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ThreeSixty

Minnesota Teens Report Stories & Issues That Matter

ThreeSixty Focus on...

Jana Shortal

The trendy, outspoken KARE 11 anchor talks standing out, the state of journalism and more, page 12



ALSO INSIDE: TEENS TALK MEDIA

From virtual reality to fake news, students report and weigh in on modern-day journalism, page 8



Young artists paint a mural of healing, page 21

Powerful college essays, page 15



REAL STUDENTS. REAL STORIES.

ThreeSixty

VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 3

JOURNALISM

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ThreeSixty Magazine will be published three times during the 2016-17 school year.

ThreeSixty Magazine is designed by Diana Boger.

Email threesixty@stthomas.edu with comments, letters and questions about participating in ThreeSixty.

ThreeSixty Journalism is a nonprofit program of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of St. Thomas. Donations from individuals like you provide a significant amount of ThreeSixty's operating budget. To contribute, please visit <http://threesixtyjournalism.org/donate>.

The state of journalism through teenage eyes

I'VE NOTICED SOMETHING odd happening in the last year or so.

First, my friends started talking more about journalism. They had questions and thoughts about media bias, political leanings, ethics and fake news.

Second, media in some ways started becoming the news. Journalism has been thrust into its own spotlight, for a number of reasons. It's become a regular talking point, and it seems that people—journalists and everyday citizens—are truly pondering, discussing and grappling with the state of journalism.

And that led to a thought: Who better to ponder, discuss and grapple with the state of journalism than our ThreeSixty Journalism high school students? Who better to tell the stories of the state of journalism than a group of students who not only represent the



By Miles Trump
ThreeSixty
Journalism
Program Manager

future of the industry but who also care about its health? Who better to help put journalism in perspective for young people than other young people?

And so, a mini-series was born.

Inside this issue, you will find "Teens Talk Media," a small handful of stories that focus on different "slices" of modern-day journalism—fake news (pages 10 and 11), virtual reality (page 9) and the echo chamber of information in our social media feeds (page 8).

There's a twist. Students who wrote these stories also had the opportunity to weigh in on them. With each reported story, you'll

find a "Teen's Take" sidebar in which our students give their perspectives on different aspects of the state of journalism (and you'll also find an op-ed on fake news).

Also included in this mini-series is a "ThreeSixty Focus" feature—our regular Q-and-A story with a Minnesota newsmaker, changemaker and/or difference-maker—on KARE 11 anchor Jana Shortal (page 12), who represents a shift from the traditional rules of journalism. In that intriguing story, the "Breaking the News" anchor gives her own perspective on the state of journalism—where it is now and where she believes it's heading.

As news consumers and the country's future news producers, teenagers deserve an opportunity to weigh into the debate. And when we listen, we'll find they have some insightful things to say.

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FILTER BUBBLE News sources that confirm only your own beliefs can create an "echo chamber" of information – and experts say that can be dangerous. **page 8**

360-DEGREE STORYTELLING Media organizations are using virtual reality videos and photos to report stories from new angles. **page 9**

FAKE NEWS Local experts warn news consumers to be more skeptical of what they're reading, watching and listening to. **page 10**

IDENTIFYING FAKE NEWS A ThreeSixty journalist writes that identifying fake news from real news can take time—but it's worth it. **page 11**

THREESIXTY FOCUS ON... JANA SHORTAL The KARE 11 anchor and journalist talks about standing out, the state of journalism and (much) more. **page 12**

POWERFUL COLLEGE ESSAYS Students from Minneapolis Roosevelt and St. Paul Harding wrote about their diverse life stories as part of ThreeSixty Journalism's College Essay Boot Camp in April. Read their essays on **page 15**.

