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VOICE OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY



Committee chairman Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., gives opening remarks as the House select committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack holds its first public hearing at the U.S. Capitol on Thursday. — AP PHOTO/J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE

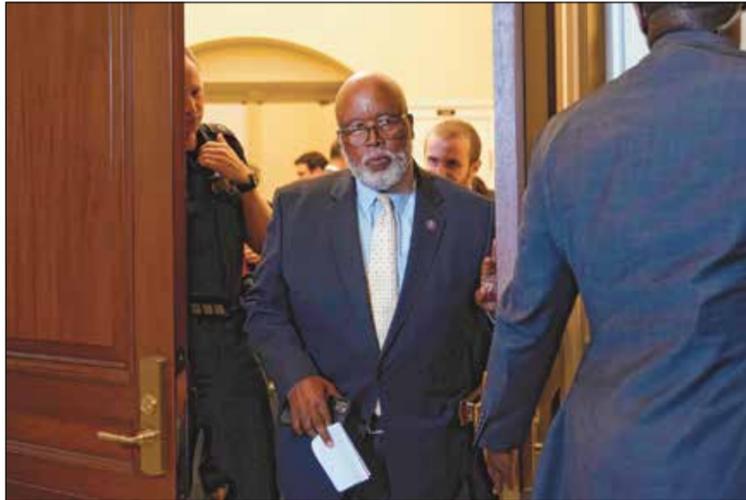
## For Thompson, chairing inquiry brings career full circle

Gloria Borger

For Bennie Thompson, the invasion of the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, was a significant moment of déjà vu. From his perch in the House gallery above the chamber that day, he couldn't quite tell what was going on, until his wife phoned him to let him know what was unfolding on television. Then the Capitol Police came and instructed him — and other members — to crouch, and take off their congressional lapel pins, so they would not become targets for the intruders. Thompson refused.

"People I know fought and died in this country for me to have the right to represent them and for them to have the right to vote," Thompson told CNN. "I'm not going to let any insurrectionist, rioter, crazy person come here and take this pin."

As a congressman from Mississippi, Thompson has been wearing a pin for 13 terms. He's the only Democrat and the only Black member of the Mississippi congressional delegation — representing one of the poorest districts in the country. He's



Thompson walks out of a hearing room on Capitol Hill in Washington on Thursday. — AP PHOTO/SUSAN WALSH

also the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee and for the past year, chairman of the January 6th committee — a job unlike any other in American history.

For Thompson, leading the Congressional investigation into the

attack on the US Capitol comes with an unprecedented mandate of reminding voters how much was almost lost that day. "Our democracy is at stake," Thompson says. "We have

THOMPSON » 4A

## Education nonprofits to merge

New group would have wider reach, improved programs

Chanel Hill

TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Two education non-profits will be merging together in the Fall.

Philadelphia Futures and Steppingstone Scholars are merging creating an organization with a \$10 million annual budget that will serve 3,000 city students a year.

The merger was made over an 18-month period and was aided by funding from the William Penn Foundation and the Nonprofit Repositioning Fund.

The decision was unanimously approved by the Board of Directors for both Philadelphia Futures and Steppingstone Scholars. Upon the official merger, which is subject to required governmental notices and approvals, the organizations will brand as a new entity. "The merging of Steppingstone and Future is an unprecedented opportunity to better serve Philadelphia students through a wider reach and significantly enhanced programming," said Sara L. Woods, president of Philadelphia Futures.

"Students are at the center of the work we have undertaken since December 2020," Woods said. "Their



Philadelphia Futures president Sara L. Woods, left, stands with Steppingstone Scholars president Sean E. Vereen. Philadelphia Futures and Steppingstone Scholars will be merging in the fall. — PHOTO BY PAOLA NOGUERAS

voices and strengths have led Futures and Steppingstone to this moment. As we unite our services and programs, our goals are clear.

"We aim to increase pathways for life-sustaining careers by helping more students in the District persist and graduate from high school, as well

as successfully earn a college degree or other postsecondary credential," Woods added.

Founded in 1989, Philadelphia Futures provides support to Philadelphia's low-income, first generation-to-college

NONPROFITS » 4A

## 'Enough is enough' say thousands who march and demand new gun measures

Ashraf Khalil  
Darlene Superville

WASHINGTON — Thousands of people rallied on the National Mall and across the United States on Saturday in a renewed push for gun control measures after recent deadly mass shootings from Uvalde, Texas, to Buffalo, New York, that activists say should compel Congress to act.

"Enough is enough," District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser told the second March for Our Lives rally in her city. "I speak as a mayor, a mom, and I speak for millions of Americans and America's mayors who are demanding that Congress do its

job. And its job is to protect us, to protect our children from gun violence."

Speaker after speaker in Washington called on senators, who are seen as a major impediment to legislation, to act or face being voted out of office, especially given the shock to the nation's conscience after 19 children and two teachers were killed May 24 at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde.

"If our government can't do anything to stop 19 kids from being killed and slaughtered in their own school, and decapitated, it's time to change who is in government," said David Hogg, a survivor of the 2018

MARCH » 5A



People participate in the second March for Our Lives rally in support of gun control in front of the Washington Monument on Saturday in Washington. — AP PHOTO/GEMUNU AMARASINGHE

## Jan. 6 hearing doesn't change many minds in Philadelphia suburbs

Mike Catalini

BENSALEM — When he was in elementary school, Dan Pigott just happened to be visiting Washington with his parents in 1973 as the Watergate hearings were underway. He managed to get a seat to watch history unfold.

That memory was particularly resonant Thursday night when Pigott watched the opening hearing as another special congressional committee unveiled evidence of what it said was then-President Donald Trump's "attempted coup" on Jan. 6, 2021, when he beckoned supporters to come to Washington as part of his effort to overturn his 2020 election defeat.

"I think what this administration did is far worse. We all see what happened," said Pigott, 58, a Democrat who lives in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, north of Philadelphia. "I'm convinced he instigated all of it ... I think this is the worst attack on our system of government since the Civil War."

His was hardly a consensus view. Others among more than a dozen voters interviewed — in coffee shops, stores and by phone — dismissed the hearing as

"rubbish," or simply did not watch.

But opinions in Bucks County, a blend of rolling farmland and densely packed well-to-do suburbs, matter more than most places because it is one of a small cluster of areas in the country where both major political parties are still competitive. And few states will be more central to the midterm elections, with highly competitive races for the U.S. Senate and governor.

The Jan. 6 riots are certain to play a prominent role in both. The Republican gubernatorial candidate, Doug Mastriano, was seen outside the Capitol on Jan. 6, and has supported Trump's false assertions that the election in 2020 was stolen. The GOP Senate nominee, Dr. Mehmet Oz, was endorsed by Trump.

The Nielsen Company reported Friday that an estimated 20 million people watched Thursday night's hearing on the 12 television networks that aired it.

The depth of political fallout will be measured in the coming months. Republicans so far have tried to parry criticism

SUBURBS » 4A

