



Coaches use balloons in effort to address UT turnover issues

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Knoxville NEWS SENTINEL

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Arrest of immigrant becomes test case

Deportation protection may not keep him in U.S.

Tyler Whetstone
Knoxville News Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

GREENEVILLE, Tennessee – Diego Hernandez Garcia, the Maryville man arrested by immigration officers Dec. 11, was legally shielded from deportation when he was arrested, attorneys for the federal government admitted at a hearing in Greeneville on Dec. 18.

The protection – called deferred action status – was stripped from him only after U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents arrested him in a raid at a Hardin Valley work-site. Until then, he was permitted to live and work in the United States until May 2026.

Now, however, the 24-year-old laborer, Maryville High School graduate and local church member is likely to be moved to an out-of-state ICE detention facility on Dec. 19 while a federal judge decides whether his arrest and detention is legal.

The stakes for noncitizens here, and across the nation, are substantial, especially for young immigrants without citizenship who grew up in America.

Deferred action, whether it be through the Special Immigrant Juvenile status that protected Hernandez Garcia or the more commonly known Dreamers program, called Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, has been a safe status for young immigrants without citizenship.

If what happened to Hernandez Garcia is allowed, the federal government could arrest and detain those with protection against deportation, then strip them of that status and send them to a foreign country. In Hernandez Garcia's case, U.S. District Judge Clifton Corker has specifically ordered the federal government to not remove him from the country while his case is being decided.

Hernandez Garcia's attorneys have argued his arrest and detention are illegal. Attorney Rachel Bonano went as far as to compare his arrest to a cop wrongfully pulling over a driver, then breaking the car's taillight so there is a reason to ticket the driver.

"It can't be right," she said. Corker, a 2018 appointee of President Donald Trump (and no relation to former Republican U.S. Sen. Bob Corker, of Tennessee), seemed receptive to Bonano's argument, saying at one point, that Hernandez Garcia was

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Holiday train chugs to notable milestone

Lantern Express provides Christmas joy

Hayden Dunbar
Knoxville News Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Gabe Passmore's earliest memory of the Three Rivers Rambler is from when he was just 2 or 3 years old. He can remember being in the train's open-air car, riding alongside his mom and his cousin.

But it was even earlier that Passmore first rode the Three Rivers Rambler. He wasn't yet 1 when he set off with his parents on the rail journey around Knoxville.

The trip would evolve into Passmore's lifelong passion.

Over the years, he would get his first toy train – a Thomas the Tank Engine from the Oak Ridge Books-A-Million – watch the trains go by in his neighborhood, travel the U.S. photographing steam locomotives and, more recently, start Marlow Railroad Company, his business that works on vintage railroad equipment.

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Hop aboard the Three Rivers Rambler with our video from a Knoxville Christmas tradition.



ABOVE: Quintyn, 9, speaks with Santa during a trip on the Three Rivers Rambler's Christmas Lantern Express.

Riders wait to board the Christmas Lantern Express for a holiday-themed trek on the Three Rivers Rambler passenger train. PHOTOS BY ANGELINA ALCANTAR/NEWS SENTINEL

Developer moves closer to six-story Old City hotel

Joanna Hayes
Knoxville News Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

The Old City is about to get a whole lot taller, with Knoxville developer Nick Patel now one step closer to opening a six-story, 175-room Marriott hotel near

Covenant Health Park. The Design Review Board of Knoxville-Knox County Planning approved the project's certificate of appropriateness Dec. 17, meaning Patel can now obtain a building permit to move forward with his plans. The SpringHill and TownePlace

Suites hotel Patel is planning for what's now a parking lot at 210 E. Jackson Ave. would sit just east of Barley's Taproom and Pizzeria and would be just steps away from the \$114 million Covenant Health Park, which began hosting Knoxville Smokies baseball and One Knoxville SC this past spring.

Hotel pitched on the condition Knoxville stadium was approved

Developers have been hoping for and hinting at new projects coming to the Old City since talk of a multiuse stadium

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