



RACE

Georgia NAACP is investigating a traffic stop involving a college lacrosse team

May 19, 2022 · 9:57 PM ET



JONATHAN FRANKLIN



Delaware State University says it has filed a complaint to the U.S. Department of Justice Wednesday to investigate the women's lacrosse team bus stop and search. Here, the main gate of the Delaware State University campus in Dover in September 2007.

Bloomberg/Bloomberg via Getty Images

The Georgia NAACP says it is taking a look into the stop and search bus incident involving members of the Delaware State University women's lacrosse team last month in Liberty County, Ga.

Gerald Griggs, state president of the Georgia NAACP, told NPR he was "disturbed" by what took place with the athletes on Interstate 95. He says the Georgia chapter of the NAACP is at the beginning of conducting its own investigation into what happened on April 20.

"My [initial] thoughts were, 'I couldn't believe this was actually happening.' Once I watched the full bodycam [video], I was just disturbed by what appeared to be an unnecessary search of their belongings," Griggs told NPR.



RACE

Delaware State University to file a complaint with DOJ after bus search incident

He says the state chapter of the NAACP was concerned to hear about the news of the team's traffic stop in Liberty County considering the county sheriff, William Bowman, is Black.

"But this is, you know, not anything new that's happening on I-95. That corridor is known for racial profiling," Griggs said.

Last month, the Delaware State University women's lacrosse team was headed northbound on Interstate 95 following games in Georgia and Florida when they were stopped in by Liberty County deputies.

Sponsor Message

In a news conference last week, Liberty County Sheriff William Bowman said the team's bus was stopped after it was traveling illegally in the left lane. During the traffic stop, several of the athletes' bags were searched after a narcotics-sniffing K-9 dog made what officials call an "open-air alert," authorities said.

In a video posted to YouTube by one of the lacrosse players, Sydney Anderson, a deputy is shown in the frame speaking to the students just before the search begins, telling them that the recreational use of marijuana is illegal in Georgia.

"If there is something in there that is questionable, please tell me now," the officer says in the video. "Because if we find it, guess what? We're not going to be able to help you."

It is unclear at this time what took place before the recording began or after the recording stopped. The deputies did not find anything illegal in the bags during their search.

Bowman told reporters during last week's news conference that deputies stopped several vehicles the morning of the incident, finding contraband on another bus that was pulled over.



RACE

Delaware AG asks for federal civil rights review after HBCU team stopped by police

Bowman said the deputies, who were not identified during the news conference, did not know the race or gender of those inside the bus when it was pulled over.

On Wednesday, Delaware State University filed an official complaint to the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division to investigate the incident, calling for an external investigation into the traffic stop.

In the five-page letter to the DOJ, the university is calling for an external investigation, saying it has "little faith" in the internal investigation by the Liberty County Sheriff's Office will be done with non-bias.

"Our students and staff deserve to know that this brazen, illegal, and discriminatory conduct will not go unchecked," the complaint reads. "The illegal behavior exhibited by these officers, the repeated misstatements by the Sheriff (both about the law and the facts), the attempt to obscure the facts, the failure to turn over immediately all of the videos from the encounter, and the racial disparity evident to anyone who views the videos make it clear that neither the Sheriff's Office nor local officials can be trusted to investigate this incident completely and impartially."

stop and search delaware state university u.s. department of justice delaware

Sign Up For The Code Switch Newsletter

See what news, politics and culture say about race and identity, sent weekly.

By subscribing, you agree to NPR's terms of use and privacy policy. NPR may share your name and email address with your NPR station. See Details. This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google Privacy Policy and Terms of Service apply.

