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BU's deep cuts raise questions after strike

Won't take new PhD applicants in humanities; grad students wonder if their gains were factor

By Diti Kohli
GLOBE STAFF

In the wake of a lengthy graduate worker strike, Boston University said Tuesday that it will not accept any new PhD students in a dozen humanities and social sciences programs, including English, history, and philosophy, in the coming academic year.

demc year.

It's one of the most aggressive cost-cutting moves undertaken by a major Boston-area school during a critical time in higher education, when enrollment is down and expenses feel forever on the rise. Dozens of smaller New England institutions have cut staff, slashed majors,

or closed due to the financial crunch. BU based its decision to freeze the PhD programs on recommendations last spring from a task force aimed at keeping the university above water going forward, the school said in a statement.

"These actions are part of Boston University's commitment to re-envision these programs to allow for their long-term sustainability," it read. "This temporary pause and cohort reduction will ensure BU is able

to meet its commitments to currently enrolled students and to set up its future programs for success."

The application portal for the programs is now closed, and students who have already applied for next fall will be refunded their fees.

University spokesperson Colin Riley declined to share how many applicants had been affected. BU currently oversees almost 18,000 graduate students, though the PhD

BU, Page A4

Diverse foes line up against Kennedy

Left and right find much to worry about in his contrarian views

By Sam Brodey
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — In one important sense, President-elect Donald Trump's provocative decision to nominate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as his health secretary has been unifying: A broad collection of people and interests have found at least one reason to lose sleep over the prospect of Kennedy becoming the nation's top health official.

►Gaetz reportedly paid two women over \$10,000, some of it for sex. A6.

That's because of Kennedy's eccentric and contrarian worldview, which mixes deep distrust in the regulations and practices of government, science, and big business with a desire to enforce his crusading views with stringent new rules.

The former Democrat and environmental activist might have attracted Democrats with his criticism of corporate conglomerates that push unhealthy processed foods and contribute to chronic diseases — if they weren't so turned off by his long record of antivaccine stances and embrace of conspiracy theories, such as when he suggested in 2023 that the COVID virus was designed to spare Chinese and Jewish people.

"Trump should find someone to give kids

KENNEDY, Page A7

War of words on deportation puts Wu in the spotlight

By Emma Platoff and Emily Sweeney
GLOBE STAFF

Two weeks after the presidential election returned Donald Trump to power, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu finds herself in the national spotlight after a back-and-forth with Tom Homan, Trump's incoming border czar.

The progressive mayor drew Homan's fire after she said in a television interview Sunday that local authorities will not assist federal mass deportation efforts, in a clip that was re-circulated on conservative news shows.

►Plymouth extends its deal with ICE. B1.

"Either she helps us, or she gets the hell out of the way, because we're going to do it," Homan shot back Monday in an interview on the conservative news outlet Newsmax.

"She's not very smart, I'll give her that," Homan said of the Harvard College and Harvard Law School graduate.

"There's a clear line here, and they can't cross a clear line," he cautioned. "They can not cooperate, but there are certain laws in place

WU, Page A7



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

Leah Tennen and her husband, Eric, have fostered children for years, but say they're frustrated by the lack of DCF support.

With DCF turnover worsening since pandemic, children lose even more stability

By Jason Laughlin
and Scooty Nickerson
GLOBE STAFF

Desperate to see her three young children last month, Maria Toscano sent increasingly pleading text messages to her caseworker at the Department of Children and Families.

"Good morning," she texted on Oct. 17, according to screen shots Toscano shared with the Globe. "I am trying to get everything set

for [a] visit please text me when you have it."

Oct. 18: "I haven't heard back from you regarding this week's visit and I was really looking forward to seeing my children."

Oct. 21: "I really miss my babies, so due to no visit last week we will have 2 hours this week, correct?"

Other texts followed through Oct. 24. In response, silence from the caseworker charged with arranging Toscano's weekly visits with her children.

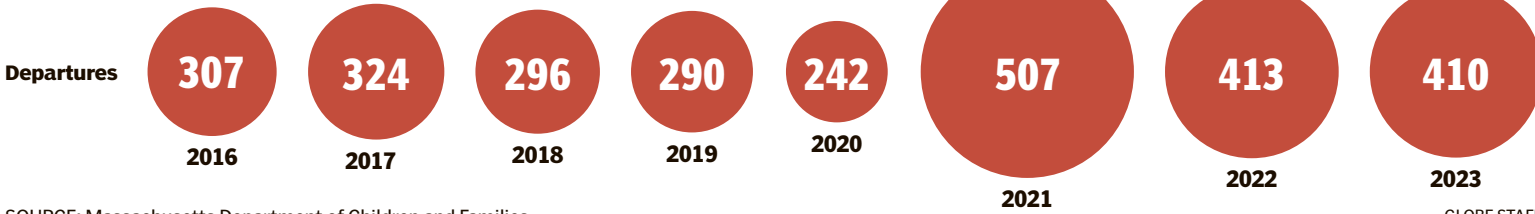
After more than a week without an an-

swer, the 41-year-old mother visited the Worcester Department of Children and Families office. To her shock, she learned that the woman she had been texting was no longer working with her family. A new caseworker had been assigned, and no one had told Toscano. This would be her children's sixth social worker in less than a year, she said.

She finally got a visit scheduled to see her children, ages 7, 6, and 4, on Oct. 29, according to the texts she shared.

DCF, Page A5

Spike in Mass. social worker exodus after pandemic



SOURCE: Massachusetts Department of Children and Families

GLOBE STAFF

Rain??? Check.

Thursday: Wet at last, windy. High 48-53. Low 42-47.

Friday: Cloudy, breezy. High 50-55. Low 39-44.

High tide: 3:05 a.m., 3:13 p.m.

Sunrise: 6:43 Sunset: 4:17

Weather and Comics, D5-6. Obituaries, C8-9.

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Nora Burnett Abrams was named the new director of the ICA, succeeding Jill Medvedow in May. B1.

A migrant from Venezuela was convicted of murdering a Georgia nursing student, in a case repeatedly cited by President-elect Donald Trump. A2.

A key block in the heart of Wellesley Square is up for sale and being shopped to developers after the town approved new rules to adhere to the MBTA Communities Act. D1.

To rake or not to rake? There's no simple answer. B1.

The NBA Cup is nothing but an empty gimmick, writes columnist Christopher L. Gasper. C1.

Righting a centuries-old wrong

With Brown's transfer of land, Pokanoket Tribe regains ancestral home

By Edward Fitzpatrick
GLOBE STAFF

BRISTOL, R.I. — Brown University is transferring 255 acres of land in Bristol to a preservation trust set up by the Pokanoket Indian Tribe, marking one of the nation's biggest victories in attempts by Indigenous people to reclaim ancestral lands.

The transfer, finalized last Friday, represents the culmination of an agreement reached in 2017 when Pokanoket tribal members and their supporters occupied the property overlooking Mount Hope Bay for more than a month.

The land is the ancestral home of Metacomb, the leader of the Pokanoket Wampanoag people who was also known as King Philip, and it's the site of his death in 1676 during King Philip's War. Metacomb was a son of Massasoit, the chief who first welcomed the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony in 1621.

The land is part of a 375-acre site that the Haffenreffer family donated to Brown University in 1955, and it includes the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology research center,

TRIBAL LANDS, Page A5



SACHEM DANCING STAR

Led by its sachem, Tracey "Dancing Star" Trezvant Guy, members of the Pokanoket Indian Tribe pushed through the gates and celebrated the land transfer in Bristol, R.I.