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KYLE GREEN
For The Idaho Statesman

Idaho Statesman

Idaho state employee fired for Charlie Kirk posts speaks out

BY ROSE EVANS AND SHANNON TYLER
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An Idaho Labor Department employee was fired following online comments he made regarding conservative activist

Charlie Kirk's death in a shooting Wednesday at Utah Valley University.

The now former employee, 23-year-old David Berriochoa, told the Idaho Statesman that he was terminated from the department's Human Rights Commission on Friday morning after

screenshots of his comments — and some of his personal information — were spread widely online. Online posts, including one shared by the Idaho Freedom Foundation, a far-right think tank, denounced Berriochoa and prompted calls to the Department of Labor and

even former employers and educators of Berriochoa.

Berriochoa admitted that his comments, which implied that Kirk was in hell, were "divisive and vitriolic" but defended his First Amendment right, especially in light of recent backlash others have received over com-

ments about the shooting. When he saw social media posts circulating about him, instead of retreating — or apologizing — Berriochoa decided to go back online.

"I was fired from my state job for a comment on Instagram," he said in a post on Reddit on Friday morning. "Ask me anything."

Reddit users quickly chimed in with questions about the content of the comments, whether he was sorry, and if he had contacted an attorney.

SEE EMPLOYEE, 4A



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Janet Gurrola, manager, holds a tray of Dubai chocolate donuts at the popular bakery.

La Esperanza Market blends tamales with TikTok trends

BY CAROLYN KOMATSOULIS
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The family behind La Esperanza Market is always reinventing the business.

When the store first opened in 2006 in a 1,200-square-foot space in Caldwell, now-Manager Janet Gurrola was just 9 years old. Her job was to make tamales, which the store is known for. She remembers going out with her family to put flyers on every car they could

find at local churches and Walmart. Back then, the store was La Esperanza Bakery.

"That's not very common anymore," Gurrola said, sitting at one of the tables where customers can eat their meals.

In the two decades since, the family hasn't stopped hustling. Gurrola's parents still own the store. But now, the smell of bread and the sound of cooks chopping vegetables fill the air at their 6,000-square-foot space on Caldwell Boulevard in Nampa. They've gone from six



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One of La Esperanza's more popular treats uses Dubai chocolate on top of fresh strawberries.

employees to 22, most of whom are full-time.

More Colombian people live in Idaho than ever before, so

the family added some Colombian products to sell. The

SEE BAKERY, 2A

Judge dismisses whistleblower suit against Idaho AG

BY KYLE PFANNENSTIEL
Idaho Capital Sun

An Idaho judge dismissed a whistleblower lawsuit against the Idaho Attorney General's Office by a fired attorney, preventing the case from a jury trial.

Idaho 4th District Judge Jonathan Medema on Friday granted summary judgement in favor of the Attorney General's Office in the lawsuit brought by former deputy attorney general Daphne Huang, who had represented the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare.

Huang's lawsuit focused on several alleged conflicts between Idaho Attorney General Raúl Labrador with the state health agency, including his investigation into millions of dollars of child care grants the agency distributed.

"The court finds that viewing the evidence in the record in the light most favorable to Plaintiff, no rational juror could find Plaintiff had proven any of her claims," the judge ruled.

The ruling, in response to the Attorney General's Office's request to dismiss the lawsuit on a motion for summary judgement, came before the case was set for a two-week jury trial in October.

Her lawsuit was filed in September 2023 under the state's whistleblower law, called Idaho's Protection of Public Employees Act. The Attorney General's Office has argued Huang was fired for misconduct — not whistleblowing.

In a statement Monday, Labrador said he will "continue protecting Idaho families and ensuring government accountability."

SEE LAWSUIT, 3A



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