

Boston Sunday Globe

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SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

Campus speech back in spotlight

After Kirk's death, renewed debate over climate of political intolerance at colleges

By Brooke Hauser
GLOBE STAFF
and Jessica Ma
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

The day before right-wing influencer Charlie Kirk was shot and killed Wednesday while speaking at a college campus in Utah, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Ex-

pression, or FIRE, released its annual report on the state of free speech at colleges around the country.

Among its key findings: "The percentage of students saying it is acceptable to shout down a speaker, block entry to a campus speech, or use violence to stop a campus speech all increased since last year and are at

record highs."

The murder of Kirk, a conservative provocateur who routinely appeared before university audiences to debate politics, puts a harsh new light on the worsening climate for political discourse on American college campuses.

But those tensions flared long before the campus protests erupted with the current Israel-Hamas war. Controversial speakers have been dis-

COLLEGES, Page A11

'I don't think it should go unnoticed that [the shooting] occurred on a college campus.'

TALIA KHAN,
MIT doctoral student

AI proving a barrier, boon in job market

Employers, applicants see an escalating 'arms race'

By Aaron Pressman
GLOBE STAFF

Bike mechanic James Peregrine applied online for a job at REI last year and was pleased to get an email inviting him to an interview.

But the "interview" turned out to be a series of recorded questions from REI managers asked by an artificial intelligence app that video-recorded his answers. The 34-year-old Malden resident tried twice but said he couldn't bear talking to the app.

"When you find yourself attempting to interview with just your face staring back at you from the screen, it feels intensely dehumanizing," Peregrine said.

Ultimately, he got a job at a local bike shop after walking in with his resume in hand. "An interview is a conversation, a back and forth," he said. "It's an opportunity for me as a job seeker to get to know the people I could be working with."

With the labor market getting weaker, the hiring process has become the latest battleground for AI infiltrating important parts of the economy. In what employers and applicants describe as an escalating "arms race," AI apps are increasingly be-

AI HIRING, Page A13

Strong start, some hiccups, to doula service

State coverage aims to end disparities but cuts loom

By Sarah Rahal
GLOBE STAFF

Living in South Boston, three weeks postpartum with her third child, Lisa Saint Cyr is savoring the final hours with her doula, Laura Pichardo, the woman she calls her "birth sister."

Saint Cyr's first birth was marked by confusion, stress, and an unexpected caesarean section. Her second pregnancy ended in stillbirth, deepening her fears that every birth could bring tragedy. But in 2023, she enrolled in Boston Medical Center's Birth Sisters program, where she found Pichardo, with whom she speaks Spanish. With Pichardo's support, she delivered her next baby vaginally, something she didn't believe would be possible.

When she got pregnant this year, Saint Cyr, 34, called upon Pichardo again to assist her through high-risk complications: high blood pressure, preeclampsia, and ultimately a last-minute caesarean. As memories of past trauma resurfaced, Saint

DOULAS, Page A13



ERIN CLARK/GLOBE STAFF

Doula Laura Pichardo held infant Lilliana Saint Cyr as the baby's mother looked on.

INSIDE THE WAR ON HARVARD

Staggering under the White House's pressure campaign, some researchers at the university are beginning to ask:

Should Harvard settle?

By Aidan Ryan
and Jonathan Saltzman
GLOBE STAFF

When Harvard said it would refuse to give in to the Trump administration's far-reaching demands, it won supporters from within academia and beyond who see the university as a beacon of resistance against an overweening government.

Many want the school to hold out and not strike the kind of deal other elite universities have in recent weeks, a conviction that only hardened recently after Harvard prevailed against the administration in federal court in a lawsuit over funding cuts. They took solace in the words of the federal judge who wrote in her decision on Sept. 3 that the Trump administration had used concerns of antisemitism as a "smokescreen" to attack Harvard and other universities.

But theirs is far from a universal position within the Harvard community. Faculty, particularly some researchers who have had to halt studies into potential life-saving medicines and gut their staff, are conflicted: While they share the fear that a deal with President Trump could infringe upon Harvard's academic freedom and institutional autonomy, they also see a settlement as potentially ending significant damage to their life's work.

The division is in part geographic. Many of the researchers affected by the federal cuts are located in the Longwood Medical

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VOL. 308, NO. 76

Suggested retail price
\$6.00



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Feeling the fall

Sunday: Clouds, sun, afternoon shower.
High: 73-78. Low: 58-63.

Monday: Clouds, sun. High: 69-74. Low: 59-64.
Sunrise: 6:23 Sunset: 6:55

Complete report, **C24**. Obituaries, **C23**.

Spring is often the peak of home sale prices for any given year, some realtors say, though a bump in activity after Labor Day makes fall the second-best time to sell.
Address, H1.

How will you fill your fall hours? Check out the Fall Arts Guide for ideas.
SundayArts, N1.

The Red Sox fell to the Yankees again, 5-3, muddying the playoff picture. **Sports, C1.**

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