



Kelce and Besse Hotel redevelopment highlight campus downtown expansion

Fatimah Bader reporter

Pittsburg State University leaders offered a closer look at two major downtown redevelopment projects during guided tours on Jan. 23, highlighting how the new Kelce College of Business building and the renovation of the historic Besse Hotel are designed to benefit students and strengthen connections with the community.

University officials began the afternoon inside the nearly completed Kelce College of Business building, which will replace the college's current facility and bring business programs closer to downtown employers and organizations.

"This is really meant to be an academic home for our students," Dr. Paul Grimes said, dean of the Kelce College of Business. "We want students to feel welcome here, to feel like they belong here and to want to stay and work together."

The new building is centered around a large atrium designed as a gathering space with casual seating, study areas and room for campus events. Grimes said the atrium will serve as the heart of the facility, encouraging collaboration between students, faculty, and staff.

"The atrium is like the living room of the building," Grimes said. "It's a place where students can study, meet with faculty and feel connected."

The first floor will house the Student Engagement Center, which will provide advising, recruitment and internship support, along with several meeting rooms for prospective students and families visiting campus. The building will also include a business "outreach street" featuring the Business and Economic Research Center, entrepreneurship programs, a professional sales center and the Center for Business and Talent Development.

Provost Dr. Susan Bon said the building reflects the university's broader Gorilla Rising initiative and its focus on downtown partnerships.

"We're closing the space between our campus community and our downtown community," Bon said. "Having students, faculty and staff downtown every day benefits our students and strengthens the life of the city."

Classrooms in the new facility were designed with flexibility and technology in mind. Many rooms will feature movable furniture for group work and presentations, while specialized classrooms will support data science, information systems, and graduate-level case discussions.

One of the building's most unique features is a new behavioral research lab designed for marketing and economics students. The lab will allow students to conduct focus groups and observe decision-making through recording equipment and observation rooms.

"It's a very hands-on, applied space," Grimes said. "It takes what students learn from textbooks and puts it into practice."

After touring the business building, university leaders walked a short distance to the Besse Hotel, where another redevelopment project is underway. The historic building is being transformed into a mixed-use space that will include student housing, university offices, and community-focused areas.

Maria Thompson, director of Housing and Residence Life, said the upper floors will include apartment-style units designed to help meet growing housing needs.

"This is the penthouse unit," Thompson said during the tour. "It's a two-bedroom with private baths, and upstairs is the living room, dining room and a half bathroom."

Thompson said the project will offer an alternative housing option as residence halls continue to fill.



Dr. Paul Grimes, dean of the Kelce Business College, leads a tour of the new business college on Broadway during the Jan. 23 press event. He guided attendees through the developing spaces and shared the vision for the college's future. | Photo by Kaylee Dillow

"Students who live on campus tend to do better in school," Thompson said.

The lower floors of the Besse Hotel will house university offices and spaces open to the public. Wesley Streeter, associate vice president for economic and community engagement, said the project is part of a larger effort to strengthen ties between the university and downtown businesses.

"The lower first floors here will be primarily to reach the public, the community," Streeter said. "And very accessible by the community."

Streeter said the building will include offices for the Kansas Department of Commerce, the university's Center for Reading, and community meeting rooms designed to support small businesses and entrepreneurs.

"These projects really work together," Bon said. "They bring students closer to their classes, closer to downtown businesses and closer to the community."

University officials said both projects are expected to create new opportunities for learning, collaboration and community engagement while bringing more student activity into downtown Pittsburg.

"Our current facilities no longer meet the needs of our programs," Grimes said. "This new space will allow us to teach, collaborate and connect with the community in ways we've never been able to before."

Sharing fellowship and grilled cheese

Joshua Smith reporter

Pittsburg State University students filled the basement of the Campus Christians house for a casual social event on Thursday, Jan. 22. Pittsburg State University Campus Christians Director Chris Hay was in the basement kitchen serving up hand-made grilled cheese sandwiches while simultaneously greeting students as they walked in. Students described the vibe as "welcoming," which was evident when Jarrod Powe, an electrical tech student graduating this May, was met with cheers as he walked in with cheese for the event. First-time visitor to Campus Christians Lexi Miles, a freshman majoring in business management with a minor in history, felt that everyone was "super-duper nice," and is "excited to learn more about Christianity."

Students like Miah Shelby, a graduate student studying social work, and organizers enjoy the atmosphere of community at the Thursday night gatherings as a way to relax and have fun. Campus Christians also has other events focused on more intentional

worship and learning.

"A lot of times it's just like a chance to have fun and relax," Shelby said. "Let loose after a hard week. And then every first Thursday of the month, we do a worship night in, so it's a bit more intentional of getting in the Word together. I love that worshiping and music, that's a good time."

PSU Campus Christians Women's Minister and Communications Director Brittany Holloway, a 2020 PSU graduate, said, "We all just love being together, hanging out, having a good time, learning about the word of God, what it says, applying that to our lives, and taking that out into the world."

"We do Thursday night fellowship events," Hay said. "We do Bible studies on Mondays and Wednesdays. We partner with other campus ministries across the Midwest, do fall retreats and spring retreats, girls' events and guys' events, and a bunch of stuff like that. We also house students as well."