More Stories From NPR



NATIONAL

The EPA starts a civil rights probe into Mississippi's water woes





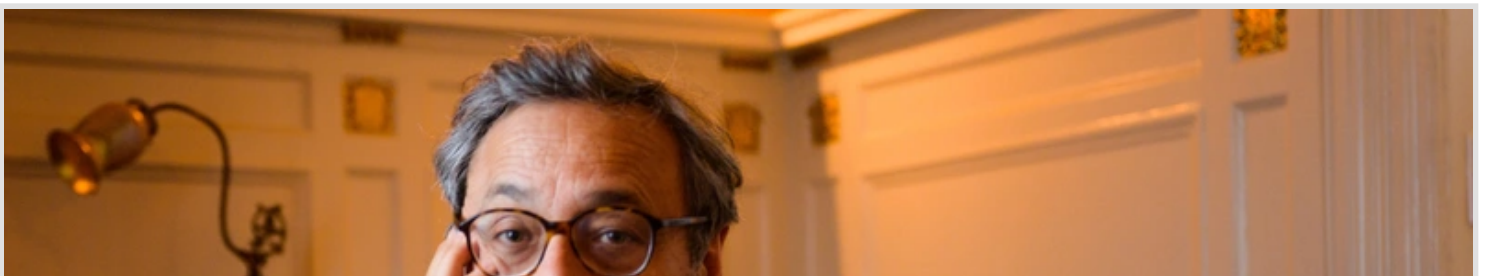
LAW

Maryland officials order the reinvestigation of about 100 deaths in police custody



NATIONAL

The GI Bill left behind Black World War II vets. Now there's a move to fix that





RACE
What can reparations for slavery look like in the United States? One man has ideas



LAW
A New Jersey teacher accused of pulling a student's hijab sues an Olympic fencer

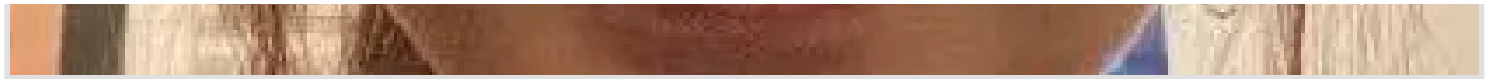


RESEARCH NEWS

Hair straightening chemicals may increase women's risk of uterine cancer, study finds

Popular on NPR.org





NATIONAL

A Princeton student who went missing for a week has been found dead, officials say