BRIGHTENING THE SHELTER Local students paint a mural in the basement of a Minneapolis domestic violence shelter as a symbol of hope and unity. **page 21**

WHITE PRIVILEGE A ThreeSixty journalist writes about how she's seen a person of color in her own life treated differently than others, and unpacks why recognizing and addressing white privilege is important. **page 22**

ONLINE GYM Some Minneapolis students can fulfill their gym requirement by taking an online course and using a wearable health tracker, such as a FitBit. **page 23**

About the ThreeSixty Scholar Award

EACH YEAR, HIGH SCHOOL seniors who are graduates of ThreeSixty programming compete for the ThreeSixty Scholar award—a full-tuition, four-year scholarship to study Communication and Journalism at the University of St. Thomas. Here is an update on our recent scholars.



Danielle Wong

Danielle Wong, 2016 Scholar

Danielle Wong, a freshman at the University of St. Thomas, is the Communications Coordinator for Asian Students in America and a co-facilitator for Feminist Community. She also is an intern at Prodeo Academy and a video production assistant with St. Thomas Media Services, and is exploring photojournalism through freelance work. Wong also was recently awarded the University Advocates for Women and Equity's "Good Sister Award" for her work through the Victim-Survivor Ally Collective.



Amira Warren-Yearby

Amira Warren-Yearby, 2015 Scholar

Warren-Yearby, a sophomore at St. Thomas, is the marketing and public relations chair of the St. Thomas Black Empowerment Student Alliance. She also is a tutor at ANEW BAM and a dance instructor with Twin Cities Mobile Jazz at St. Paul Humboldt. Next year, Warren-Yearby will study film and television at Bond University in Australia as part of a yearlong study abroad program.



Deborah Honore

Deborah Honore, 2014 Scholar

Honore, a junior at St. Thomas, returned to campus after studying journalism and new media in Morocco with Round Earth Media during the fall semester and traveling to South Africa with the St. Thomas Theology Department in January to study AIDS and apartheid. Honore is working as a video reporter for TommieMedia.com, the university's student-run news organization, and is producing and editing video projects with other young storytellers.



Simeon Lancaster

Simeon Lancaster, 2013 Scholar

Lancaster, a senior at St. Thomas in his final semester, is the director of TommieMedia and is a student intern for PBS NewsHour's The Under-Told Stories Project, whose correspondent, Fred de Sam Lazaro, is based at St. Thomas. Lancaster went on a reporting trip to India with The Under-Told Stories Project in January. He's on the job hunt as he finishes his journalism and political science degrees.



Samantha HoangLong

Samantha HoangLong is the 2017 ThreeSixty Scholar

THREESIXTY JOURNALISM, A nonprofit outreach program of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of St. Thomas, has selected ThreeSixty student Samantha HoangLong as the 2017 ThreeSixty Scholar. She receives a full-tuition, four-year scholarship to study Communication and Journalism at St. Thomas starting in fall 2017.

Each year, high school seniors who are graduates of a ThreeSixty summer journalism camp compete for the ThreeSixty Scholar award – valued at more than \$160,000 over four years.

"The scholarship is more than just a financial benefit. It puts me on a pathway that is the start of an exciting life journey," HoangLong said. "I couldn't be more thankful for ThreeSixty Journalism."

HoangLong, a senior at

Burnsville High School, joined ThreeSixty in summer 2016 and completed the program's College Essay Boot Camp, Rookie Journalist Camp and News Reporter Academy. She quickly established herself as a committed student eager to learn and practice journalism.

"While attending ThreeSixty Journalism summer camps, I learned the basics of journalism," HoangLong said. "It also reminded me of the need for more multicultural journalists."

One of HoangLong's first pieces with ThreeSixty, "Adding their own flavor: Harding trio gets once-in-a-lifetime chance to display culinary chops in D.C.," was featured in the September 3, 2016 edition of the Pioneer Press.

"Samantha stood out early on," said Miles Trump, ThreeSixty program manager. "Throughout

her time with ThreeSixty, she's emerged as a strong writer, communicator and leader among her peers. We're lucky to have her, and so is St. Thomas."

HoangLong also participated in a special ThreeSixty partnership project with Minnesota Public Radio at the 2016 Minnesota State Fair and on ThreeSixty's 2016-17 school-year News Team. She was a National Honor Society member at Burnsville from 2015-17 and active in diversity initiatives.

