

# Hundreds mourn at A&M vigil for Kirk



People gather Thursday evening as members of the Texas A&M University chapter of Turning Point USA and other campus organizations take part in a vigil for assassinated conservative activist Charlie Kirk on campus in College Station.

Student groups remember slain activist, condemn political violence

By Megan Menchaca  
STAFF WRITER

COLLEGE STATION — Hundreds of students at Texas A&M University in College Station mourned conservative activist Charlie Kirk at a vigil on campus Thursday.

Texas A&M’s student chapter of Turning Point USA organized the vigil at Rudder Plaza to honor Kirk’s memory and lift his family up in prayer. Kirk, the CEO and co-founder of Turning Point USA, was killed Wednesday while speaking at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah.

Members of Political Science Aggies, Pro-Life Aggies and the Texas A&M chapters of Young Americans for Freedom, **A&M continues on A2**



During the vigil, attendees prayed and sang worship songs while holding electric candles and miniature American flags. Kirk was killed Wednesday in Utah.

*“Tonight, we stand united and in solidarity against political violence. Not only are we Aggies, but we are also Americans united under Christ.”*

Dylan Seiter, president of Texas A&M’s Turning Point USA chapter

Suspect had become ‘more political’ ahead of Kirk slaying

By Eric Tucker,  
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and Hannah Schoenbaum  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

OREM, Utah — A 22-year-old Utah man who was arrested and booked on murder charges in the assassination of Charlie Kirk held deep disdain for the conservative activist’s provocative viewpoints and indicated to a family member that he was responsible for the shooting, authorities said Friday.

The arrest marked a major break in a case that shocked the country and raised fresh alarms **Suspect continues on A3**



Robinson

**MORE COVERAGE:** Houston religious leader call Kirk a martyr. **A2** Klein ISD fires football coach over remarks on social media. **A3**

Judge orders date for killer’s execution

Thompson guilty of slaying former girlfriend, her lover

By Nicole Hensley  
STAFF WRITER

A 55-year-old man convicted in the double killing of his ex-girlfriend and her new lover in 1998 is slated for execution in January after spending 26 years on death row, a judge ordered Thursday.

The execution of Charles Victor Thompson — scheduled for Jan. 28 — will be the first under Harris County District Attorney Sean Teare’s leadership. Nine people were executed during his predecessor’s tenure.

Thompson killed Denise Hayslip, 39, and Darren Cain, 30, at her home in the 14700 block of Wunderlich in north Harris County after Hayslip ended her tumultuous relationship with Thompson to be with Cain. A jury convicted him in 1999 and sentenced him to death.

During the first trial, a psychologist declared Thompson a sociopath but also said he would benefit from prison life and sobriety.

A higher court overturned his sentence after prosecutors played an audiotape of a jail call at trial without prior notification to Thompson for his lawyers. Another jury affirmed his punishment during a second trial in 2005.

Thompson, while waiting to be transported back to death row following the second trial, escaped the Harris County jail after slipping into street clothes and fooling jailers into thinking he was an investigator. He was captured days later outside a liquor store in Shreveport, La.

Thompson is featured in the 2018 documentary series on Netflix “I Am a Killer.”

Friends and family of Cain sat in the 262nd District Court gallery Thursday as prosecutor Andrew Smith detailed Thompson’s exhausted appeals and other legal proceedings aimed at overturning his sentence.

“This has been a long, long journey for the family **Execution continues on A5**

# Data: Houston has highest poverty rate among big cities

By Maliya Ellis  
STAFF WRITER

Houston has the highest poverty rate among the country’s 10 most populous cities.

About 21.2% of Houston’s population lived below the poverty line last year, according to U.S. Census Bureau data released Thursday. That means more than 500,000 Houstonians made less than the federal poverty income threshold, which is \$15,940 for one person and \$32,130 for a household of four.

Houston’s high rate put the city just ahead of Philadelphia’s 19.7% and New York City’s 18.0%. Houston’s ranking above Philadelphia fell within the 1.2% margin of error, meaning the two cities’ true positions could be swapped.

Houston also had the highest child poverty rate among the top 10 cities, with 31.7% of residents age 18 or younger qualifying. That rate was well ahead of Philadelphia’s second-place 27.1%.

Poverty rates for Houston and the greater Houston area have stayed relatively stable over the past decade, said Daniel Potter, director of the Houston Population Research Center at Rice University’s Kinder Institute for Urban Research.

“It’s not moving down, but it’s not this ever increasing thing over time,” he said. He also noted that cities generally have higher poverty rates than suburban areas because they tend to offer more entry-level jobs and social services than suburbs.

Still, Houston’s especially high poverty rate — a direct reflection

of wages — could indicate that the city has a disproportionate share of low-wage workers. The rate also could reflect Houston’s large population of immigrants, many of whom are part of “shadow economies” in which they are paid poorly and in cash, Potter said.

“As we continue to grow and expand the Houston economy and the juggernaut that it is, we have to make sure we’re prioritizing those positions, occupations and industries that are living wage jobs,” Potter said.

Potter said city leaders should prioritize policies that attract higher wage jobs, like in the technology and software sectors. “When we prioritize those jobs that can bring in that living wage ... we’re setting the com- **Poverty continues on A5**



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