



Scientists explore maggot DNA for forensic accuracy

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Courier News

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‘If I go back, maybe they will kill us’



Afghan refugees arrive at Washington Dulles International Airport in Northern Virginia on Aug. 31, 2021. The refugees evacuated after the U.S. military withdrew from Afghanistan and its capital, Kabul, fell to the Taliban.

ANNA MONEYMAKER/GETTY IMAGES

Afghans in state fear forced return

Hannan Adely

NorthJersey.com

USA TODAY NETWORK – NEW JERSEY

When Akbari arrived in the United States from Afghanistan seven months ago, he carried with him the hope that his two young sons would finally grow up safe, educated and free.

Today, as the Trump administration halts asylum decisions for Afghans and signals that green cards and past refu-

gee approvals may be reexamined, he fears everything could be taken away.

The former video editor and sports-caster — he asked to use only his nickname because of a pending immigration case — fled his home in the wake of the United States’ abrupt withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, ending a war that spanned two decades. Taliban foot soldiers had threatened him at the his job at a television station, he said, and he faced risk as part of the persecuted Hazara ethnic group.

“The United States gave us the

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About 190,000 Afghans were admitted into the United States since August 2021, according to the DHS. They include people who faced persecution or were in danger because they worked for the United States and its allies in Afghanistan.

RWJUH Somerset foundation names chairman

MyCentralJersey.com

USA TODAY NETWORK – NEW JERSEY

Joshua Kalafer has been appointed as chairman of the board of trustees for the Somerset Health Care Foundation.



Kalafer

The foundation serves as the fundraising arm of Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Somerset, an RWJBar-nabas Health facility.

Kalafer is no stranger to charitable efforts, having chaired the Somerset Health Care Foundation Golf Outing from 2013, raising over \$2 million for the hospital’s programs and services.

In 2021, he joined the foundation’s board, and two years later, in 2023, he was named co-vice chairman.

His ties with the hospital date even further back as his father, Steve Kalafer, was an avid supporter of the

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NJ program helps boost teen mental health

Michael L. Diamond

Asbury Park Press

USA TODAY NETWORK – NEW JERSEY

Gabby Suriani was in her junior year of high school when she felt her anxiety begin to rise.

She needed to keep up her grades, excel on her swim team, and have a fun social life. But as she scrolled through Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat, filled with images of her friends and influencers who were having a grand old time, she worried she was falling short.

“I realized to myself one day, ‘I don’t want to feel like this,’” said Suriani, 17, now a senior at Scotch Plains Fanwood

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TEACHING FOR CHANGE READING LIST

Kids’ books show disability in everyday life

Gene Myers

NorthJersey.com

USA TODAY NETWORK – NEW JERSEY

This holiday season, North Jersey families looking for children’s books can find a variety of choices that feature disability as part of everyday life.

Teaching for Change, a nonprofit

that runs the Social Justice Books project, curates a reading list used by educators and librarians aimed at representation.

Highlighting disabilities helps children understand the world around them, supports empathy and gives children with disabilities opportunities to see themselves in stories, according to

Social Justice Books.

Holiday book-buying is in full swing, but these works pass along lessons that are timeless.

Here’s a selection from the list of disability-themed books for children, sorted by reading level.

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