"I like to think recognizing the diversity in my own community has helped me become a more empathetic, accepting person," she said.

HoangLong said the scholarship is an opportunity to pursue a career she is passionate about.

"At the University of St. Thomas, I will be able to learn, grow and explore," she said.

Three reasons you should apply to summer camp

IT HAPPENED TO Hlee Lee. It also had a similar effect on Zekriah Chaudhry. Samantha HoangLong experienced it, too.

ThreeSixty Journalism summer camp changed these high schoolers' lives by introducing them to and enhancing their love for storytelling. And the impact was so great, these students all made the decision to study communication and journalism in college.

It will happen for some of you, too.

Students who participate in one of ThreeSixty Journalism's summer programs gain a voice to tell their stories, helping them feel more connected to their communities and become more driven, knowledgeable, confident, tenacious, brave, enthusiastic and passionate in life.

Pretty cool, right?

Need more reasons to sign up today? Here are my top three reasons why you should apply for ThreeSixty Journalism summer camp.

NO. 1: COMPLETE YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY IN ONE WEEK!

You can significantly increase your chances of getting into the college of your choice by submitting a powerful and compelling personal essay. ThreeSixty Journalism and our volunteers, who are professional writers and communications experts, support you throughout the process—from brainstorming topics to revising to editing. Our students have used their essays to get into New York University, Penn State University and the University of St. Thomas.

HoangLong, a Burnsville High School senior, said writing her college essay was “really fun.”

“I never thought a journalism camp was something I would enjoy much,” she said. “I was just going because, ‘Okay, I get to write a



By Bao Vang
ThreeSixty Journalism
Engagement
Coordinator

college essay.’ ... I ended up using that college essay quite frequently.”

The one-week College Essay Boot Camp is offered as part of a two-week journalism camp. It's intensive, but you'll be glad you did it!

NO. 2: EXPAND YOUR NETWORK!

Are you ready to expand your network of friends and people who can get you a job or internship later in life? ThreeSixty Journalism summer camp brings a diverse group of high school students together from across the Twin Cities – and even from around the globe. Last year,

one student joined us from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia! You'll enjoy learning from your peers' experiences, making memories together and staying lifelong friends.

Our ThreeSixty volunteers, guest speakers and supporters are also eager to meet you and share their journeys of becoming journalists and communications professionals.

Chaudhry, a Minneapolis South High School junior, said his favorite part of ThreeSixty summer camps so far has been “the connections I've been able to build with professional journalists, going into their environments, observing their daily lives, their daily objectives they have to fulfill and getting an idea of what it's like to be a professional journalist.”

Often times, mentorships are formed and professional

journalists will keep students in mind when internships and job opportunities arise.

NO. 3: WIN A CHANCE TO GO TO COLLEGE TUITION-FREE!

The ultimate life-changing event to happen to a ThreeSixty Journalism student is when they receive our ThreeSixty Scholarship. It's a four-year, full-tuition scholarship to study Communication and Journalism at the University of St. Thomas. That's a value of more than \$160,000. You're eligible when you complete a two-week summer program and are admitted to the University of St. Thomas.

Lee, ThreeSixty's inaugural scholar, remembered how stressed she and her family of 10 felt about college tuition. She was thinking, “What am I going to do, how am I

going to pay for college?” she said.

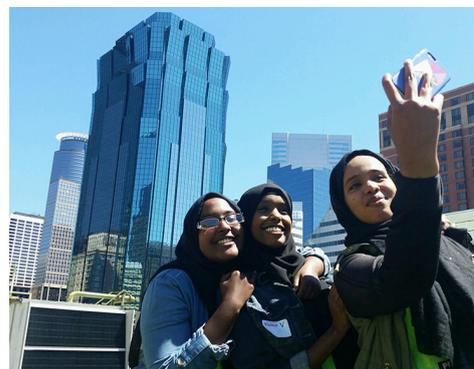
“If I didn't have the scholarship, I may not have stuck to journalism,” she said. Lee graduated from St. Thomas in 2007 and is now a freelance videographer and storyteller working primarily with Twin Cities-based nonprofits.

