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UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Terminated grants total \$40M

The unexpected end of two more programs adds to earlier research cuts

By Kris B. Mamula
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The federal government has unexpectedly ended two more research grants at the University of Pittsburgh, which in one case, upends 16 years of research in two of the city's poorest neighborhoods. The cancellations affect Alzheimer's researcher Ann D. Co-

hen, associate professor of psychiatry, and Tamara Dubowitz, chair of the department of epidemiology at Pitt's School of Public Health and researcher into the social determinants of health in Pittsburgh's Hill District and Homewood neighborhoods since 2010. Their studies were complementary and the women are among the university's most pro-

lific researchers, with a dozen active projects between them and a combined grant value in excess of \$21 million, according to the National Institutes of Health. Cohen was also the recipient of the department of psychiatry's Diversity Equity and Inclusion Award, a term widely reviled by the Trump administration. But the recent cancellation of the

NIH grants will only cost the university \$5.04 million because the awards were spread out over five years and the terminations came in the ending years of projects. Cohen lost total funding of \$3.5 million, which includes unspent money from prior years; Dubowitz's grant was \$1.54 million.

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FAUCI MAY FACE CONTEMPT CHARGE

Senate panel acts after COVID-related hearing

By Eric Tucker
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Senate committee voted along party lines Thursday to hold Anthony Fauci in contempt of Congress over his refusal to answer questions at a hearing on his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, setting up a referral to the Department of Justice for potential investigation over whether the country's longtime top infectious disease official properly exercised his constitutional rights. A department spokesperson confirmed Thursday evening that the department had received the contempt referral, is "reviewing it and will work with the Senate accordingly." The vote approving the contempt resolution came a week after Fauci invoked his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination more than 100 times when he appeared before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, an episode that raised fresh legal questions about the ability of Congress to compel testimony from a previously pardoned witness. Republican Sen. Rand Paul, of Kentucky, the committee chairman who pressed for the contempt finding, said that constitutional protection did not apply because Fauci last year received a pardon from Democratic President Joe Biden and thus did not have to worry about the threat of prosecution. "Dr. Fauci faced no risk of federal prosecution," Paul said at the outset of Thursday's vote. "All he had to do was tell the truth."

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Bill Peduto, left, and Corey O'Connor, former and current mayor of Pittsburgh, respectively, talk during the Strong Cities Network's annual mayoral retreat Thursday at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in Highland Park.

TRUMP ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT, TWO YEARS LATER

'We are the solution'

Mayors gather in Pittsburgh to talk about political violence

By Hallie Lauer
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The attempted assassination of Donald Trump in Butler County has left a long shadow on the community. Even two years later, Butler Mayor Bob Dandoy said the events of July 13, 2024, still cloud his efforts to improve the town of about 13,000 people. "I'm trying to work on things like, how do I feed the people of my community? How do I make sure they're safe? How do I make sure

they have affordable housing? And this keeps getting in the way," Dandoy said. The shooting, which occurred during an outdoor campaign rally at the Butler Farm Show grounds technically happened outside Dandoy's jurisdiction — he governs the city of Butler and the grounds are beyond city limits — but in the hours, days and years that have followed, he became the de facto spokesperson for the event. He also became the punching bag. Dandoy heard from mayors all over the country, and even then-President Joe Biden.

They all had the same message for him. "They told me: 'Watch out. There's going to be so much stigma and negativity,'" he said. "Somehow, everyone had been given carte blanche to be angry at the city of Butler." Immediately, those other leaders were proven correct. The calls and emails and posts on social media started right away, blaming Dandoy for not doing enough to stop the shooting, insulting him and demanding he address the

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Changes ahead for Head Start

Trump aims to overhaul U.S. preschool program

By Moriah Balingit
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's administration said Thursday it plans to overhaul Head Start, tossing out many of the regulations that are the hallmark of the early education program for the nation's poorest children. Officials from the Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees the federally funded preschool program, said the proposed changes would encourage more local decision-making. But the proposal has sparked alarm across the Head Start community, where advocates say it threatens the backbone of the antipoverty initiative. The Associated Press previously reported on the overhaul proposal, which became public Thursday when it was posted online. The public will have 60 days to weigh in on it before it goes into effect, though it could face legal challenges that would delay implementation. Head Start centers serve about 700,000 of the nation's most vulnerable children, including those who are homeless, in foster care or disabled. That wouldn't change under the overhaul. Alex J. Adams, an assistant secretary at Health and Human Services, said the department is hoping to give Head Start centers the flexibility to change the way they operate. That means eliminating most of Head Start's regulations, such as standards for low staff-to-student ratios or requirements to provide services to preschoolers' families.

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Iran seeks to bar U.S. ships amid strait talks



Residents swim as cargo and commercial vessels are anchored in the Strait of Hormuz off Bandar Abbas, Iran, on Thursday.

Bloomberg

Iran will seek to bar U.S. and Israeli ships from the Strait of Hormuz and require compensation from hostile countries before they're allowed to use it, according to local media reports on a proposed Iran-Oman deal to manage the crucial waterway. The agreement has become key to expectations for a reopening of Hormuz and a resumption of energy flows that have been throttled since the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran in February. The text is now under review in Iran's parliament, the semi-official Fars news agency said. Fars reported other details including a proposed ban on cargo related to Israel, and a fee structure covering services like insurance and environmental costs.

"That's clearly not going to go down well in Washington," said Thomas Warrick, a former State Department official who is now a nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council. "Instead of both sides making concessions, both sides are increasing demands." Separately, Fars said on Thursday Iranian naval forces had struck "hostile targets" at the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz, citing an unnamed source and without giving additional details. Oil prices climbed and stocks fell on Thursday's developments. Both U.S. and Iranian officials have been signaling in recent days that some kind of accord on Hormuz is close. President Donald Trump, who

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