

Some rip Harvard’s pick to lead bias panel

Choice for antisemitism task force criticized for saying worries overblown

By Hilary Burns and Mike Damiano
GLOBE STAFF

Harvard University’s spring semester started Monday where its fall semester ended: with fierce debates about speech and antisemitism in the wake of the Hamas-led Oct. 7 attack on Israel, prolonging a period of upheaval that has spanned two seasons and two presidents.

In the latest flare up, some alumni, Jewish advocacy groups, and conservative media figures are denouncing interim Harvard president Alan Garber’s choice of a Harvard professor of Jewish history to lead a new task force focused on combating antisemitism.

The critics, including former Harvard president Lawrence Summers, contend that Derek Penslar, a leading scholar of Zionism, was an inappropriate choice to lead the task force because of his criticism of Israel, his opposition to a frequently used but disputed definition of antisemitism, and his view that some claims about the extent of antisemitism at Harvard have been overblown.

Hedge fund billionaire Bill Ackman, who helped mobilize opposition to former Harvard president Claudine Gay, joined the chorus of critics with a social media post. Jonathan Greenblatt, the chief executive of the Anti-Defamation League, called Penslar’s selection “absolutely inexcusable.”

Penslar pushed back Monday. He said in a statement that he views the task force as “an important opportunity to determine the nature and extent of antisemitism and more subtle forms of social exclusion that affect Jewish students at Harvard. Only with this information in hand can Harvard implement effective policies that will improve Jewish student life on campus.”

Reports of antisemitism at Harvard, and
HARVARD, Page A7

At MIT, few faculty concerns over plagiarism warning

But Mideast war divides campus, spurs Jewish students’ fears

By Mark Arsenault
GLOBE STAFF

Imagine a really rich guy who is so upset with your employer that he threatens to deploy sophisticated artificial intelligence to scrutinize your work — yes, yours — and that of all your colleagues, for any career-killing mistakes you might have made.

And then to publish your shortcomings for the world to see.

Faculty at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have been pondering this possibility since New York hedge fund billionaire Bill Ackman in early January posted on X that he would review for plagiarism the work “of all current @MIT faculty members,” along with that of the school’s president, Sally Kornbluth, other officers, and board members.

His post was in response to a report in a business publication alleging plagiarism by Ackman’s wife, who received her PhD at MIT and also taught there.

The region’s mightiest citadel of science,
MIT, Page A7



Bill Ackman said he will review MIT faculty papers for plagiarism.

With a touch of the bizarre, primary nears a fitful finish



ERIN CLARK/GLOBE STAFF

A supporter waved a massive Trump flag while waiting for a rally for the former president last week in Manchester, N.H.

Inside the unsanctioned effort to get voters to write in Biden

By Matt Stout
GLOBE STAFF

GORHAM, N.H. — Once united in anger at President Biden and the national Democratic Party for snubbing the state’s vaunted first-in-the-nation primary, New Hampshire Democratic leaders quickly coalesced around something else: Their firm belief that Biden needs a strong showing ahead of a likely fight against Donald Trump.

What it’s spawned — an unsanctioned effort to persuade New Hampshire voters to write in Biden’s name on Tuesday’s Democratic primary ballot — may be the strangest presidential primary campaign in history.

Largely decentralized, it is bereft of field offices or much in the way of paid staff. At \$1.5 million spent so far, it’s a relatively cheap endeavor. The schedule of meet-and-greets and sign-waving is pieced together in Zoom break-out rooms. Its leaders’ rallying cry is that democracy is on the ballot. Their actual candidate, of course, is not.

“Most of us are pretty comfortable being pissed off about one thing and still voting for someone because you care about something else a lot,” Colin Van Ostern, a former

BIDEN, Page A5

‘Boy, what a circus, I think there’s more media than people. I’ve never seen it like this where you have one leading candidate in court.’

SCOTT FIRTH, as he viewed a venue for Nikki Haley in Franklin



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

A Nikki Haley supporter pumped up the crowd at her event at Exeter High School Sunday.

On GOP side, it’s retail politics against the Trump buzzsaw

By Jess Bidgood and Emma Platoff
GLOBE STAFF

FRANKLIN, N.H. — It was bright outside but dark in the windowless VFW hall where former South Carolina governor Nikki Haley was about to appear on Monday.

The other candidate, former president Trump, was far away and otherwise busy for a brief appearance in court.

One more day to go.

The first-in-the-nation primary neared its finish on Monday, as Haley made a show of criss-crossing the state — albeit with limited press and few opportunities for voters to ask questions — while Trump, the front-runner, had no plans to be in New Hampshire until a late-night rally in the remote Lakes Region.

And while Haley supporters are holding out hope the state will deliver the kind of surprise result that has long burnished its political mythology, the campaign’s closing days have felt decidedly strange, feeding a creeping sense that perhaps nothing here — not the months of campaigning or the millions of dollars spent — really mattered in the face of Trump’s dominance.

“You can make a case that there was a never a fork in the road, that it was all just kind of — we were all just kind of going through the paces and pretending there was

PRIMARY, Page A4

US effort to help young adults find housing underused

Program for those once in foster care seen slowed by bureaucracy

By Jason Laughlin
GLOBE STAFF

In the last days of December, Kianna, a 19-year-old former foster child, slept in the only space she could find, a small, purple-painted tunnel in a Worcester park.

Kianna, who asked that her last name not be used to protect her privacy, has repeatedly ended up on the streets in the last year, sleeping in stairwells, on buses and other “weird spots,” when she wasn’t able to shelter with friends or other con-

nections, she said.

A 2019 federal housing voucher initiative was supposed to make such experiences vanishingly rare by guaranteeing at least three years of housing for hundreds of young adults in Massachusetts who lived in foster care or other residential placement as children.

Yet as of October, the state had received just 88 vouchers and put even fewer to use, according to data from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The program, say officials, is hindered by a laborious application process and challenging restrictions.

The Department of Children and Families refers eligible young people ages 18

VOUCHERS, Page B4



SUZANNE KREITER/GLOBE STAFF

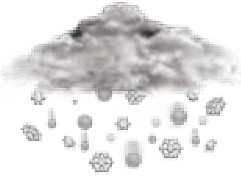
Former foster child Xyanna-Amari Joseph moved into her new Plainville apartment recently.

Thousands of professors and lecturers in the California State University system walked off the job, demanding higher compensation in the largest strike of its kind in US history. **A2.**

US and British militaries bombed eight locations used by the Houthis in Yemen on Monday night, as Israel came under withering criticism from

families of hostages and from EU ministers. **A3.**

Troubled Steward Health Care may have to close or sell its hospitals, several of which are in Massachusetts. But private equity firm Cerberus Capital Management is a big winner, having gained \$800 million after cashing out of Steward in 2021, columnist Larry Edelman writes. **D1.**



Primarily miserable

Tuesday: Rain, sleet, late snow.
High 39-44, low 30-35.

Wednesday: Snow, wintry mix.
Obituaries, **C9-10.**
Weather and comics, **D5-6.**

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