Will you join hundreds of your peers who say ThreeSixty Journalism summer camp was the highlight of their high school life? Apply today at www.threesixtyjournalism.org/summercamps.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY!

Get the most out of your summer — join ThreeSixty today! Meet great people; learn new skills that will help you in high school, college and beyond; experience life on a college campus; and complete your college essay. Apply for ThreeSixty Journalism's Rookie Journalist Camp and ThreeSixty Journalism's News Reporter Academy TODAY!

To apply, go to www.threesixtyjournalism.com/summercamps and follow the directions to fill out the application. Summer camps take place on the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul campus. Application deadline is May 22, 2017. Space is limited, and it is a competitive application process. Questions? Contact me at baovang@stthomas.edu or at 651-962-5225.



ThreeSixty Journalism wins big at MNA Awards

A TOTAL OF six ThreeSixty Journalism students—both current and alumni—received awards for their work during the 2015-16 Minnesota Newspaper Association College Better Newspaper Contest banquet on Jan. 26 in Bloomington.

ThreeSixty Journalism also won the General Excellence category, bringing the program's award total to seven, which matches the totals from each of the last two years.

This year, ThreeSixty earned four first-place finishes, two second-place awards and one third-place honor.

Annrose Jerry, a ThreeSixty graduate and freshman at Notre Dame, took home first place in the Business Story category for "Making their mark on the business world:

Young Minnesota entrepreneurs turn visions into reality."

"Nice enterprise piece featuring strong anecdotes and good local sourcing," the judges wrote about Jerry's story.

Melisa Robles-Olivar, a senior at Minneapolis Southwest High School, earned first place in the Columnist-4 year category for "Why I joined a high school walkout."

"Excellent, thoughtful writing with strong anecdotes, show-don't-tell reporting, and a perspective that looks but doesn't judge. Strong, call-to-action ending," the judges wrote about Robles-Olivar's article.

Shay Radhakrishnan, a ThreeSixty graduate and freshman at North Dakota State University,

ThreeSixty takes home 7 awards, including 4 first-place honors

took the top spot in the Editorial category for "The (lack of) youth vote: Young people need to take part in their civic duty."

"An important issue at a time when so much is at stake. This editorial stood out," wrote the judges.

ThreeSixty won the General Excellence category for recent issues of ThreeSixty Magazine.

"Wide breadth of coverage," the judges wrote about ThreeSixty Magazine. "Good photos. Strong

writing, featuring compelling ledes and strict adherence to AP style."

Aidan Berg, a senior at Minneapolis Southwest High School, earned second place in the Sports Story category for "Tackling concussions: Safety measures in football have been taken in recent years, but some call for sport's removal from schools."

"Nice story on a popular (concussion) topic. Well written," the judges wrote of Berg's piece.

Marissa Abara, a ThreeSixty graduate and a freshman at the University of St. Thomas, took home second place in the Columnist-4 year category for "Race and political correctness."

"Very strong and personal

piece—takes courage (and, probably, some frustration) to pull back the curtain to reveal a day in the life of someone who doesn't look like anyone else in class," the judges wrote.

Sebastian Alfonzo, a senior at St. Paul Central High School, earned third place in the Social Issues category for "They need to listen to the youth': Young people help NOC on front lines in fight for racial and economic justice."

"This story took a local program or project, and gave it a wider breadth of study and examination, including the larger issues in the community. Very nice reporting," the judges wrote about Alfonzo's piece.



Aidan Berg (left), a senior at Minneapolis Southwest High School, and Marissa Abara, a freshman at the University of St. Thomas, pose with their awards and others at the Minnesota Newspaper Association College Better Newspaper Contest in January in Bloomington. ThreeSixty won a total of seven awards, including four first-place finishes.