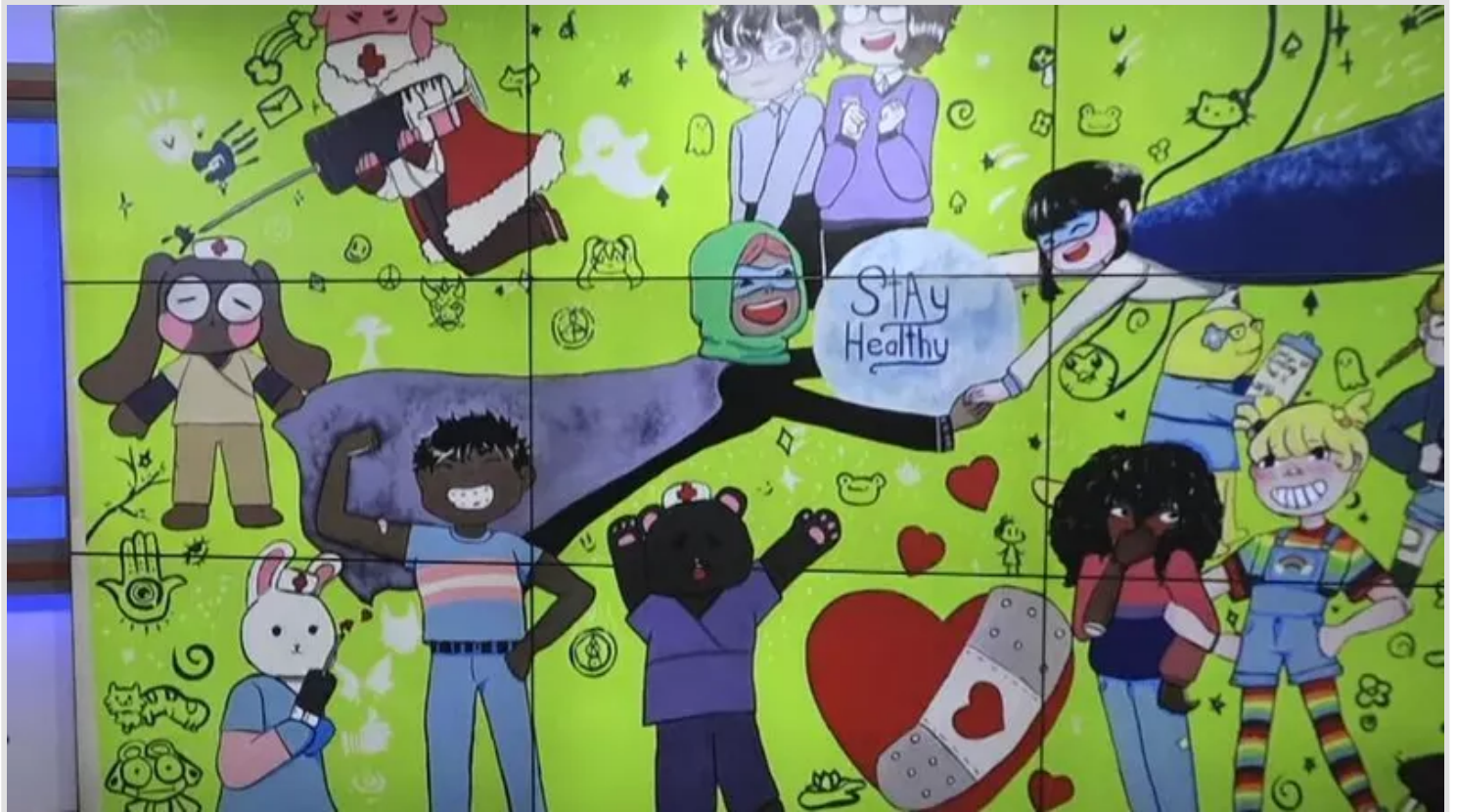
SPORTS

Tennessee is hit with a \$100K fine and needs new goal posts after euphoric win



POLITICS

What's in the so-called Don't Say Gay bill that could impact the whole country



EDUCATION

A high school student's mural angers parents over what they say are hidden messages



