

# charliekirk.com

A news site named for Charlie Kirk, founder of a national conservative student movement, that has published false and unsubstantiated claims about the 2020 elections and COVID-19.



**Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic journalistic standards.**

**Score: 0/100**

## Ownership and Financing

CharlieKirk.com does not disclose its ownership, although it is named after Kirk, a podcaster and founder of Turning Point USA. Turning Point is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that aims to empower young people “to promote the principles of free markets and limited government,” according to CharlieKirk.com’s About page. Turning Point USA, according to CharlieKirk.com, is active on over 2,000 college campuses and includes 250,000 student members. The nonprofit reported approximately \$11 million in revenue in fiscal year 2018, according to the organization’s IRS filings.

Kirk, who has no formal college education, is also chairman of Students for Trump, a group that aimed “to activate one million new college voters in the lead up to the 2020 presidential election,” according to Kirk’s biography on CharlieKirk.com. Students for Trump is a project of Turning Point Action, a sister 501(c)(4) organization to Turning Point USA. Kirk has hosted fundraisers for Turning Point USA at U.S. President Donald Trump’s Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida, and Trump has spoken at several Turning Point USA conferences, according to a July 2020 article in Pro Publica.

CharlieKirk.com generates revenue from advertising, donations, and merchandise.

- ✗ Does not repeatedly publish false content (22points)
- ✗ Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
- ✗ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
- ✗ Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
- ✗ Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
- ✗ Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
- ✗ Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
- ✗ Reveals who’s in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
- ✗ The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

*Criteria are listed in order of importance.*

[More information.](#)

## Content

The website’s About page provides a biography of Kirk, saying that Kirk “is building the future of American conservatism.”

CharlieKirk.com provides conservative-leaning news and commentary on U.S. politics. The site features dedicated sections for news, videos, and for the Charlie

Kirk Show podcast. The top of the site's homepage also lists topics that are labeled as "trending now," such as "Trump," "Biden," and "CIA."

Typical headlines have included "Happy Thanksgiving: One Sheriff Says NO to Enforcing Andrew Cuomo's Covid-19 Restrictions on Home Gatherings," "Poll Finds Trump was Hurt by Media Not Covering Hunter Biden Scandal," and "Why Forgiving Student Loan Debt is Not a Good Idea"

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Credibility

CharlieKirk.com does not provide original reporting. The site primarily adds brief commentary to excerpts of articles from other conservative news websites, such as The Epoch Times, The Daily Caller, and Breitbart News.

The site has advanced inaccurate and misleading information about voter fraud in the 2020 U.S. presidential election. For example, a November 2020 story published a week after the Nov. 3, 2020, election claimed that "10,000 confirmed or suspected dead have returned their mail-in ballots." Titled "Michigan Sees 10,000 Dead People Return Mail-in Ballots," the story included an excerpt from The Epoch Times, reporting that an analysis by Richard Baris, director of the data research firm Big Data Poll, indicated that "somebody else was trying to vote on behalf of these people." Baris told The Epoch Times, "It's also entirely possible that some of them aren't even real people."

Another November 2020 story, titled "Graveyard Vote: Check out the MASSIVE List of Joe Biden's Dead Supporters in Michigan," stated, "When it comes to certain voter demographics, one group the Democrats always win over is the dead vote. Across the country, more and more votes keep turning up for former Vice President Joe Biden from those who have passed on." As evidence for its claim, CharlieKirk.com provided a link to what the site described as, a "list of over 1,200 Michigan voters who felt so compelled to participate in the 2020 presidential race, they voted from beyond the grave." The link directed readers to a list of names on the content-sharing website Pastebin. One of the names on that list was William Bradley, who died in 1984 and would be 118 years old if he were alive today.

Michigan officials have called these claims baseless. Michigan's Secretary of State's office issued a November 2020 statement affirming that Michigan checks all ballots against death records, so any vote cast in the name of a dead person would be invalidated. "Ballots of voters who have died are rejected in Michigan, even if the voter cast an absentee ballot and then died before Election Day," the Secretary of State's office statement said. "Those who make claims otherwise are wrong, and the lists circulating claiming to show this is happening are not accurate."

The office's statement continued, "We are not aware of a single confirmed case showing that a ballot was actually cast on behalf of a deceased individual."

In another statement, Michigan's Secretary of State said that the vote in William Bradley's name was likely cast by a living person with the same name, according to ClickOnDetroit.com, the website of Detroit's NBC affiliate WDIV:

In a November 2020 episode of The Charlie Kirk Show podcast, titled "Dominion, Hammers and #Maidens," the website advanced the claim that a supercomputer called "Hammer" and an accompanying software called "Scorecard" enabled Democrats to switch votes from President Trump to Democrat Joe Biden, altering the outcome of the presidential election. Retired Lt. General Thomas McInerney, who appeared on the show, said that "Hammer" and "Scorecard" were used to manipulate the vote in favor of Joe Biden:

"Two weeks ago tonight, two days before the election, I got word that they were using 'Hammer' and 'Scorecard,' which was a new application — envision 'Hammer' being like your iPhone, and 'Scorecard' being an app on it — to break into communications areas. They would put 'Scorecard' on it, it manipulates the voting data...This changes the vote count so it's about a 3 percent difference between moving votes from Trump to Biden. And I predicted on Steve Bannon's show on Monday afternoon that we were going to lose the election because they were using 'Scorecard' and

'Hammer' to change the vote. Now I know it's really true because Fox News will not let anybody that comes on there say 'Scorecard' or 'Hammer.'"