Wells Fargo comm. pro joins ThreeSixty Board



JOHN HOBOT, Wells Fargo Assistant Vice President, Media Relations & Corporate Communications Minnesota (pictured above), was recently elected to the ThreeSixty Board of Advisors. Hobot has ten years of communications experience, and in his current role he leads day-to-day media interactions as a company spokesperson. Prior to joining Wells Fargo in June 2015, John served as communications manager for the Minnesota National Guard for almost eight years.

"We're thrilled to have John's talents and voice at the ThreeSixty

table," said ThreeSixty board chair Duchesne Drew.

Hobot, who has a bachelor's in political science from the University of St. Thomas, said he is eager "to give back to my alma mater."

Hobot is also a Major in the Minnesota Army National Guard and has 14 years of service that includes two combat tours in Iraq. He is a military graduate of the U.S. Army Armor School, Fort Knox, Kentucky, and the Defense Information School, Fort Meade, Maryland.

STAFF PHOTO

ThreeSixty's Youth Digital Media Summit a 'virtual' success

VIRTUAL REALITY. Website coding. Viral videos. Snapchat Spectacles.

Twin Cities high school students became makers and creators with those digital media tools and platforms—and many more—at ThreeSixty Journalism's 2017 Youth Digital Media Summit on Feb. 11 at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul.

The event—which aimed to empower teenagers to use digital media wisely, responsibly and effectively to accelerate their future success—was centered around five digital media-focused breakout sessions. The kicker: ThreeSixty Journalism students planned and taught three of those sessions, serving as digital media experts passing along knowledge to their peers.

"There was a lot of thought that went into the ThreeSixty Youth Digital Media Summit," said Zekriah Chaudhry, a junior at Minneapolis South who helped create one of the breakout sessions. "It takes a lot to create an informative and engaging breakout session, and I think that everyone I worked with really fed off of that challenge."

ThreeSixty students worked in groups with volunteer professionals (aka "Digital Media Pros") Erica Dao, account supervisor at Weber Shandwick; Steffen Ryan, digital strategist at Weber Shandwick; Phyllis Welsh, employee advocacy lead/social media specialist at 3M; David Jungers, solutions consultant at Sprinkl; Briana Gruenewald, account executive at Belmont Partners; and Emma Strub, account coordinator at Belmont Partners.

"For me, the best part was being able to see how excited the student leaders were to share what they have learned," Welsh said. "As someone who leverages digital storytelling every day, it's fantastic seeing the next generation of storytellers diving into the industry—a picture of what is to come!"

Best Buy's Geek Squad Academy led the Summit's capstone. Geek Squad Agents helped end the Summit on a high note by teaching students website coding basics, including how to put their own spin on an existing website.

Student participants also learned about and captured 360-degree photography and video during a session at the **DIGITAL MEDIA** *continued on page 29*



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

Above: Students record a video on an iPad during a breakout session at ThreeSixty Journalism's Youth Digital Media Summit in February at the University of St. Thomas.

Left: ThreeSixty student Duni Awad tries out a pair of Snapchat Spectacles during ThreeSixty Journalism's Youth Digital Media Summit.



FOR MORE PHOTOS

Turn to page 26 for more photos of the Youth Digital Media Summit and of ThreeSixty Journalism's school-year News Team program.

ThreeSixty Alumni Spotlight

Farm to marketing



AMARI GRAHAM/THREESIXTY JOURNALISM

Maggie Collette took advantage of opportunities, from scholarships to internships, to bring her creativity from rural South Dakota to downtown Minneapolis.

AFTER HER SENIOR year in high school, Maggie Collette moved from a small-town farm in South Dakota to begin a new journey and find new opportunities in the Twin Cities.

Ten years later, Collette works as an art director at Broadhead, a full-service marketing agency in the heart of downtown Minneapolis that connects “urban and rural.” She took advantage of internships and opportunities along the way to get where she is now, and believes much of her success is a result of a range of experiences during college.

“I think that’s been really important to my success ... my breadth of experience and my variety of experience,” Collette said. “Really taking in those opportunities as much as you can.”



