

OSCAR'S PREVIEW

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# Sunday

THE POST-STANDARD

SYRACUSE

## Family, friends and new tactic got a painter out of ICE custody in 21 days



Adelso Bravo, a Syracuse painter, with wife Karen Cisneros and baby Angel. Michelle Breidenbach, mbreidenbach@syracuse.com

**Adelso Bravo asks, 'At the end of the day, who are you really catching?'**

**Michelle Breidenbach and Isabel Melendez-Rivera** *The Post-Standard*

After just 18 days in immigration detention, Adelso Bravo heard the guards call his number: 369.

"You have a court date," he said they told him.

Inside the Batavia immigration center, a court hearing does not mean freedom. Most often, it means either you're getting deported or you're staying put.

Bravo, 39, had spent more than two weeks in a crowded unit with other detainees stuck for months and even more than a year. Still, Bravo said he felt hopeful.

"I knew my family was fighting for me," he said.

Over the next few days, he would find out

how much his wife, advocates and lawyers had done to free him.

He had a big advantage: Years spent learning his rights as an advocate for other immigrants, a smart support system and a recent trend in the federal justice system that gives immigrants a chance to make bond.

Still, he needed the right judge, a pile of money and a buzzer-beater effort. Friends raised more than \$18,000 and collected dozens of support letters from people whose houses he has painted.

Three days later, Bravo hugged his wife and three children in Syracuse.

"It was more than luck," he said. "I'm thankful to God for the people I know because they're the ones who did all the work."

**A THREAT OF VIOLENCE**

Bravo came to Syracuse more than 20 years ago from Guatemala to be with his extended family and to flee a specific threat of violence.

When he was 18 years old, armed men

attacked him and his brother-in-law while they were delivering coffee, he said. The men took everything, including the truck, he said.

The boss blamed Bravo, who was riding along for the first time. If he ever returns to Guatemala, he said, he will have to pay that debt.

"And they don't pay with money there," he said.

In 2006, Bravo walked across the U.S. border and traveled to Syracuse to be with his parents, who were already there. Because he was only 19, he later joined his father's asylum case.

For many years, Bravo said, he thought he was covered by that family case. But when he married Karen Cisneros, he learned that he had to open his own separate asylum case, he said.

In 2023, he said, he started a new case. He said he used the details of that assault in Guatemala as part of his argument that he fears violence in his home country.

For two decades, the U.S. government **SEE ADELSON BRAVO, A6**

INVESTIGATION

## Abandoned kids at Upstate Golisano are attacking nurses

*Getting no medical care, they bring chaos. Pushed to the limit, the hospital ordered martial arts gear.*

**Marnie Eisenstadt**  
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A pediatric nurse at Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital was attacked and knocked unconscious by a 12-year-old last month.

The child, upset by the nurse's decision to take the phone out of his room, followed her out of the room on the hospital's pediatric floor and began punching her. Then he knocked her down and continued beating her until other nurses and staff pulled him off, according to people familiar with the Feb. 8 incident.

The child's outburst was no surprise. He was at the hospital precisely because he was violent.

He was left at the ER by the people caring for him because it was too dangerous for him to be at home and they could find nowhere else to take him, sources told The Post-Standard and syracuse.com.

Upstate Golisano, Syracuse's only pediatric trauma center, has increasingly become a dumping ground for children with serious behavioral and social problems who are often violent, a Post-Standard and syracuse.com investigation shows.

They are boarders, not patients. They receive no medical or psychiatric care when they are there; they are referred to as "social admissions."

They are often there for months; some have been there for more than a year. The annual cost is more than \$1 million.

Now, doctors and nurses at the pediatric hospital are fed up.

In a letter to the hospital administration Feb. 11, the doctors in charge of pediatric medical care asked the administration to stop putting violent children on pediatric medical, surgical and oncology units. They asked the hospital to stop admitting children whose only problems are social and behavioral.

A longtime Upstate pediatric doctor and nurses who have left the hospital spoke to The Post-Standard and syracuse.com about the violence and what they see as the administration's lackluster response. Two of them said they left their jobs at the hospital because of the risk of **SEE UPSTATE GOLISANO, A8**

SYRACUSE

## Residents: Nob Hill was a disaster waiting to happen

*They say City Hall should have done more before the fire.*

**Marnie Eisenstadt**  
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A month ago, Sean Stanyon sat in a Syracuse City Court room and told the judge he feared what would happen in his Nob Hill Apartments building if things continued the way they had been going.

"I'm scared to sleep at night in case there's a fire," he said.

That's exactly what happened early Feb. 28: A fire ripped through Building 3 at Nob Hill, killing one man and leaving at least 50 others, including Stanyon, homeless.

Another man was found dead in a bathroom; his death doesn't appear to be related to the fire.

The evening before, police had been called to the apartment building at least two other times for a melee among about 40



Residents of Nob Hill Apartments wait in line their turn to gather their belongings from inside Building 3 on March 5.

Vince Gasparini, vgasparini@syracuse.com

teens fighting with traffic cones and snow stakes.

The residents of Nob Hill had been telling anyone who would listen that it was not a matter of if, but when, something terrible

would happen.

Weeks before the fire, a housing advocate compared it to the Skyline Apartments. There, it took an elderly resident's brutal death at the hands of a squatter before the city got tough.

Since then, city officials have said they were going to be tougher on landlords, more creative. But as Nob Hill descended into a fatal mess, city officials decided against several options that would have enabled quicker fixes to dangerous problems and swifter action against the out-of-town landlords.

Instead, they chose to file a lawsuit over more than 100 code violations. Then, city lawyers agreed to Nob Hill's requests to delay the case seven times between June and December.

A City Court judge who heard days of testimony from frustrated tenants and the landlord's local representatives cited the failure of the city code enforcement effort.

In a decision one day before the fire, she **SEE NOB HILL, A4**

SU SPORTS



## Meet the new AD

In Bryan Blair, the university appears to be looking for a modern approach to bring in some fresh air. On his social media his lists his credentials: his job, law degree, ex-football player, perhaps most seriously BBQ extraordinaire. **B1**