One of those students being housed, Powe, is happy to be on the leadership team, setting up events and helping new students to feel welcome.

"I'm a resident of the guys' house," Powe said. "There are six guys and eight girls this semester. This is our first event; we have events every Thursday night at seven. I'm really happy to be part of CC and be on their leadership team. We help organize the events, try to talk to new people as they come in and visit, and we clean up afterwards."

Powe and Shelby both said that the feeling of belonging and acceptance are some of their favorite aspects of Campus Christians.

"I feel like everyone is one big family," Powe said. "Once you get into this, you feel like you belong. I think everyone down here feels at ease, where you can just relax."

"It's a bit smaller, like a really good tight-knit community," Shelby said. "Everyone was super welcoming and I think as a Christian it's really important to find accountability and fellowship with other Christians that can encourage you and build you up. It's a very accepting community; people may not feel like they fit in elsewhere or like they haven't found their crowd yet, but Campus Christians is a really good place that you can find your crowd and feel welcome no matter who you are."

A testament to that acceptance of everyone, Miles said this was her first time coming to a Campus Christians event and she has had an easy time talking to others.

"Everyone's super-duper nice, and it's so easy to start conversations, I haven't really had

an awkward conversation," Miles said. "I did join the small groups, and I am real excited to learn more about Christianity and God, because I don't really know anything."

Miles said she is new to Christianity and showed up to Campus Christians in an effort to open up and make friends in the Christian community.

"I really got into Christianity because of my boyfriend and his family," Miles said. "I didn't grow up with religion at all, so I've been trying to be more open and it's hard coming from my household. But I'm just trying to put myself out there and make more friends."

Through the different outreach efforts of Campus Christians, including a weekly free breakfast, Hay estimates they have 2,000 student interactions a year and has roughly 60 students who attend events.

"We have been super blessed to grow a bunch over the past couple of years," Hay said. "We've probably pulled like 30 to 50 students when it comes to our events. In our orbit, there's probably 60-ish students when it comes to our fellowship events like small groups, and we also weekly give out free breakfast at the tech center or the oval. Yearly, we probably have like 2,000 interactions with students from all the stuff that we do. We're a nondenominational campus ministry, whoever wants to come, can come."

Hay said that Campus Christians is meant to be a community, but not a replacement for church attendance.

"At the end of the day, we are not a church," Hay said. "We want students to be put into a church and be part of a community, and like this kind of be an extension. A home and community for them."

Everyone the Collegio interacted with at the event encouraged readers to come to a Thursday evening event and feel welcome.

"You (students) can come to CC whenever you want," Powe said. "You (students) can just walk on in."

"Feel more than welcome to come try it out," Shelby said. "We'll welcome you with open arms and hopefully you'll feel that, and if you don't, we'll do better."

"We'd love students to come around," Hay said. "Students have probably seen us from times when we're doing outreach, but we really encourage students to come to an event, come join a Bible study. All our Thursday nights, we try to make them super low barrier of entry; we want students to feel welcome. Follow us on Instagram (@CCPSU), Gorilla Engage, and Facebook."



Chris Hay, the director of Campus Christians serving up food for a grilled cheese and game night. | Photo by Ky Boterf

Stranger things season 5 review, no reset button

SPOILER ALERT

Chance Fields reporter

Season five of “Stranger Things” feels less like a normal season of television and more like a long goodbye. From early on, it is clear that Hawkins is not something that can simply be saved and reset. The damage left behind from season four shapes everything, and the show commits to a heavier, more final tone all the way through.

One of the strongest choices this season makes is letting loss linger. Max being alive but not truly present hangs over the group constantly, especially Lucas. His grief and frustration are uncomfortable to watch in the best way because there is nothing he can do to fix it. The show finally allows characters to sit in pain instead of immediately turning it into motivation or action.

Eleven’s arc feels the most complete it ever has. Instead of focusing on how strong she is, the season focuses on control and choice. Her final confrontation with Vecna is not really about power but about refusal. Refusing to become him. Refusing to let trauma define her. It feels like the natural end of the story that began when she first escaped the lab. Vecna himself is used more carefully this time. He feels less like

a villain who needs constant screen time and more like something inevitable. His presence looms even when he is not on screen, which makes the threat feel heavier and more personal.

Will’s coming out is handled quietly and respectfully. It is not treated as a major plot twist or emotional centerpiece, but as a small moment of honesty in a season full of endings. The show does not overexplain it or turn it into a big deal. It simply lets it exist as part of Will growing up and understanding himself, which fits both the character and the tone of the final season.

Steve, Nancy, and Jonathan finally stop repeating the same emotional loops from earlier seasons. The ending is not perfect or overly sentimental, but it feels honest. Not everyone ends up where fans might expect, and that realism works in the show’s favor.

The finale avoids a clean reset. Hawkins survives, but it is permanently changed, and so are the people who grew up there. The last moments are small and human rather than flashy. Friends sitting together. Silence. A sense that childhood is truly over.

While season five is not the most fun season of “Stranger Things,” it may be the most meaningful. It closes the series by accepting that growing up comes with loss, change, and unfinished feelings, and it does not try to soften that truth.