By Amari Graham
News Reporter

While participating in her high school newspaper in Mellette, South Dakota, Collette (her maiden name is “Clemensen”) was interested in becoming a reporter. She attended a ThreeSixty Journalism summer camp between her sophomore and junior years in 2007 at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. She stayed in the dorms on campus, a long way from home.

“It was so helpful for me when I was going through the program to see what other people did, because I grew up on a farm in a really small town in South Dakota,” Collette

said. “I didn’t have much exposure to different careers other than farming. It was great to see what was out there, what a real reporter does.”

Lynda McDonnell, the former executive director of ThreeSixty, recalls Collette arriving at camp recognizing how important gas prices were for teens in rural areas. By interviewing teenagers at gas stations, she put together a well-written piece during camp, McDonnell said.

“I was so impressed by how she calmly, quietly, intelligently worked her way through challenging tasks, new environments and new groups of people,” McDonnell said.

During her senior year in 2009, Collette was awarded the ThreeSixty Scholarship, a four-year, full-tuition scholarship to study

< Maggie Collette, an art director at Broadhead and the 2009 ThreeSixty Scholar, would advise anyone pursuing design “to get as much practice as you can and do as much as you can.”

Communication and Journalism at the University of St. Thomas.

“I was so excited and honored to win the ThreeSixty Scholarship,” Collette said. “I knew I wanted to go to St. Thomas but could not afford it, so having that dream made possible was an amazing gift that I will always be grateful for. It has had a huge impact on my career.”

During her time at St. Thomas, Collette was involved in extra-curriculars, jobs and internships, including working for TommieMedia, the university’s student-produced news organization, the university yearbook and St. Thomas Magazine. She later returned to ThreeSixty as an advertising intern in 2012.

During spring semester of her freshman year, Collette applied for an internship recommended by an administrator in the University Relations department, which would later result in her earning a design degree at St. Catherine University, just down the street from St. Thomas.

Collette changed her focus to advertising from reporting about halfway through her sophomore year.

THE MAGGIE COLLETTE FILE

Grew up: On a farm in Mellette, South Dakota

Occupation: Art director at Broadhead, soon-to-be strategist at Broadhead

Hobbies: Knitting in front of the TV; attending concerts; taking art classes; learning; traveling

Pet: Blind Boston Terrier named Ray Charles

In high school: Graduated with a class of 19 students; started a small business screen-printing T-shirts for sports teams, scrapbooking clubs and family reunions; earned the ThreeSixty Scholarship in 2009.

In college: Held several reporting and advertising jobs and internships; studied abroad and traveled to 11 countries

Now: Works full-time at Broadhead; enrolled in the University of Minnesota master’s program in Strategic Communications

“I realized the reporting life was not for me and fell in love with advertising,” she said. “There’s so much variety to the work and as a designer at the time, the opportunities to do really cool, creative work were much greater for me.”

A major part of Collette’s success stems from her lengthy resume. “Every year I had an internship,” she said.

ALUMNI *continued on page 29*



Collette (back row, second from left) during her time at ThreeSixty camp.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MAGGIE COLLETTE

teens talk media

From **fake news** to **virtual reality** to the echo chamber of **social media**, *ThreeSixty* high school journalists report—and weigh in on—the stories of **modern-day journalism**.

Trapped in the echo chamber

News that confirms only your beliefs can be ‘a very dangerous thing’

EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD DAVID JAFFE is about as politically involved as any teenager.

A self-proclaimed political aficionado, Jaffe starts his day by listening to National Public Radio, sneaks peeks between classes at news notifications on his phone, and drives his car, displaying a Barack Obama bumper sticker, to Model United Nations practice, where he simulates United Nations discussions and procedures.

Yet even civically engaged teenagers such as Jaffe are vulnerable to the phenomenon of the “echo chamber,” in which people encounter opinions that align with only their own worldviews, according to



By Mina Yuan
News Section
Leader and
Senior Reporter

University of Minnesota professor Sid Bedingfield.

“The idea is that in an echo chamber, one message is delivered ... repeatedly,” Bedingfield said. “That’s a very dangerous thing.”