There is no evidence that the "Hammer" computer system or the "Scorecard" software exist, let alone that they were used to alter votes. The former director of the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Chris Krebs, a Trump appointee, called such claims "nonsense" in a Nov. 7, 2020, tweet. In October 2020, a website called The American Report published claims about the existence of "Hammer" and "Scorecard" and their planned use in the election, claiming that an ex-government contractor named Dennis Montgomery built the system, without specifying when. According to The Daily Beast, Montgomery is "a former intelligence contractor and self-proclaimed whistleblower" with "a long history of making outlandish claims."

The website has also published false information about the COVID-19 virus. For example, an October 2020 article titled "Frontline Doctors Summit: Psychiatrist Discusses the Pandemic of Delusional Psychosis," included a video that promoted the anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine as an effective treatment for COVID-19.

Clinical psychiatrist Dr. Mark McDonald, a member of a group called America's Frontline Doctors, said in the video, "We need to use measures like exercise, sunlight, vitamin D, hydroxychloroquine, zinc. This stuff is free, or nearly free, and it's not risky...It's cheap. It's effective. It works. These practices reduce risk of infection, and risk of complications if one is infected, by over 90 percent in all the studies and research published. That's huge."

In June 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration revoked the March 2020 emergency use authorization that enabled hydroxychloroquine to be used as treatment for COVID-19, saying, "The totality of scientific evidence currently available indicates a lack of benefit."

Subsequent clinical trials have also failed to find a benefit for the drug. A trial involving 400 patients, conducted by researchers at University of Minnesota and published in July 2020 in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, found that hydroxychloroquine did not decrease the severity of COVID-19 symptoms over 14 days any better than a placebo in patients who were not hospitalized.

Hydroxychloroquine has also not been shown to prevent COVID-19, contrary to the claim in the CharlieKirk.com article. A trial published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in June 2020, involving 800 patients and also conducted by researchers at the University of Minnesota, found that hydroxychloroquine did not perform better than a placebo in preventing people from developing COVID-19 after they were likely to have been exposed to someone who had been infected.

In the video, McDonald also discouraged the use of masks and self-isolation as a measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. “Healthy people should never be wearing masks and isolating themselves. Ever. There is no reason for it. These practices offer no proven benefit, yet they incur significant risk,” he said.

A growing body of scientific evidence suggests that wearing face masks can prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in July 2020 tracked infection rates among nearly 10,000 employees at Mass General Brigham Hospital before and after a mask mandate. The study concluded that “universal masking at MGB was associated with a significantly lower rate of SARS-CoV-2 positive among health workers.”

The primary method of transmission of the COVID-19 virus is through respiratory droplets that are released when an infected person sneezes, coughs, or talks, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A June 2020 fact-checking article by USA Today reported that while it is true that the COVID-19 virus particles are approximately 0.1 microns in size —

and therefore difficult to block — those particles are attached to larger droplets, which can be blocked by wearing face masks.

Because CharlieKirk.com has published multiple articles containing false and misleading information, including about the presidential election and COVID-19, NewsGuard has determined that the site publishes false content, does not gather and present information responsibly, and does not avoid deceptive headlines.

CharlieKirk.com does not articulate a corrections policy, and NewsGuard did not find corrections on the site.

CharlieKirk.com's About page discloses the website's conservative perspective. However, the website regularly publishes opinionated stories that appear in the news section on the site, which does not meet NewsGuard's standard for handling the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

For example, a November 2020 article, "Why Forgiving Student Loan Debt is Not a Good Idea" stated, "The old adage many elders used to say is that 'money doesn't grow on trees.' This message was clearly not taught to many democrats as many of them believe everything should be free and the government can print as much as you need."

Another November 2020 article titled "The Left and Their Lists" stated, "The left says they want unity when everyone knows they just want power and control and will do whatever it takes to get it, including rigging an election."

An October 2020 article, headlined "Minneapolis Residents Demand Law and Order and Sue City Over Violent Crime Wave," stated: "Minneapolis residents have had enough! No longer do they want to sit back and watch the city council, which is made up of 12 democrats and 0 republicans, destroy their city."

CharlieKirk.com does not provide contact information for users. The website of Turning Point USA did not respond to NewsGuard's two November 2020 messages sent through a general contact form on the site, seeking comment on its false and unsubstantiated

claims, approach to corrections, and publication of unlabeled opinion. Kirk also did not respond to a November 2020 message to his Facebook page.

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#### Transparency

A copyright logo at the bottom of the site says “Charlie Kirk, all rights reserved.” However, that logo does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for clearly disclosing ownership. The About page does not identify its editorial leadership. Although it provides extensive information about Kirk, the website does not provide any contact information for users.

Articles do not include the names of authors, and CharlieKirk.com provides no other information about its content creators.

Display advertising is distinguished from editorial content. However, CharlieKirk.com labels sponsored stories from the content-sharing platform Revcontent as “You May Also Like,” which does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for clearly labeling advertising.

CharlieKirk.com does not provide contact information. NewsGuard was unable to reach the site for comment on its failure to disclose its owners, editors, and content creators, and failure to label some sponsored content. Turning Point USA also did not respond to two NewsGuard’s messages sent in November 2020 through a general contact form on the site. Kirk also did not respond to a NewsGuard message sent to his Facebook page.

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#### History

CharlieKirk.com launched in 2012, the year that Kirk graduated high school in suburban Chicago.

In April 2012, Kirk wrote an essay for the conservative website Breitbart News about how the alleged left-leaning agenda in public schools was indoctrinating students. The essay led to Kirk’s appearance on Fox Business Network. He was then approached, according to an April 2020 profile in The New York Times, by a retired entrepreneur named Bill Montgomery, who was impressed by Kirk’s appearance and urged him not to go to college.

The two founded Turning Point USA a month after meeting, The Times reported.

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Send feedback to NewsGuard: [Click Here](#)

## Sources

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Ownership and Financing

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