The final community opinions on Hollow Knight: Silksong

Ky Boterf reporter

Approximately four months and three weeks after the release of Hollow Knight: Silksong, the gaming community has beaten the game and formed their opinions. After all of the excitement that the game generated at release, it became clear that the community behind Silksong’s predecessor, Hollow Knight, had very high hopes.

Silksong is a Metroidvania game based in Pharloom, a kingdom in disrepair though not completely abandoned. You meet pilgrims making their way to the citadel at the top of this kingdom, though most don’t survive to make it there. Hornet, our protagonist, gets captured and is brought to Pharloom. When she escapes her captors, your main objective becomes reaching the citadel. You go through difficult boss battles and arenas, meet many characters like a caravan of flea characters and Shakra the map maker, and can complete quests for the towns you come across. In comparison to Hollow Knight, Silksong gives the player more choice, allowing Hornet to build bonds with characters and dictate what will happen in the acts of the game.

The game as a whole was received very well by both Hollow Knight community members and newcomers to the series. The positive aspects of the game being heavily related to its intricate and well thought out level/world design. There are 32 distinct areas on the map that the player gets to explore as they progress through the game, each feeling unique to one another. With the new movement of Silksong, these areas have their own ways to progress.

Great examples of this are in an area called the Hunters March, which

utilizes the pogo mechanic so that you can avoid spikes that fill the area. Another example is in an area called Mount Fay that uses the claw line mechanic to have you scale the mountain while avoiding being frozen. Each area brings its own quirks to the game that makes it feel fleshed out and nicely done. Adding onto that each area has multiple bosses that complement their themes, sometimes catching the player off guard.

With every good game, there also comes issues that the players have with them. With Silksong, the biggest problem people have had was the backtracking. Because of the number of bosses that the game has, it makes sense that dying is very common, even for seasoned players. In Silksong, you can heal yourself and save when you sit on a bench, which also respawns enemies. Though these benches are riddled through Pharloom, they may not be close to the arena or boss that you are trying to fight, and having to backtrack through treacherous areas to collect your things and fight a boss can be daunting and quickly become an annoyance. In the boss fight for Groat the Great, the runback takes anywhere from three to five minutes, while you also risk dying again during it. While not every boss fight has this issue, it is still a mildly annoying part of the game. Though runbacks are very common in Metroidvanias and not just an issue within Silksong.

With the Hollow Knight: Silksong DLC Sea of Sorrow rapidly approaching in 2026, it’s clear that even with the difficult bosses and bad runback, Silksong is a well-crafted and good game. This holds true with Silksong receiving the title of 2025 game of the year during the Steam game awards.

‘Pluribus,’ shades of gray

Bryce Bicknell reporter

“Pluribus” is a show that does nearly everything correctly. It will be revered like Vince Gilligan’s other shows (“Breaking Bad” and “Better Call Saul”). It is deeply human, and that might be the best part. In this review, there will be spoilers for the first episode and other minor plot points.

The show stars Rhea Seahorn, playing romance novelist Carol Sturka, trying to navigate a world now run by a hive mind called the Others. The hive mind was created in a lab after scientists discovered coding for a virus being projected from space. They then created the virus, testing it on rats before a human got infected, eventually spreading to all but 13 people in the world. The Others are peaceful and meet almost any demand the immune make, but their end goal is to have the remaining 13 immune join the rest of the human race. Carol is seemingly the only person opposed to such a goal and thus clashes with the hivemind in the form of Zosia played by Karolina Wydra in a love-hate relationship mirroring actual relationships people have. Another character, Manousos Oviedo, played by Carlos-Manuel Vesga, refuses all contact with the Others. Eventually Manousos discovers the existence of Carol via videotapes she sends to the immune, leading him to travel from Paraguay all the way to Albuquerque, New Mexico, in order to help Carol reverse the virus.

The show does a good job showing the negative and positive aspects of the Others. For example, the Others don’t kill, but this also leads them to not pick plants, causing there to be a crisis in the food supply. Everyone is happy, but it’s a result of everyone being basically one person and having all identity and autonomy stripped away from them with no consent. Nearly a billion people died in the so-called “Joining,” the event where the virus was activated. This includes Carol’s manager and wife Helen, adding to why she initially distrusts the Others. The show really is shades of grey and so morally complex. It deals with ideas of identity, choice, and what it means to be human.

The cinematography is wonderful, with almost every shot being beautiful. All the actors give an amazing performance, especially Vesga. The music is mostly good, besides the intro, which isn’t nearly as memorable as that of “Breaking Bad” or “Better Call Saul.”

One of the only problems the show might have is how long it will take for another season. Increasingly, more shows have taken longer and longer gaps with seemingly fewer and fewer episodes. Estimates for a second season release would be in late 2027, two years after the first season. Regardless, “Pluribus” is an amazing show that deserves immense praise. From its visuals to its storytelling, it’s hard to find many flaws. It is available for streaming on AppleTV. Overall “Pluribus” is the best piece of media I have reviewed so far. I would give the show a 9.2 out of 10 for sure.

