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HBO's 'Thrones' spinoff, 'A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms,' is more muddy than magical.

In today's paper **SEVEN:** 'The Beauty' takes on beauty standards with lots of body horror. 1C



Philippe Antonello/FX TNS



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The Fresno Bee



Fresno State lecturer back after leave over Kirk comments

BY ROBERT KUWADA rkuwada@fresnobee.com

Barri Brennan, the Fresno State lecturer who was placed on a paid administrative leave after making caustic comments following the killing of conservative political activist Charlie Kirk, was back in the classroom on Tuesday, the second day of instruction in the spring semester.

Brennan taught two classes, both in fundamentals of public communication. "My classes went well, and I look forward to the rest of the semester," she

said, in her only on-the-record comments.

The university confirmed that Brennan was teaching this semester, but declined to comment further on her return to campus or an investigation into comments made prior to the start of a Sept. 10 class that was conducted by the university's office of faculty affairs.

It had released a statement in September following the death of Kirk, who was shot and killed while speaking on a college campus in Utah. A 22-year-old Utah man is alleged to have been the shooter.

"Fresno State is aware of a

video circulating online that appears to record a lecturer making a disturbing comment about the death of Charlie Kirk," it said. "The university has launched an immediate investigation into this incident. We condemn, in the strongest possible terms, any language that celebrates or condones violence. Such remarks are antithetical to our values at Fresno State."

Brennan is under contract at the university through May 31, 2027, and as part-time faculty is represented by the California Faculty Association. Her comments, made after Kirk had

been shot but before news of his death had been confirmed by authorities, were made during an informal, private conversation prior to the start of a class and were secretly recorded. Portions of the discussion were later posted to social media.

"On the surface it looked pretty Draconian what faculty affairs and the administration was doing, but in all honestly, having discussed this with faculty affairs, they were doing what they could to protect her given that she had been doxxed and someone I think at one point tried to break into her house and she was getting death

threats," Andrew Jones, president of the Fresno State chapter of the CFA, said on Tuesday. "We tried to make sure that this died down, and now she's going to be back in the classroom."

Brennan after a brief break had continued to teach a class last fall at Fresno City College.

Upon returning to Fresno State, the lecturer did change the course syllabus to preclude the use of electronic recording devices. The syllabus in the fall did not expressly prohibit their use, but said they should be turned off and put away prior to the start of class, unless the instructor gives permission to use them.

In an op-ed in The Fresno Bee, Brennan said the illegal recording sullied the academic classroom experience for students and faculty.

"I will not defend what I said

SEE LECTURER, 2A

Hospital wage theft probe 'on pause' amid court proceedings

BY ERIK GALICIA egalicia@fresnobee.com

More than 18 months after announcing he would investigate Valley Children's Hospital for wage theft, Fresno City Attorney Andrew Janz says the probe is "on pause" while the hospital's most recent employee wage theft lawsuit plays out in court.

In a recent interview with The Fresno Bee, Janz said he will "defer" to Brian Whelan, the attorney representing a nurse who sued Valley Children's in Madera County Superior Court for wage theft in June 2024. Janz said he believes Whelan is working out a potential settlement between the employees and the hospital but added he "can't speak" to his own investigation of the hospital any further.

SEE WAGE THEFT, 2A



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Passengers walk through the Concourse B gallery, part of Fresno Yosemite International's \$150 million terminal expansion project.

Fresno airport breaks passenger record for fifth year in a row

BY LILIANA FANNIN lfannin@fresnobee.com

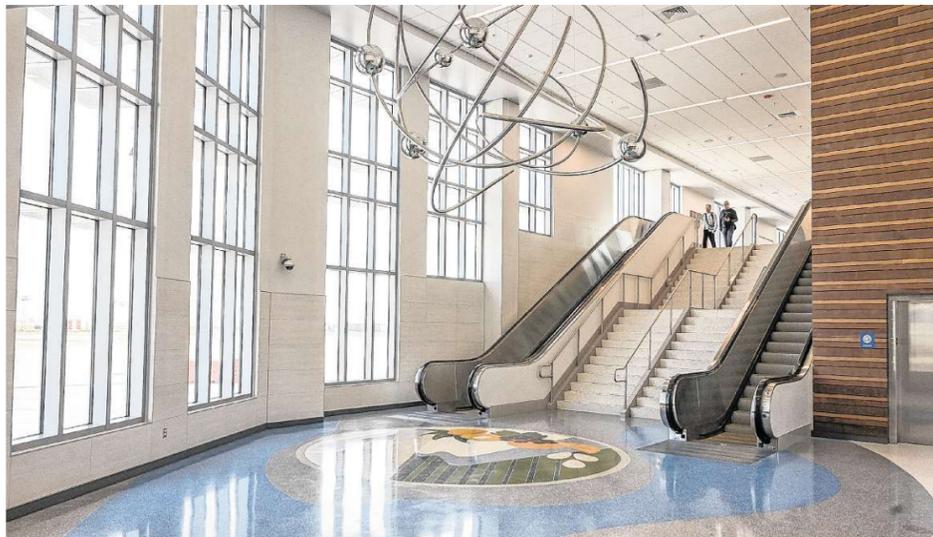
For the fifth year in a row, Fresno Yosemite International Airport has broken its own record for passengers flying in and out of the airport.

In 2025, the region's airport served more than 2.7 million travelers, a 2.97% increase over the total in 2024, airport officials said Tuesday.

"The continued growth in passenger traffic at Fresno Yosemite International Airport (FAT) reflects our airline partners' confidence in the region's strong demand for air travel," said Francisco Partida, interim director of aviation. "As more travelers choose to fly Fresno and fill seats, airlines recognize the need to expand service to meet this growing demand. This growth demonstrates FAT's emergence as a dynamic travel hub."

In 2020, when the coronavirus pandemic suppressed airline travel, flights hit an all-time low of just under 1 million, The Bee reported.

Since then, FAT has seen a



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An aerial art sculpture and floor tile display art at the entrance to the new Concourse B at Fresno Yosemite International Airport.

steady increase in travelers. The number of arriving and departing travelers surpassed 2 million for the first time in 2022, hit 2.4 million in 2023 and approached 2.7 million in 2024.

The announcement of FAT's most recent record-breaking year comes just one month after the opening of its \$150 million new terminal expansion, the largest expansion in the airport 80-year history.

The project was aimed at delivering "an enhanced travel experience for passengers flying through FAT," the airport said in a Dec. 19 news release.

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