While echo chambers have existed as long as mass media, the explosion of niche media outlets may be making young viewers and readers increasingly susceptible, Bedingfield said.

As social media has gained popularity as a primary source of news,

TEEN’S TAKE

How to pop your filter bubble—even when you’re tired

AS BOTH A journalist and a high school student, I like to believe I am extremely wary and proactive regarding echo chambers. Because of my last four years with *ThreeSixty*, I have been immersed in a peer group that is unusually aware of different perspectives on current events. It’s easier for me to seek out information from all sides because of the people I surround myself with and the activities I choose.

Yet simultaneously, I’m a busy high school student. I understand what it’s like to get home with an endless mountain of homework to slog through and approximately five hours until school starts again. At that point, I can’t physically summon the brain cells to

make myself consider whether the news I’m reading is from the same source I used last night, or the night before, or even the night before that.

In such situations, I would recommend the tips below, which require very few brain cells and may help broaden the perspectives you encounter:

Don’t unfriend people you disagree with on social media.

While some opinions may seem abrasive, overbearing or downright abhorrent, it’s important to consider the validity of each argument. In my own experience, most people have reasons for posting what they do, and it’s valuable to try to understand those reasons.

Use AllSides.com to vary your news sources. AllSides.com uses bias ratings to present users with news articles with biases on the political left, right and center. It’s essentially a one-stop shop for news from a wide variety of perspectives.

Get offline, and go purposefully talk to people whose opinions don’t align with yours. During my time at *ThreeSixty*, I have always felt face-to-face interviews help me get into the minds of my sources most intimately and accurately. The same holds true for everyday conversation. Speaking in-person with a variety of people is ideal for preventing echo chambers.

—Mina Yuan

especially for teenagers, algorithms used by platforms such as Facebook and Twitter often show users more of the content they have expressed interest in on their feeds. These algorithms also often filter out posts

with viewpoints different than the user’s, Bedingfield said.

“[But the algorithms] didn’t start out as some insidious effort to create filter bubbles,” Bedingfield said. “No! It was a rational response

to information overflow.”

When Bedingfield was young, he said, people relied on a few major TV networks, radio stations and newspapers for information. People **ECHO CHAMBER** *continued on page 25*

TEEN'S TAKE

Paired with text, VR can show new angles to the story

VIRTUAL REALITY CERTAINLY has its limitations. Unlike traditional broadcast journalism, the purpose of virtual reality is not necessarily to reach more households or to make visuals more accessible, but instead to give users control of their surroundings. Raw 360-degree video with a high level of user control could feed confirmation biases because a user can actively search for almost whatever he or she wants in the virtual environment.

Writing will likely always be needed to provide virtual reality video with the proper context. Without a solid amount of text to supplement virtual reality media, there is no longer a median—a journalist—between the viewer and a situation.

However, when writing is combined with virtual reality (for instance, the way the Star Tribune used both elements to show the Somali community in the Cedar-Riverside area), the result can be a comprehensive story that shows users multiple angles of a story. If journalists can accept the responsibility of using virtual reality as an element of storytelling and not let it tell an entire story on its own, then I believe the tool could find its place in regular journalistic storytelling.

—Zekriah Chaudhry



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

A high school student straps on virtual reality headgear at the ThreeSixty Journalism Youth Digital Media Summit in February at the University of St. Thomas. Media organizations are increasingly using virtual reality as a form of storytelling.

Putting the ‘wow’ in journalism

Media companies embrace 360-degree virtual reality for storytelling

TIGER WORKU THOUGHT he could tell the difference between reality and virtual reality.

A freshman at Minneapolis South High School, Worku first tried virtual reality in February, through a headset providing 360-degree video immersion, at a digital media workshop at the University of St. Thomas.

“But when I put it on,” Worku said, “that was like—‘wow.’”



By Zekriah Chaudhry
News Section
Leader and
Senior Reporter

Worku experienced what Eric Tornoe, associate director of research computing at St. Thomas, calls the “wow factor” of virtual reality.

Now, journalists at organizations such as the New York Times, the

Washington Post and many others are trying to harness that “wow factor” and implement it into the journalistic field.