Chicken Pot Pie

Fatimah Bader, reporter

Cold winter nights call for comfort food, and chicken pot pie is a classic dish that brings warmth to the table. Filled with tender chicken and vegetables in a creamy sauce, this meal is easy to prepare and perfect for staying in on frigid evenings.

Ingredients (serves 4–6):
2 cups cooked chicken, shredded or diced
1 cup frozen peas and carrots
1 cup diced potatoes (pre-boiled until soft)
1/3 cup butter
1/3 cup flour
1 cups chicken broth
1/2 cup milk
Salt and pepper to taste
1 teaspoon dried thyme or parsley
2 refrigerated pie crusts

Directions:
Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. In a saucepan over medium heat, melt butter and stir in flour to form a thick paste. Slowly whisk in chicken broth and milk, stirring until the sauce becomes smooth and creamy. Season with salt, pepper, and thyme.

Add chicken, peas, carrots and potatoes to the sauce and stir until well combined. Pour the filling into a pie dish lined with one crust. Cover with the second crust, seal the edges and cut small slits in the top to release steam.

Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown. Let cool slightly before serving.

This comforting dish pairs well with a simple green salad and is sure to warm you up after a long day in the cold.



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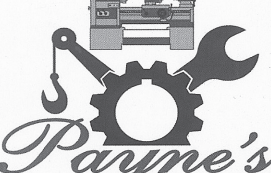
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A Science Guy and a Shark visit Campus

Lauryn Gilfillan reporter

Pittsburg State students and community members are being given the opportunity to hear from two well-known public figures this spring as a part of the ongoing “Scott Speaker Series,” where events are focused on science, entrepreneurship, and education. Science educator Bill Nye seeks to inform students on space and our own environment; Businessman Daymond John plans to give advice to students who hope to succeed as he has.

Bill Nye, a scientist and television character, will come to the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts on April 9 at 7 p.m. Nye is a widely recognized host of the television series “Bill Nye the Science Guy,” which helped to introduce concepts of science to generations of students through simple explanations and humor. The show remains a point of reference for many college students who watched it during their early years.

Nye currently serves as the CEO of the Planetary Society, one of the world’s largest non-governmental space organizations. He also hosts the podcast “Science Rules! With Bill Nye,” and “The End is Nye” on Peacock. Nye’s presentation in the spring will address a range of topics including climate change, science education, planetary science, and environmental problems.

Students have shared some of their reactions to Nye’s upcoming appearance. Tyne Ellis, a freshman majoring in business finance, expressed that Nye visiting could influence students who are interested in science fields.

“I think it’s really good because it can help students who look up to him,” Ellis said. “Maybe he can push them to pursue their dreams in science. I mean come on now, it’s Bill Nye; who wouldn’t want to go see him? Almost all of us grew up watching him.”

Nic Stewart, a sophomore majoring in wood manufacturing, voiced that Nye will be an interesting person to host on campus.

“I think that would be pretty cool; I mean he’s a cool one to have on campus.”

Another student had more reserved opinions. Ariel Suppenbach, a freshman majoring in forensic psychology, said she was unsure how she felt about the event because it could shift students’ views on Nye.

“I don’t know, it’s going to be fun of course, but I feel like we would be suspicious of him if we learned more about his opinions on issues.”

Following Nye’s presentation, Daymond John, an entrepreneur and Shark Tank investor, will speak on May 8 at 7 p.m., at the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts as well.

John is a self-created bestselling author, businessman, and investor on ABC’s business reality television show “Shark Tank.” He is often referred to as “The People’s Shark,” since he started his own apparel company named FUBU with \$40 and a “rise and grind mentality.” Yet he also connects with everyday businesses and focuses on their marketing and branding to help them succeed.



Bill Nye | Photo courtesy of Pittsburg State Marketing Communications

John is well known for his work in guerilla marketing as well as blending fashion, music, and culture into his approaches. He has gained more recognition for his use of social media over the years, using pop culture trends to stay relevant. During his Pitt State presentation, Johns plans to share his strategies that relate to sales growth, negotiation, leadership, and team development, while advising students, business leaders and entrepreneurs.

Ellis voices that John’s experience could be very beneficial for students who are pursuing business degrees.

“I think it can inspire people who want to go into business,” Ellis said. “And especially with how much he’s seen, he can give good advice to them.”

Suppenbach said that even though she was not familiar with John before learning about the event, she still sees the potential value in him coming to Pitt.

“It could be a good space for people who want to be entrepreneurs too,” she said. “Not just listening to advice but also meeting others with the same mindset.”

Even though Stewart’s opinion on John was limited, he still thought it could be an advantageous event for anyone.

“It can be a good one for people who are aspiring to be like him.” Stewart said. “But anyone that goes could still learn something from it.”

Both speakers are a part of the “Scott Speaker Series,” which brings a variety of speakers to campus throughout the school year. These events help to offer students the chance to hear perspectives from familiar figures whose careers span into very different fields, while addressing important topics relevant to student interests like career development, future opportunities, and education.



John Daymond | Photo courtesy of Pittsburg State Marketing Communications

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Gorillas sweep first track competition

Curtis Meyer reporter



Sophomore and human resource development major Maggie Salsbury falls on the landing pad during the high jump event. | Photo by Mark Ziegler

After a very successful run last year, which saw the men’s team taking home the gold as National Champions and the women’s finishing third overall in the country, the Gorillas track and field team look poised to continue their reign as the team to beat in the country this year. A dominant showing by the Gorillas at the Rumble in the Jungle Invitational has shown that Pitt State is looking to keep the title they earned last season.