LAW

Steve Bannon sentenced to 4 months in prison for flouting House Jan. 6 panel



POP CULTURE

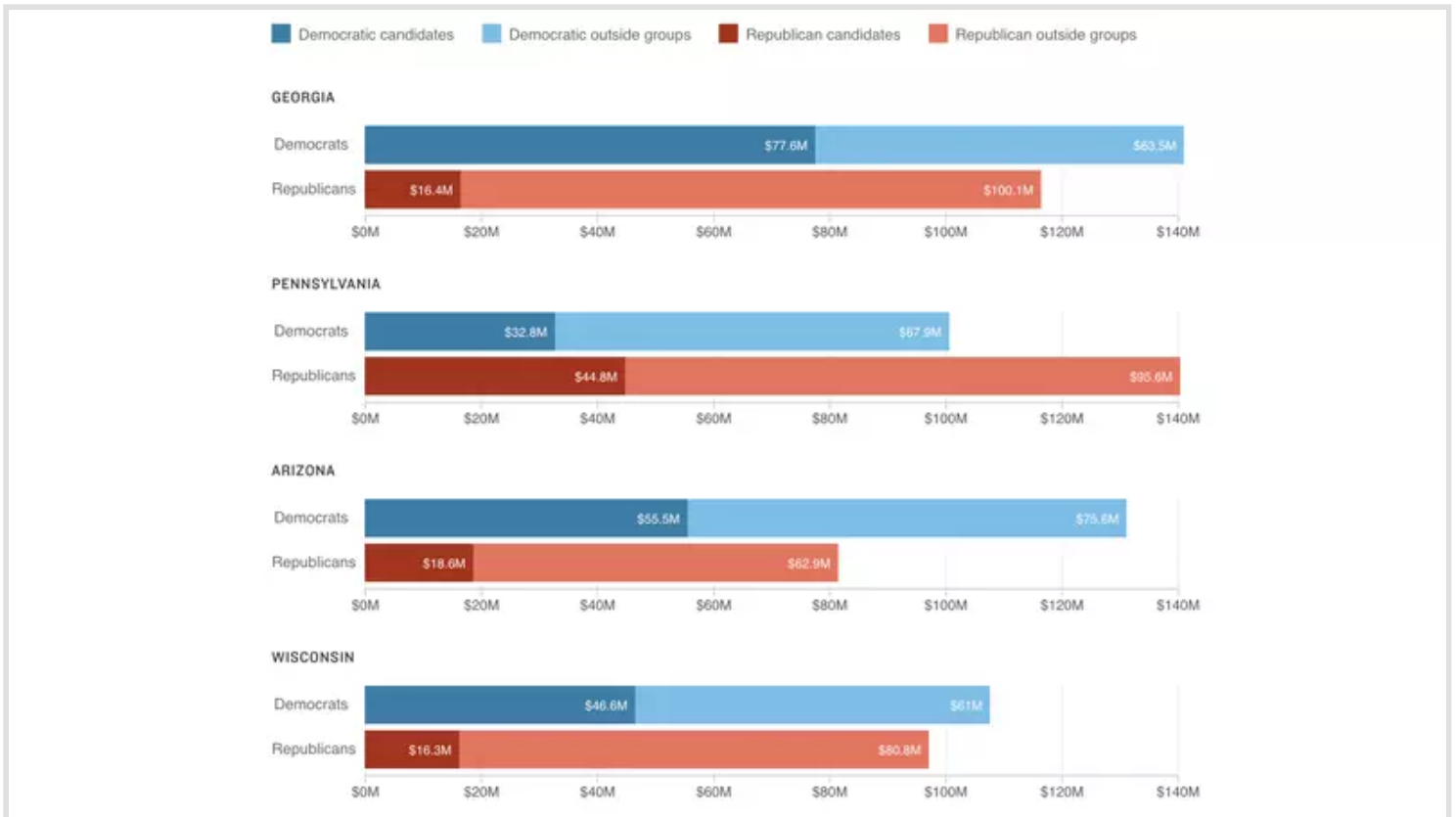
The family of George Floyd plans to file a \$250 million lawsuit against Ye

NPR Editors' Picks



TECHNOLOGY

The fastest ever laundry-folding robot is here. And it's likely still slower than you



ELECTIONS

Dark money groups have spent nearly \$1 billion so far to boost GOP Senate candidates



