

# Jury chosen for Hunter Biden trial

Opening statements expected Tuesday in federal gun case

**By Claudia Lauer, Michael Kunzelman and Colleen Long**  
Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. — A jury was seated Monday in the federal gun case against President Joe Biden’s son Hunter, after prospective panelists were questioned about their thoughts on gun rights and drug addiction while the first lady watched from the front row of the courtroom.

Opening statements were set to begin Tuesday after the jurors — six men and six women plus four women serving as alternates — were instructed by Judge Maryellen Noreika not to talk or read about the case.

Hunter Biden has been charged in Delaware with three felonies stemming from a 2018 firearm purchase when he was, according to his memoir, in the throes of a crack addiction. He has been accused of lying to a federally

licensed gun dealer, making a false claim on the application by saying he was not a drug user and illegally having the gun for 11 days.

The case is going to trial following the collapse of a plea deal that would have avoided the spectacle of a trial so close to the 2024 election. Biden has pleaded not guilty and has argued that he’s being unfairly targeted by the Justice Department, after Republicans decried the now-defunct plea deal as special treatment for the

Democratic president’s son.

The proceedings are unfolding just days after Donald Trump, the presumptive 2024 Republican presidential nominee, was convicted of 34 felonies in New York City. A jury found the former president guilty of a scheme to cover up a hush money payment to a porn actor to fend off damage to his 2016 presidential campaign. The two criminal cases are unrelated, but their proximity underscores how the courts have taken

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Hunter Biden arrives at federal court Monday in Wilmington, Del. **MATT SLOCUM/AP**



Jinan Chehade, a Muslim DePaul and Georgetown graduate, on Thursday in Oak Lawn. Chehade filed a lawsuit against the law firm, Foley & Lardner, after they withdrew a job offer the day before she was supposed to start. She argues that the firm discriminated against her because of her Arab Muslim background and pro-Palestinian political statements on social media. **TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## Long-term consequences a big concern for activists

College grads worry that pro-Palestinian advocacy could deter future employers

**By Zareen Syed**  
Chicago Tribune

When graduating University of Chicago senior Rayna Acha heard about the lawsuit filed by a Lebanese American attorney alleging a job offer from a national law firm was rescinded because of her pro-Palestinian views on Gaza, the revocation confirmed one of her worst fears.

“The reality is we might not get jobs because of (our activism),” said Acha, an undergraduate anthropology major at the U. of C. and an organizer with Students for Justice in Palestine.

Acha has more than one reason to worry. She is one of four U. of C. students whose degrees were withheld because of their involvement with the university’s pro-Palestinian encampment calling on the institution to sever its financial ties to Israel.

A U. of C. spokesman has said the school cannot comment on individual student disciplinary matters, but said that the process is standard practice after a formal complaint is reviewed by the university’s Disciplinary Committee. Meanwhile, over the weekend, hundreds of students and faculty walked out of U. of C.’s

convocation over the university’s actions.

“All four of us aren’t employed yet,” Acha said. “I’m in this situation now where I have to find a job to support myself but I also need to continue to fight for the things I need to fight for.”

The fear of long-term professional consequences has been a source of concern for pro-Palestinian protesters, though several of them, including Acha, plan to enter professions well served by activism such as community organizing, nonprofit work, academia or politics.

“We have some universities,

like U. of C., that are pledging that they are going to protect student speech and the presidents (of these universities) recently have been saying that more than their policies actually do that, but at least they’re saying it,” said Kimberly Yuracko, a Judd and Mary Morris Leighton Professor of Law at Northwestern University who specializes in antidiscrimination and employment law. “But I’ve just not heard of a single private sector employer that has said they will contractually protect speech in accordance

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## Toxic chemicals on the rise in lake

Likely sources for PFAS are rain, contaminated air, researchers say

**By Michael Hawthorne**  
Chicago Tribune

Toxic forever chemicals are on the rise in Lake Michigan, an alarming finding that reflects how the Great Lakes act like sponges soaking up pollution from near and far.

Rain and contaminated air are major sources of the contamination detected by a team of researchers from Indiana University and Canada’s top environmental agency. So are discharges from sewage treatment plants and industries.

The new study found airborne concentrations of PFAS — per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances — are much higher near Chicago and other urban areas than at rural monitoring stations in northern Michigan and upstate New York. Previous research recorded similar patterns for flame retardants and other toxic chemicals.

But unlike many other contaminants, PFAS in rain were consistent throughout the Great Lakes region, likely because the chemicals are so widespread in the environment.

Levels detected in rain were the same near Chicago and at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, 223 miles northeast across Lake Michigan near Traverse City.

As the most comprehensive tracking of PFAS in the lakes to date, the study provides another example of how it is impossible to avoid exposure to the chemicals — some of which build up in human blood, cause cancer and other diseases and take years to leave the body.

“We need to take a broader approach to control sources releasing PFAS into the atmosphere and into bodies of water,” Marta Venier, an environmental chemist at Indiana University and co-author of the study, said in an interview. “Eventually that pollution ends

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### Former Ill. youth detainees allege abuse

In another set of sweeping lawsuits, former residents of juvenile detention centers have alleged widespread sexual abuse in youth prisons across Illinois and are calling on state officials to reform the system. **Chicagoland, Page 3**

### Mexico elects its first woman president

Claudia Sheinbaum has promised to continue the political course set by her populist predecessor despite widespread discontent with persistent cartel violence, the weakening of democratic institutions and fears among investors that an already hostile environment might become worse. **Nation & World**

## On the move to get message — and pal — home



Jeremiah Smith wears a t-shirt meant to raise awareness for Israelis taken hostage by Hamas on Oct. 7, while he poses for a portrait on Friday near Mary Bartelme Park in Chicago. **VINCENT ALBAN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

### Chicago truck driver is trying to raise awareness for childhood friend being held hostage in Gaza

**By Kate Armanini**  
Chicago Tribune

The box truck was parked beside a quiet sidewalk in the West Loop. A few people stopped, glancing curiously at the image flashing on its rear door: a young man, his expression resolute but tinged with sadness. Below his figure was a message in bold letters: “Chicagoan kidnapped by Hamas.”

“He’s always up there,” said the truck’s driver, Jeremiah Smith, 27, as he stared at the image. “I always know that.”

Twelve hours a day, six days a week, Smith drives the truck

through the Chicago area, raising awareness for the scores of Israeli hostages held captive by Hamas. But the man on the screen, Hersh Goldberg-Polin, is more than a distant figure.

To Smith, he’s like a brother. When Smith was 6 years old, he met Hersh’s grandmother, a tutor at his elementary school, and was taken under her wing. It’s a story of familial love, a bridge of back-grounds — stronger than ever as a war wages on.

“I wouldn’t want nobody else to drive the truck,” Smith said, clutching the Star of David around

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