The Gorillas ended up taking first place in both the men’s and women’s competitions, handily beating the second-place teams. The men’s team was good for 205 points overall, with nine individual victories, while Missouri Southern came in a distant second place with 122 points. Washburn University came in third with 67.5 points. The women’s side ended up with 221.5 points, along with eight individual victories. Second-place Missouri Southern had only 79 points, while third place Washburn ended with 78 points.

Redshirt junior Dylan Sprecker and juniors Paige Mullen and Caden Williams each established new Pitt State records. Sprecker sprinted to a winning time of 1 minute, 49.68 seconds in the men’s 800 meters, while Mullen clocked a winning time of

9:35.76 in the women’s 3,000 meters. Williams registered a fast time of 1:10.00 in the men’s 600-yard run.

Senior Jack Haukap set a new meet record in winning the men’s weight throw (65-1), while both Pitt State 4x400m relay squads also clocked meet record times. The men’s relay of all juniors, Logan Davis, Kavar Williams, Caden Williams, and Nate Watson, won their race in 3:08.95. Meanwhile, the women’s relay of junior Ala’Jah Brooks, freshman Piper Hula, senior Kinleigh Hall, and senior Isabel Abdouch posted a winning time of 3:45.03.

Additional men’s event winners included: freshman Xavier Byers, high jump (7-0.75); sophomore Isaiah Webster, triple jump (49-8.5); junior Tyrone Jackson, 60-meter hurdles (7.93); and redshirt freshman Griouard Weddington, 60 meters (6.69) & 200 meters (21.39).

Additional women’s event winners included: sophomore Bethany Umbarger, high jump (5-8.5); redshirt senior Isabelle Peters, pole vault (13-9.75); redshirt senior Blakelee Winn, long jump (19-7.75) & 60m hurdles (8.55); sophomore Lily Brown, triple jump (40-3.5); freshmen Jakayla Morgan, 600y (1:23.75).

The Pitt State men also got second place finishes by junior Albert House in the 60m hurdles (8.07) and junior Nate Watson in the 400 meters (47.28). The Pitt State women registered six second-place marks: senior Rachel Wilson, high jump (5-8.5); junior Jazmine Williamson, long jump (19-4); freshman Alexa Binkley, triple jump (37-6.5); sophomore Kayvon Nubine, 60m hurdles (8.55); Hula, 600y (1:23.75); and sophomore Phoebe Fletcher, 800m (2:19.49).

With this dominant performance by both the men’s and womens teams, it’s safe to say that the Gorillas are focused and ready to defend their national title and strive for the national championships. Pitt State has been dominant, with the men having won six titles in the last seven seasons. The women’s team took home first place last year in the indoor championship, and third in the outdoor competition, so both teams have experience on the biggest stages of competitions. Both teams will return to action this Saturday when the Gorillas host the Pittsburg State Invitational.



Junior and exercise science major Kyra Heald readies herself to hop over the bar in the high jump event. | Photo by Mark Ziegler



Freshman Jacob Johnson prepares to make contact with the sand during the long jump event. | Photo by Mark Ziegler



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Pitt State student turns love for art into a business

Mark Ziegler reporter

All students at Pittsburg State have talents and interests beyond what classes they take. Some are musically inclined, some have a passion for video games, and others love all the things on this earth. For Quincey Turner, a sophomore majoring in marketing and management, her love of art was something that she was able to turn into a business.

Hailing from Bartlesville, an Oklahoman city about two hours away from Pittsburg and about an hour away from Tulsa, Turner is the owner of Quincey Turner Studio, where she creates pieces of art, mainly done with colored pencils or oil, and sells them. She has had her own booth at many art festivals over the past three years, including shows in Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Texas, and she’s hoping to visit more shows.

“I’ve been doing art since I was old enough to hold a pencil. I would say that my dad was the biggest encouragement in pursuing art and encouraged me to

practice and never be intimidated,” Turner commented when asked about the start to her artistic journey. Aside from his words of wisdom, Turner’s father also bought her books about art and ignited her dream of being a professional artist when he took her to a famous art show in Oklahoma City.

She also brought up her middle school art teacher as someone who helped her in her journey, being someone who helped give Turner confidence when she needed it the most. Turner also views artists like Carol Marine, Teddy Parker, and Jeff Weir as inspirations to her. In order to fully bring Quincey Turner Studio to life, she took two gap years before coming to Pittsburg State.

Being at Pittsburg State has taught Turner how to truly run her business the best she can. “I’ve realized after taking some basic business classes, such as financial accounting, that there is a method to keeping the books, rather than my thrown-together method of just jotting stuff down.” While she already felt like she had a good grip on expenses and accounting during

her gap years, being at Pittsburg State has helped her feel more organized and better equipped to handle accounting for her business.

