

# Biden defends past civil rights record

Former Vice President Joe Biden addressed Rev. Jesse Jackson's Rainbow PUSH Coalition

By SARA BURNETT AND WILL WEISSERT  
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Joe Biden strongly defended his civil rights record on Friday, pledging to be a “president who stands against racism” and “the forces of intolerance” and defiantly dismissing any suggestions otherwise.

Speaking to the Rev. Jesse Jackson's Rainbow PUSH Coalition, the white former vice president was working to repair the damage from a blistering attack from California Sen. Kamala Harris, the lone black woman in the 2020 presidential race. During Thursday's presidential debate, Harris criticized Biden for recently highlighting his decades-old work with segregationist senators and his opposition to public school busing during the 1970s — creating a dramatic and deeply personal breakout moment.

“I heard, and I listened to, and I respect Sen. Harris,” Biden said. “But we all know that 30 seconds to 60 seconds on a campaign debate exchange can't do justice to a lifetime commitment to civil rights.”

Biden has surged to the top of the Democratic pack



AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast

Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden addressed the Rainbow PUSH Coalition Annual International Convention on Friday in Chicago.

arguing that he's best positioned to defeat President Donald Trump because he can build a broad coalition of support. Appearances such as the one with Jackson — his onetime rival in the 1988 Democratic presidential primary — will signal whether Harris' attack will chip into his support among African Americans. He acknowledged the critical role of black voters and labor unions on Friday, saying, “Y'all are the ones that bring me to the dance.”

Biden pushed back against some of Harris' specific criticisms, including her argument that he once opposed busing. He said he was more opposed to federal intervention in busing than the practice itself.

“I never, never, never, ever

opposed voluntary busing,” Biden said, adding that he supported federal legislation to “address root causes of segregation in our schools” and that he was always “in favor of using federal authority to overcome state-initiated segregation” — even in bygone days when it wasn't popular.

But even while defending his own record, Biden still tempted controversy. He said he envisioned a society in which everyone realizes the “kid in the hoodie might be the next poet laureate and not a gang-banger.”

The “gang-banger” remark was a reminder of his loose and undisciplined approach to language and a tendency to say things that he doesn't think will offend his generation but that conjure

very different images among others, especially young Americans.

California attorney Tom McInerney signed up to be on Biden's national finance team but said he notified the campaign this month that he was withdrawing his support. He pointed to what he called repeated missteps, including Biden's comments on segregationists and the former vice president's recent reversal on the Hyde Amendment, a long-standing congressional ban on using federal health care money to pay for abortions. His reversal — he now says he opposes the amendment — came after rivals and women's rights group blasted him for affirming through campaign aides that he still supported the decades-old budget provision.

# Thousands gather for Stonewall Day

By ALI SWENSON AND JENNIFER PELTZ  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Thousands of people converged Friday on the Stonewall Inn for the 50th anniversary of the rebellion that catalyzed a movement for LGBTQ liberation, marking the milestone with celebrity performances, speeches and personal reflections.

People from New York and afar came to take photos and share in the legacy of the gay bar where patrons resisted a police raid, sparking protests and longer-term organizing that made the cause considerably more visible.

“Fifty years ago, people stood up for their rights, and look where we're at now. We've got flags all over the city,” said Richard Walker, 58, an airline worker from New York. “I'm getting goosebumps just really thinking about it.”

With the modern incarnation of the Stonewall Inn as the focal point, the day's celebrations included music, speeches and an evening rally. Lady Gaga, Whoopi Goldberg, Alicia Keys, drag performers and other artists at the advocacy organization



Greg Allen

Crowds participate in the second annual Stonewall Day honoring the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots, hosted by Pride Live and iHeartMedia, in Greenwich Village on Friday in New York.

Pride Live's Stonewall Day Concert addressed a crowd that stretched for blocks on a nearly 90-degree afternoon.

“This community has fought and continued to fight a war of acceptance, a war of tolerance,” Lady Gaga said. “You are the definition of courage.”