NATIONAL

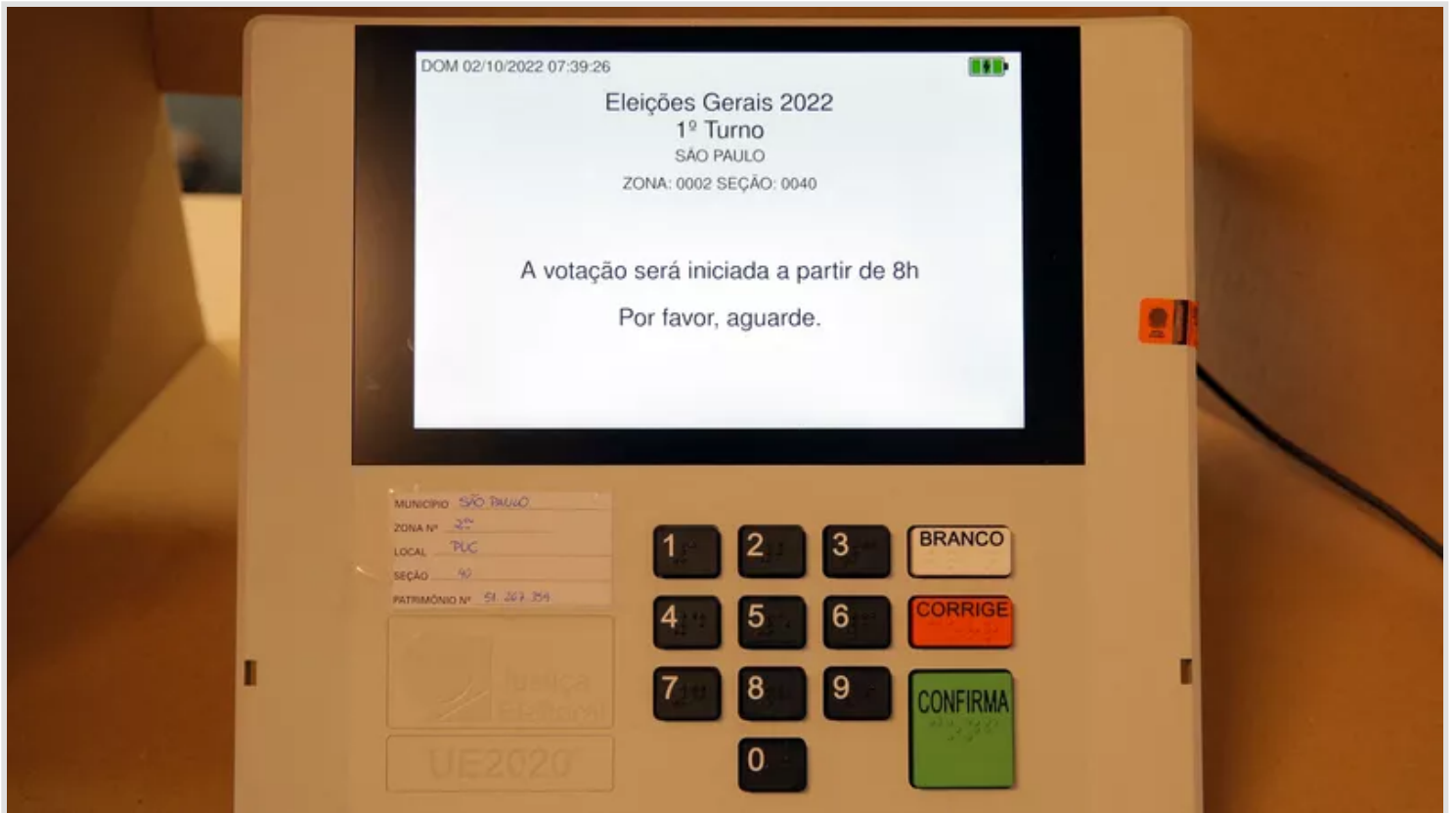
Texas state police fire first officer over Uvalde school massacre response



ASIA
China's Communist Party moves to solidify Xi Jinping's power in leadership shuffle



ANIMALS
It's cute, but is it safe to put your dog in a Halloween costume?



ELECTIONS

Why false claims about Brazil's election are spreading in far-right U.S. circles

READ & LISTEN

[Home](#)

[News](#)

[Culture](#)

[Music](#)

[Podcasts & Shows](#)

ABOUT NPR

[Overview](#)

[Diversity](#)

[Ethics](#)

[Finances](#)

[Public Editor](#)

CONNECT

[Newsletters](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Press](#)

[Contact & Help](#)

GET INVOLVED

[Support Public Radio](#)

[Sponsor NPR](#)

[NPR Careers](#)

[NPR Shop](#)

[NPR Events](#)

[terms of use](#)

[privacy](#)

[your privacy choices](#)

[text only](#)

© 2022 npr