As is the case with any college student, however, Turner’s time is taken up with other activities. Aside from classes, her business, and her personal life, Turner is also a member of Pitt State’s track and field team, where she competes in the women’s pole vault event. As such, college level athletics has accounted for a lot of her time, meaning some adjustments have had to be made to her business. Not being able to attend as many art shows and needing to find free days to present amongst her schedule has posed a challenge for her the client base she’s established in Edmond, Tulsa, and Oklahoma City during their April and May shows.

However, in the face of these challenges, Turner has her eyes on the future, embraces the challenges with open arms, and is eager to expand her business, wherever it takes her.

Secretary Kristi Noem faces rising calls for her firing or impeachment

Lisa Mascaro AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — A groundswell of voices have come to the same conclusion: Kristi Noem must go.

From Democratic Party leaders to the nation’s leading advocacy organizations to even the most centrist lawmakers in Congress, the calls are mounting for the Homeland Security secretary to step aside after the shooting deaths in Minneapolis of two people who protested deportation policy. At a defining moment in her tenure, few Republicans are rising to Noem’s defense.

“The country is disgusted by what the Department of Homeland Security has done,” top House Democratic Reps. Hakeem Jeffries of New York, Katherine Clark of Massachusetts and Pete Aguilar of California said in a joint statement.

“Kristi Noem should be fired immediately,” the Democrats said, “or we will commence impeachment proceedings in the House of Representatives.”

Republicans and Democrats call for Noem to step down

What started as sharp criticism of the Homeland Security secretary, and a longshot move by Democratic lawmakers signing onto impeachment legislation in the Republican-controlled House, has morphed into an inflection point for Noem, who has been the high-profile face of the Trump administration’s immigration enforcement regime.

Noem’s brash leadership style and remarks in the aftermath of the shooting deaths of Alex Pretti and Renee Good — in which she suggested Pretti “attacked” officers and portrayed the events leading up to Good’s shooting an “act of domestic terrorism” — have been seen as doing irreparable damage, as events on the ground disputed her account. Her alliance with Border Patrol chief Greg Bovino, who was recalled from the Minnesota operation Monday as border czar Tom Homan took the lead, has left her isolated on Capitol Hill

“What she’s done in Minnesota should be disqualifying. She should be out of a job,” said Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C.

“I think the President needs to look at who he has in place as a secretary of Homeland Security,” said Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska. “It probably is time for her to step down.”

Trump stands by Noem and praises her work

President Donald Trump defended Noem on Wednesday at



Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem speaks during a news conference at Federal Emergency Management Agency headquarters, Saturday, Jan. 24, 2026, in Washington. | Photo by Julia Demaree Nikhinson

multiple junctures, strongly indicating her job does not appear to be in immediate jeopardy.

Asked by reporters as he left the White House on Tuesday for a trip to Iowa whether Noem is going to step down, Trump had a one-word answer: “No.”

Pressed later during an interview on Fox News if he had confidence in Noem, the president said, “I do.”

“Who closed up the border? She did,” Trump said, “with Tom Homan, with the whole group. I mean, they’ve closed up the border. The border is a tremendous success.”

As Democrats in Congress threaten to shut down the government as they demand restrictions on Trump’s mass deportation agenda, Noem’s future at the department faces serious questions and concerns.

The Republican leadership of the House and Senate committees that oversee Homeland Security have demanded that department officials appear before their panels to answer for the operations that have stunned the nation with their sheer force — including images of children, including a 5-year-old, being plucked from families.

“Obviously this is an inflection point and an opportunity to evaluate and to really assess the policies and procedures and how they are being implemented and put into practice,” said Senate Majority Leader John Thune, a Republican from South Dakota, where Noem had been the state’s House representative and governor before joining the administration.

Asked about his own confidence in Noem’s leadership, Thune said, “That’s the president’s judgment call to make.”

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer called Noem a “liar” and said she must be fired.

The fight over funding

Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin said in a statement that DHS enforces the laws from Congress, and if lawmakers don’t like those laws, they should change them.

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Feb. 8 marks Super Bowl LX, where the New England Patriots and the Seattle Seahawks are set to clash in a Super Bowl rematch almost 10 years in the making, and along with it will come a new wave of commercials. Names like Totino's, Avocados from Mexico, and Skittles are just a few of the brands you can expect to see going on the air. Will these new commercials go down in history with some of the greats listed in this article? Will they fumble and be inducted into the Hall of Shame? Only time and the people's voices will tell.

When service finally came back and Verizon apologized, I felt relieved. But I also felt changed by the experience. That day reminded me how fragile our connection to the world really is and how quickly it can disappear. When the signal went silent, the world felt smaller. And for a little while, much lonelier.

Man arrested in the attack on Ilhan Omar has a criminal history and made pro-Trump posts

MICHAEL BIESECKER and LAURA BARGFELD Associated Press MINNEAPOLIS

The man who squirted an unknown substance on Democratic U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar at a town hall in Minneapolis has a criminal history and has made online posts supportive of President Donald Trump.

Anthony Kazmierczak, 55, was convicted of felony auto theft in 1989, has been arrested multiple times for driving under the influence, and has had numerous traffic citations, Minnesota court records show. There are also indications he has had significant financial problems, including two bankruptcy filings.

