

‘There’s a million ways for things to go wrong’

JILL SEEBER, executive director of Mabel Center for Immigrant Justice in Boston

MASS. MOVES TO HELP MIGRANTS GET WORK

But even with assistance, getting a permit is a complicated job all its own

By Katie Johnston  
GLOBE STAFF

With the number of migrants soaring in Massachusetts and maxing out emergency shelters, their need to find work has never been greater.

But the wait for permits can be excruciating for those crammed in shelters and not allowed to earn the money they need to move out. It takes three and a half months for federal immigration authorities to process temporary employment authorization to most applicants from one major category of migrants here legally, according to current government estimates. But for many it takes far

longer.

Crisler Thelemarque, 32, who is from Haiti, arrived in the United States a year ago, just as the Biden administration expanded the criteria for migrants from that country to enter the United States legally. Thelemarque has been waiting for his work permit since March — so long that the one-year period he was allowed to stay — and work, if authorized — will likely expire before he gets his permit. A pending asylum application will allow him to remain in the country, but if he wants to work, he has to reapply.

Nationwide, US Citizenship and Immigration Services, or USCIS, has nearly 1.6 million

pending applications for work permits, which are granted only to those with permission to be here.

Efforts to improve the slow, cumbersome process are taking shape. Massachusetts has launched what it says is a first-in-the-nation program to provide legal assistance, case management, and other services for new migrants, sending legal professionals into shelters to help people apply for permits and holding two weeklong clinics in Reading in conjunction with federal authorities. Free job training for those waiting on work authorization is also taking place, including one initiation

WORK PERMITS, Page A9



JOSH REYNOLDS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Jean Fedner Estesma and Guerline Saul (center) got help applying for work permits during a clinic in Reading last month.

Official left in disgrace, then stayed on as adviser

Review finds little evidence of work by ex-commissioner paid more than \$50,000

By Jason Laughlin  
and Elizabeth Koh  
GLOBE STAFF

When David D’Arcangelo was accused of verbal abuse and mismanagement at the state’s Commission for the Blind in April, he stepped down from the top post within days. But the disgraced former commissioner stayed on as a paid adviser for nearly five months afterward — and it’s unclear what work he accomplished during that time.

D’Arcangelo received more than \$50,000 as an adviser between April 7, when he resigned as commissioner, and late August, when his term as commissioner would have ended.

The Globe requested reports, memos, research, or other documents produced by D’Arcangelo during that period, as well as all the emails he sent. The commission provided no documents, and the hundreds of emails the commission provided revealed little evidence of new

work. In fact, the majority of D’Arcangelo’s sent messages were forwarded old emails from his time as commissioner sent in response to either a public records request or a state investigation of possible policy violations. Virtually the only emails he sent in August were dozens of copies of his farewell message.

A top union official in the agency said D’Arcangelo was never seen, and rarely heard from, after he stepped down.

“Maybe the first month he tried to reach out to people,” said Carolyn Ovesen, vice president of the Service Employees International Union Local

509’s chapter representing Commission for the Blind workers. “I don’t think anybody heard from him after May.”

D’Arcangelo didn’t reply to multiple requests for comment.

D’Arcangelo, who was appointed by former governor Charlie Baker, is far from the only government executive who remained on the state payroll for months after leaving a high-profile job in recent years. Sometimes, the practice eases the transition from one administration to another, government watchdogs said. In some cases, though, it’s a fi-

D’ARCANGELO, Page A9

Finding lessons in medical mysteries

A century of ‘Case Records’ shows sleuthing skills of MGH doctors

By Felice J. Freyer  
GLOBE STAFF

An 18-year-old athlete ended up in the hospital with unexplained fevers and back and abdominal pain. His illness puzzled doctors — until they discovered he had accidentally swallowed a toothpick.

For a 24-year-old woman, a different kind of abdominal pain, vomiting, and fever also landed her in the hospital. Doctors ruled out several possible sources of her illness before an investigation turned up an unlikely cause: anthrax from the animal hide on the bongo drum she used in her drumming circle.

And then there was the patient who died from eating too much licorice.

These are among the eye-opening, instructive, and occasionally bizarre reports of medical mysteries and their solutions that

MEDICAL MYSTERIES, Page A12

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ASHLEY BORG, ADOBE STOCK



In October 1923, the New England Journal of Medicine published the first in the weekly series “Case Records of the Massachusetts General Hospital.”

Israeli official threatens 2nd front

Military cites ‘high readiness’ on border with Lebanon

By Johnatan Reiss, Nadav Gavrielov,  
and Thomas Fuller

NEW YORK TIMES

As Israel pounded targets in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, a member of the country’s war cabinet threatened action on a second front, along the northern border with Lebanon, where the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah has fired rocket barrages into Israel.

“The stopwatch for a diplomatic solution is running out,” Benny Gantz, a member of Israel’s war cabinet and former defense minister, told reporters Wednesday. “If the world and the Lebanese government don’t act in order to prevent the firing on Israel’s northern residents, and to distance Hezbollah from the border, the IDF will do it,” he said, referring to Israel’s military.

“The next stages in fighting will also be deep, forceful, and surprising,” added Gantz. “The campaign will continue and expand, according to necessity, to more foci or fronts.”

The threat of a wider war has preoccupied the United States and its allies since the start of the conflict in Gaza, and has only grown as three Iranian-backed groups — Hamas, Hezbollah, and Houthis in Yemen — have launched attacks toward Israel as well as on commercial ships in the Red Sea.

The concern prompted the United States to dispatch two aircraft carriers to the eastern Mediterranean.

MIDEAST, Page A6

2024 races promise to be costliest yet

Up and down the ballot, the pocketbooks are open

By Lissandra Villa de Petrzelka

GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — The last several election cycles have seen record-breaking raising and spending in states across the country, and many political observers expect this coming year will only push those records higher.

With the White House, Senate, and House of Representatives all potentially up for grabs, 2024 is going to be a highly competitive and consequential election.

The Globe reached out to political strategists, outside spending entities, party committees, and campaign finance experts to get the lay of the spending landscape next year and to see what to watch as campaign season shifts into high gear.

The presidential race

The top of the ticket, which polling suggests is likely to be a rematch between President Biden and former president Donald Trump, will set much of the tone for the 2024 election.

“The trend line we’ve seen over the last few elections is pretty clear. Every presidential cycle . . . has been record-breaking in terms of the overall

ELECTION SPENDING, Page A8



Watering plan

Thursday: Rain and wind.  
High: 44-49. Low: 38-43.

Friday: Cloudy, drizzle.  
High: 41-46. Low: 36-41.

High tide: 11:52 a.m.  
Sunrise: 7:13 Sunset: 4:19  
Comics and Weather, D5-6

VOL. 304, NO. 181

\*  
Suggested retail price  
\$3.50



Tom Smothers, half of the comic folk duo the Smothers Brothers, whose 1960s program brought political satire to network TV died. He was 86. **Obituary and appreciation, C11, 12.**

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center is expected to acquire a site for the state’s second wind farm terminal, a deal that will help make the city of Salem a pivotal player. **D1.**

Several cities and towns are still reeling with a shortage of snowplow drivers, despite beefing up recruitment efforts and incentives. **B1.**

The Michigan Supreme Court paved the way for Donald Trump to appear on the state’s primary ballot. **A2.**