Robert Beard traveled from Dallas to attend the Stonewall anniversary events a couple of years after coming out in his 50s.

“I just kind of hid who I was for my whole life, and then within the last two years, I've been going through this kind of cathartic experience

of accepting myself,” said Beard, 53, who had been married and fathered children. “Just to be here with all these people is pretty amazing.”

Jocelyn Burrell isn't gay, but she made her way to the Stonewall Inn because she was struck by how welcoming it was when she stopped in there years ago, and she feels a sense of common cause with its place in history.

“Just like we fought — black people fought — for civil rights, I feel I should support other people who fight for civil rights,” she said.

Friday's events were kick-

ing off a big weekend of Pride festivities in New York and elsewhere. In New York, Sunday's huge WorldPride parade — and an alternative march intended as a less corporate commemoration of Stonewall — also will swing past the bar.

Cities around the world began celebrating Pride on Friday. Participants in a march in the Philippines went by the presidential palace in Manila, waving placards as they marked the 25th year since the first such gathering.

The Stonewall Inn is now a landmark and part of the Stonewall National Monument, but in 1969, it was part of a gay scene that was known, yet not open. At the time, showing same-sex affection or dressing in a way deemed gender-inappropriate could get people arrested, and bars had lost liquor licenses for serving LGBTQ customers.

The police raid on the bar began early the morning of June 28, 1969. The nightclub was unlicensed, and the officers had been assigned to stop any illegal alcohol sales.

Patrons and people who converged on the bar on Christopher Street resisted, hurling objects and at points scuffling with the officers.

# Supreme Court to rule on Trump bid to end DACA

By MARK SHERMAN  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Adding a high-stakes immigration case to its election-year agenda, the Supreme Court said Friday it will decide whether President Donald Trump can terminate an Obama-era program shielding young migrants from deportation.

The justices' order sets up legal arguments for late fall or early winter, with a decision likely by June 2020 as Trump campaigns for re-election. The president ordered an end to the program known as DACA in 2017, sparking protests and a congressional effort to salvage it.

That effort failed, but federal courts in California, New York, Virginia and Washington, D.C., have blocked him from ending it immediately. A federal judge in Texas has declared the program is illegal, but refused to order it halted.

The program — Deferred

Action for Childhood Arrivals — protects about 700,000 people, known as dreamers, who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children or came with families that overstayed visas.

The DACA protections seem certain to remain in effect at least until the high court issues its decision.

The administration had asked the court to take up and decide the appeals by the end of this month. The justices declined to do so and held on to the appeals for nearly five months with no action and no explanation. The court did nothing Friday to clear up the reasons for the long delay, although immigration experts have speculated that the court could have been waiting for other appellate rulings, legislation in Congress that would have put the program on a surer footing or additional administration action.

Since entering the White House, Trump has intermittently expressed a willingness to create a pathway to citizen-

ship for the hundreds of thousands of immigrants who've been protected by DACA. But he's coupled it with demands to tighten legal immigration and to build his long wall along the Mexican border — conditions that Democrats have largely rejected.

With the 2020 presidential and congressional election seasons underway or rapidly approaching, it seems unlikely that either party would be willing to compromise on immigration, a touchstone for both parties' base voters. Three decades of Washington gridlock over the issue underscore how fraught it has been for lawmakers, and there's little reason to think a deal is at hand.

On the campaign trail, nearly all of the two dozen Democratic presidential candidates have pledged to work with Congress to provide a pathway to citizenship for millions of people in the country illegally — beginning with the dreamers. On the other hand, Trump sees his hard-

line immigration policies as a winning campaign issue that can energize his supporters.

“We are pleased the Supreme Court agreed that this issue needs resolution. We look forward to presenting our case before the court,” Justice Department spokesman Alexei Woltornist said.

California Attorney General Xavier Becerra said in a conference call with reporters that the high court's ruling Thursday barring, for now, a citizenship question on the 2020 census “demonstrates that the court's not going to be fooled by the Trump administration's clearly disingenuous efforts when it comes to trying to undo and backslide on a lot of the laws and regulations that are there to protect our health and our welfare.”