Police say Kazmierczak used a syringe to squirt liquid on Omar during Tuesday’s event after she called for the abolishment of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the firing or impeachment of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem following the fatal shootings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti. Officers immediately tackled and arrested Kazmierczak, who was jailed on a preliminary third-degree assault charge, police spokesperson Trevor Folke said.

Photos of the syringe, which fell when he was tackled, showed what appeared to be a light-brown liquid inside. Authorities haven’t yet publicly identified the substance.

After the attack, there was a strong, vinegarlike smell in the room, according to an Associated Press journalist who was there. Forensic scientists were called in, but none of the roughly 100 people who were there had a noticeable physical reaction to the substance.

Omar continued speaking for about 25 minutes after Kazmierczak was ushered out, saying she wouldn’t be intimidated. While leaving, she said she felt a little flustered but wasn’t hurt, and that she was going to be screened by a medical team.

She later posted on X: “I’m ok. I’m a survivor so this small agitator isn’t going to intimidate me from doing my work. I don’t let bullies win.”

A Trump supporter
Kazmierczak hadn’t been formally charged or scheduled for an initial court appearance as of Wednesday morning. The Hennepin County Attorney’s Office has until Thursday to charge him but could seek an extension. A spokesperson for the prosecutor’s

office didn’t immediately return a call seeking further information.

It isn’t clear if Kazmierczak has a lawyer who could speak on his behalf. The county’s chief public defender, Michael Berger, said the case hasn’t been assigned to his office.

In social media posts, Kazmierczak described himself as a former network engineer who lives in Minneapolis. Among other things, he made comments critical of former President Joe Biden and referred to Democrats as “angry and liars.”

“Trump wants the US is stronger and more prosperous,” Kazmierczak wrote. “Stop other countries from stealing from us. Bring back the fear that enemies back away from and gain respect that If anyone threatens ourselves or friends we will (expletive) them up.”

In another post, Kazmierczak asked, “When will descendants of slaves pay restitution to Union soldiers families for freeing them/dying for them, and not sending them back to Africa?”

Following the shooting of conservative activist Charlie Kirk in September, Kazmierczak for a time changed his profile picture on Facebook to an AP photo of Trump embracing the widow, Erika Kirk.

Often at odds with the president
Omar, a progressive, has been a frequent target of Trump’s barbs since she joined Congress in 2019.

That year, Trump urged Omar and three other freshmen congresswomen of color known as “the squad” to “go back “to their countries if they wanted to criticize the U.S. Omar was the only one of the four born outside of the U.S., having immigrated to the country as a child when her family fled violence in Somalia.

Trump stepped up his criticism of Omar in recent months as he turned his focus on the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, which is home to about 84,000 people of Somali descent — nearly a third of the Somalis living in the U.S. During a Cabinet meeting in December, he referred to her as “garbage.” And he has linked the Twin Cities immigration crackdown to a series of fraud cases

involving government programs in which most of the defendants have roots in the East African country.

The White House did not respond to a Tuesday message seeking comment. But, when asked about the attack Tuesday night, he told ABC News that he hadn’t watched the footage and accused her of staging the attack. “She probably had herself sprayed, knowing her,” Trump said.

Earlier Tuesday, the president criticized Omar as he spoke to a crowd in Iowa, saying his administration would only let in immigrants who “can show that they love our country.”

“They have to be proud, not like Ilhan Omar,” he said, drawing loud boos at the mention of her name.

He added: “She comes from a country that’s a disaster. So probably, it’s considered, I think — it’s not even a country.”

Lawmakers face rising threats
The attack came days after a man was arrested in Utah for allegedly punching U.S. Rep. Maxwell Frost, a Democrat from Florida, in the face during the Sundance Film Festival and saying Trump was going to deport him.

Threats against members of Congress have increased in recent years, peaking in 2021 following the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol before dipping slightly only to climb again, according to the most recent figures from the U.S. Capitol Police.

Following Tuesday’s attack on Omar, U.S. Capitol Police said in a statement that the agency was “working with our federal partners to see this man faces the most serious charges possible to deter this kind of violence in our society.”

Lawmakers have discussed the impact of the threatening political climate on their ability to hold town halls and public events, with some even citing it in their decisions not to seek reelection.

Biesecker reported from Washington. Associated Press reporter R.J. Rico in Atlanta contributed.

Putin hosts Syria’s interim leader for talks, with Russian military bases on the agenda

VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV Associated Press MOSCOW

Syria’s interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa visited Moscow on Wednesday for the second time in less than four months, and Russian President Vladimir Putin emphasized his readiness to help the country rebuild its war-battered economy. “I know that there is a lot that’s necessary to restore in Syria, and our economic operators, including the construction sector, are ready for this joint work,” Putin said. The talks also were expected to focus on the future of Russian military bases in Syria, a key foothold for Moscow in the Mediterranean. Al-Sharaa, who first visited Russia in October, thanked Putin for helping to stabilize Syria. He led a swift rebel offensive in December 2024 that ousted former Syrian President Bashar Assad, who enjoyed Moscow’s support for years as his government fought a devastating civil war. Russia, which in recent years has been focused on the fighting in Ukraine and kept only a small military contingent in Syria, didn’t try to counter the rebel offensive. It gave asylum to Assad and his family after he fled the country. The Russian military recently has begun pulling out from a base in northeastern Syria

