

Census reveals divergent trends

Data shows an uptick in Pittsburgh's poverty rate while nationwide numbers improve

By Jimmy Cloutier
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The Pittsburgh poverty rate inched up last year, even as the nationwide numbers improved and the U.S. economy rebounded from the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

An estimated 57,000 people — or 20.1% of the city's population — lived below the poverty line, an increase from 19.9% in 2023, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau released last week.

The uptick comes as pandemic-era programs wind down and billions of dollars in public assistance

to cities dries up.

"The pandemic federal programs went a long way to pushing down poverty while they were in effect, and, as those programs ended, likely caused some reversion to past patterns and trends," said Chris Briem, a demographer at the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Social and Urban Research.

Though Pittsburgh's rate has hovered around the same level — with one in five residents living be-

low the poverty line since 2016 — other cities across the country showed an improvement in their rates last year.

In Philadelphia — once the poorest big city in the U.S. — the poverty rate fell below 20% for the first time since at least 2005. In Cleveland, the numbers fell by 2.4 percentage points and in Buffalo, N.Y., the rate dropped by 4.6 points.

SEE **CENSUS**, PAGE A-2

MIDEAST WAR

ISRAELI STRIKES AMP UP IN GAZA

Rubio visits as military intensifies attacks

By Matthew Lee and Samy Magdy
Associated Press

JERUSALEM — U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio was in Israel on Sunday as its military intensified attacks on northern Gaza, flattening multiple high-rise buildings and killing at least 13 Palestinians.

Mr. Rubio said before the trip that he would seek answers from Israeli officials about their view of a path forward in Gaza, following Israel's attack on Hamas leaders in Qatar last week that upended efforts to broker an end to the conflict.

His two-day visit also represents a show of support for the increasingly isolated Israel as the United Nations holds what is expected to be a contentious debate next week on commitment to the creation of a Palestinian state. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu strongly opposes the recognition of a Palestinian state.

Qatar fallout

Mr. Rubio's visit proceeded despite U.S. President Donald Trump's anger at Mr. Netanyahu over the Israeli strike in Doha, which he said the United States wasn't notified of beforehand.

On Sunday, Mr. Netanyahu, Mr. Rubio and their wives, along with U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee and his wife, toured the Western Wall and the excavated tunnels near it.

"I think his (Rubio's) visit here is a testament to the durability, the strength of the Israeli-American alliance. It's as strong and as durable as the stones of the Western Wall we just touched," Mr. Netanyahu said.

On Friday, Mr. Rubio and Trump met with Qatar's prime minister about the

SEE **GAZA**, PAGE A-8

SEAHAWKS 31, STEELERS 17



Sebastian Foltz/Post-Gazette

Seahawks defensive end Leonard Williams wraps up Steelers quarterback Aaron Rodgers during the fourth quarter of Sunday's home opener at Acrisure Stadium. Mr. Rodgers completed 18 of 33 passes for 203 yards and one touchdown. More game coverage in **Sports, B-1**.

'HAVE TO REFOCUS'

Steelers can't brush past performance against Seahawks

By Jason Mackey
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Perhaps whatever plagued Kaleb Johnson was contagious.

As the Terrible Towels twirled for team's home opener on a gorgeous September day, the Seahawks in town and optimism high on the North Shore, the Steelers in a way functioned like their rookie kick re-

turner.

By inexplicably going the other direction.

Either that, or we were all seriously fooled during a Week 1 victory over the Jets, because Pittsburgh's 31-17 loss to Seattle at Acrisure Stadium was *bad*. And bigger than Mr. Johnson's brain cramp with 12 minutes, 46 seconds to go in the fourth quarter, a special teams gaffe that helped turn a 14-14 game into a 14-point loss.

"I made a mistake," Mr. John-

COMMENTARY

son said. "That just means I have to work even harder, with a chip on my shoulder. ... It's part of football, part of life."

Let's hope the Steelers do the same — and they definitely won't lack for available material.

Because as tempting as it might be to make this about Mr. Johnson's mistake or coach Mike Tomlin's ridiculous deci-

sion to punt on 4th-and-1 from midfield late in the third, there are bigger concerns right now with the Steelers.

Things like allowing 395 total yards and 117 on the ground a week after Pittsburgh had a similarly leaky performance against the Jets.

Not only that, failing to get a stop when it was needed the most, specifically the Seahawks'

SEE **STEELERS**, PAGE A-6

TRAGEDY IN UTAH

Governor cites 'leftist ideology' of suspect

By Nicholas Riccardi and Josh Boak
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Family and friends of the 22-year-old accused of fatally shooting conservative activist Charlie Kirk described his politics as veering left in recent years as he spent large amounts of time scrolling the "dark corners of the internet," Utah Gov. Spencer Cox said Sunday.

Investigators were still piecing together information about the suspect, Tyler Robinson, and not yet ready to discuss a potential motive. But Mr. Cox noted that Mr. Robinson, who is not cooperating with law enforcement, disliked Mr. Kirk and may have been "radicalized" online.

Mr. Kirk founded Turning Points USA to bring more young, conservative evangelical Christians into politics as effective activists, and he was a confidant of President Donald Trump, leading to a flood of tributes that included a vigil Sunday night at the Kennedy Center in Washington. Mr.



Kirk

SEE **KIRK**, PAGE A-8

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Schools encouraged by enrollment boosts

By Maddie Aiken
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Community colleges in the Pittsburgh region are reporting enrollment boosts this fall that leaders attribute to increased desire for affordable education and shorter-term degrees.

The Community College of Allegheny County and Westmoreland County Community College both are projecting higher student popu-

lations on campus this semester, officials confirmed.

The Community College of Beaver County also expects to hit its enrollment target this fall after seeing enrollment growth the past three semesters, a spokeswoman said.

"Many students are recognizing the value of community colleges in bringing people access to higher

SEE **COLLEGES**, PAGE A-2

HUES OF FALL



Hanna Webster/Post-Gazette

Eryn Taylor, 6, of Homestead, left, and Brynn Rutherford, 6, of White Oak make fine art at the Paint Monkey booth Sunday during The Waterfront's Fall Fest in Homestead. **Story, A-4.**



ONLINE TODAY:
Get real-time breaking news and much more at post-gazette.com

Weather

Mostly sunny and very warm. Daytime high, 85; tonight's low, 59.
Page B-14

Almanac A-2
Bridge B-12
Classified B-13
Comics B-11
Concert Review A-5

Crosswords B-12
Editorials A-11
High Schools B-7
Horoscope B-12
Local News A-4

Lottery A-6
Obituaries A-9
Scoreboard B-8
Sports B-1
Television B-10



6 08136 26301 8