The Obama administration created the DACA program in 2012 to provide work permits and protection from deportation to people who, in many cases, have no memory of any home other than the United States.



AP Photo/Kristin Murphy

Salt Lake City police take Ayoola A. Ajayi into custody in connection with missing University of Utah student MacKenzie Lueck in Salt Lake City on Friday.

# Police arrest man suspected of killing Utah college student

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST  
Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — A Utah college student missing 11 days was abducted and killed and her remains burned in the yard of a man now facing aggravated murder and other charges, authorities said Friday.

Salt Lake City Police Chief Mike Brown, who became emotional at times during a morning press conference, said Ayoola A. Ajayi was being charged with aggravated murder, kidnapping, obstruction of justice and desecration of a body in the death of 23-year-old Mackenzie Lueck.

He was arrested without incident Friday morning by a SWAT team.

Ajayi, 31, is an information technology worker who attended college on and off but never earned a degree and was briefly in the Army National Guard but didn't complete basic training.

He doesn't have a criminal record, according to online court information, but a northern Utah police department said he was accused of a rape in 2014. Police investigated but the alleged victim, an adult woman, declined to pursue charges, North Park police said in a news release.

Brown said telling the missing woman's parents in Southern California was “one of the most difficult phone calls I've ever made.” Her parents are “devastated and heartbroken by this news.”

Lueck disappeared on June 17, after she returned from a trip home for her grandmother's funeral and took a Lyft ride from the airport to a park north of Salt Lake City. She was last seen apparently willingly meeting someone there at about 3 a.m.

Her text conversation with Ajayi was her last communication and phone location data shows them both at the park within a minute of each other, Brown said.

“This was the same time as Mackenzie's phone stopped receiving any further data or location services,” he said.

He declined to say whether or how exactly they knew each other. Ajayi has acknowledged texting with Lueck around 6 p.m. on June 16, but denied talking to her after or knowing what she looked like — despite having photos of her on his phone, Brown said.

The police chief said investigators were seeking to determine if others were involved. A second person was questioned at the time of his arrest and later released, Brown said.

Police have not discussed a motive for the killing, or specified a

cause of death. A judge ordered Ajayi held without bail. It was not known if he has an attorney to speak on his behalf. He had not returned previous messages from The Associated Press prior to his arrest.

After discovering that Ajayi was the last person Lueck communicated with, police searched his home on Wednesday and Thursday. Police Thursday described him as a “person of interest.”

In his backyard, they said they found a “fresh dig area,” and charred items that belonged to Lueck. They also found burned human remains that matched her DNA profile, Brown said.

Ajayi has worked in information technology for several companies including Dell and Goldman Sachs, according to his LinkedIn page. Goldman Sachs confirmed he worked as a contract employee for less than a year at the Salt Lake City office ending in August 2018. Dell said Ajayi had worked there but didn't provide his dates of employment.

Ajayi also appeared to have pursued employment in modeling with a bio page on a website called modelmanagement.com. Court records show he is divorced.

Lueck was a part-time senior at the University of Utah studying kinesiology and pre-nursing, and was expected to graduate in Spring 2020. She had been a student since 2014 and had an off-campus apartment. The university offered counseling services to any students or staffers affected by her death.

She is from El Segundo in the Los Angeles area and flew to California for a funeral before returning to Salt Lake City, police said. Her family reported her missing on June 20 and became more concerned after she missed a planned flight back to Los Angeles last weekend.

Lueck's uncle, who did not provide his name at the police press conference, held back tears as he read a statement from her family thanking the investigators for their work.

“They're also grateful to her community, her friends and others around the nation who have supported this investigation,” he said.

Friends who appealed for helping in searching for her when she was missing did not respond to requests for comment after the arrest was announced.

Lueck's sorority, Alpha Chi Omega, said in a statement the group is grieving her loss and hoping the members closest to her can find comfort as they remember her lasting impact on her loved ones.