in an area still controlled by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces after the group lost most of its territory in an offensive by government forces. Putin told al-Sharaa that Moscow always supported Syria’s integrity and congratulated him on reclaiming control over the area, describing it as a “very important step.” “You know that we always stood for the restoration of Syria’s territorial integrity, and we support all your efforts in this direction,” Putin said. In the meeting, al-Sharaa emphasized the importance of Russia’s role in supporting Syria’s unity and stability, Syria’s SANA state news agency reported. He noted that in 2025, Syria had overcome major challenges, the latest of which was the reunification of its territories, and he expressed hope for a transition to stability and peace, it added. Fighting broke out early this month between the SDF and government forces after negotiations over a deal to merge broke down. A ceasefire is now in place and has been largely holding. After the expiration of a four-day truce Saturday, the sides announced the ceasefire had been extended by another 15 days. Despite having been on

opposite sides from Moscow during the civil war, the interim government in Damascus has signaled readiness to develop ties in apparent hopes that Russia could help rebuild the war-shattered country and offer a way to diversify its foreign policy. For the Kremlin, it’s essential to keep its naval and air bases on Syria’s coast, the only such outposts outside the former Soviet Union that are crucial for maintaining Russia’s military presence in the Mediterranean. Russian authorities have voiced hope for negotiating a deal to maintain the Hmeimim air base and the naval outpost in Tartus. Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov and military intelligence chief Adm. Igor Kostyukov were among senior officials who took part in Wednesday’s Kremlin talks. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said ahead of the meeting that “all issues related to our military’s presence in Syria will be discussed in the talks.” He refused to comment on reports that Syria’s interim government had pushed for Assad’s extradition. Abby Sewell in Beirut contributed.

Noem from page 5

“Too many politicians would rather defend criminals and attack the men and women who are enforcing our laws,” McLaughlin said. “It’s time they focus on protecting the American people, the work this Department is doing every day under Secretary Noem’s leadership.”

The ability of Congress to restrict Homeland Security funding is limited, in large part because the GOP majority already essentially doubled department funding under Trump’s big tax breaks and spending cuts law.

Instead, Democrats are seeking to impose restraints on Border Patrol and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement operations as part of a routine annual funding package for Homeland, Defense, Health and other departments. Without action this week, those agencies would head toward a shutdown.

To be sure, Homeland Security still has strong defenders in the Congress.

The conservative House Freedom Caucus said Tuesday in a letter to Trump that he should invoke the Insurrection Act, if needed, to quell protests. The group said it would be “ready to take all steps necessary” to keep funds flowing for Trump’s immigration enforcement and removal operations.

On the job for a year, Noem has clashed at times with lawmakers on Capitol Hill, as Republicans and Democrats have sought greater oversight and accounting of the department’s spending and operations.

Noem has kept a low profile since the Saturday press conference following Pretti’s death, though she appeared Sunday on Fox News. She doubled down in that interview on criticism of Minnesota officials, but also expressed compassion for Pretti’s family.

“It grieves me to think about what his family is going through but it also grieves me what’s happening to these law enforcement officers every day out in the streets with the violence they face,” she said.

Once rare, impeachments now more common
Impeachment, once a far-flung tool brandished against administration officials, has become increasingly commonplace.

Two years ago, the Republican-led House impeached another Homeland Security secretary, Alejandro Mayorkas, in protest over the then-Biden administration’s border security and immigration policies that allowed millions of immigrants and asylum seekers to enter the U.S. The Senate dismissed the charges.

On Tuesday, Maryland Rep. Jamie Raskin, the top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, said if the Republican chairman of the panel, Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio, does not launch an impeachment probe, he would.

Raskin said he would work with the top Democrats on the Homeland Security and Oversight committees to immediately launch an impeachment inquiry related to the Minnesota deaths and other “lawlessness and corruption that may involve treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanors.”

More than 160 House Democrats have signed on to an impeachment resolution from Rep. Robin Kelly, D-Ill.



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Kelce-Besse Press Tour



Dr. Paul Grimes, dean of the Kelce Business College, speaks with members of the press during the tour on Broadway, Jan. 23. He discussed the vision, progress, and community impact of the new business college. | Photo credit Kaylee Dillow



An upper-level view of the Kelce Business College lobby on Broadway, showcased during the press tour on Jan. 23. The perspective highlights the scale and progress of the new central gathering space. | Photo credit Kaylee Dillow



Dr. Paul Grimes, dean of the Kelce Business College, leads a tour of the new business college on Broadway during the Jan. 23 press event. He guided attendees through the developing spaces and shared the vision for the college’s future. | Photo credit Kaylee Dillow



A look at the future student snack bar inside the Kelce Business College on Broadway, toured during the press event Friday, Jan. 23. The space is currently seeking a vendor to bring convenient food options to students. | Photo credit Kaylee Dillow



Community leaders and media toured the Kelce Business College on Downtown Broad last Friday, the 23rd, getting a first look at the progress of the new lobby space. The developing entrance highlights the college’s vision for a modern, welcoming hub in the heart of downtown. | Photo credit Kaylee Dillow