In 2016, the Times published more than 15 virtual reality films, according to the company website. It also publishes a daily 360-degree video and offers its own virtual reality app, NYT VR. In the same year, the Washington Post debuted its first virtual reality project, titled “VRroom.”

“[Virtual reality] can show you a more complete picture of what’s going on,” Tornoe said. “Instead of just looking where the person who is shooting the footage wants you to look, you now have the ability to look all around. You can see more process.”

Jenni Pinkley, a senior producer and editor of multimedia at the Star Tribune, has been using virtual reality as a storytelling device for the past year. She calls virtual reality an

“empathy machine,” saying other journalistic tools do not give users the same level of control to look around their environment.

“It has the ability to impact differently than words and one-dimensional photos do,” Pinkley said.

For example, Pinkley and the Star Tribune used virtual reality to show the tightly knit Somali community in the Cedar-Riverside area, called “Little Mogadishu,” in an article in early March. The Star Tribune added three 360-degree videos by videographer Mark Vancleave to a story written by Allie Shah, all posted on the startribune.com website.

One video allows the user to look around Samiya Clothing Store, a clothing shop in “Little Mogadishu” that is lined with decorative dresses hanging on the store walls. Another shows two barbers carefully trimming hair of two clients at Banadir Barbers, a small

VIRTUAL REALITY *continued on page 30*

Taking on fake news

Local experts warn news consumers to be more skeptical

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA signs executive order banning the Pledge of Allegiance. Pope Francis shocks the world, endorses Donald Trump for President. FBI agent suspected in Clinton email leaks found dead in apparent murder-suicide.

These are a few examples of fake news headlines that filled up Facebook, Twitter and other social media feeds leading up to the November presidential election.

Hardly a day goes by when readers don't hear or see a reference to "fake news."

So, what is fake news? How do you recognize it?

"I don't really like the term fake news because it's either news or it isn't, right?" said Mark Neuzil, a Communication and Journalism professor at the University of St. Thomas. "So, in my view, fake news is—really, there is no such thing. It's just another way for making stuff up."

There are a few essential things to consider in evaluating a news story. The first, Neuzil said, is the reliability of the news source. Does the newspaper, magazine, TV network, website or blog have a track record? Has it been reliable and unbiased in the past?

Look at what a news source has reported previously, Neuzil said. Is it objective? Does it have a point of view? Why is it saying what it's saying? Is it a talk radio host who

"It's just another way for making stuff up."

—Mark Neuzil,
St. Thomas professor,
on defining fake news.



By **Samantha HoangLong**
Culture Reporter

has said things previously that have no basis in fact? Is it a website, such as Breitbart News, that has a definite political point of view? Is it a newspaper or a network that has been accurate for a long period of time?

Neal Justin, a TV and radio critic at the Star Tribune, said it's useful to have two or three go-to news organizations with a record of being fair and accurate. Then

news consumers can measure any particular report against those trusted sources.

Justin said the goal of fake news creators is a "deliberate attempt to set an agenda and disrupt legitimate information."

This is why readers need to be particularly skeptical of news accounts, Neuzil said. Is the accuracy of the particular information in question? Can it be verified? Can it be found in one or more other places? And do those places have a reputation for accuracy?

Some politicians have erroneously tried to dub errors in mainstream news organizations as fake news, Justin said. Others have used the term as a way of demeaning and discrediting the legitimate news media.

For instance, Justin recalled a story from the inauguration of Pres. Donald Trump when a Time magazine correspondent at the White House incorrectly reported that the Martin Luther King, Jr., statue had been removed from the Oval Office.

TEEN'S TAKE

How to broaden your news sources

HEY, FRIENDS. WITH fake news being such a problem right now, you need to broaden your news reading habits to include reputable sources beyond your social media feeds.

Based on my reporting and interviews, here are some tips:

Download a news app and turn the pop-up notifications ON. Doing this simple action can instantly feed you information. If the news sounds like something you're interested in, you can easily click on the notification and read the article.

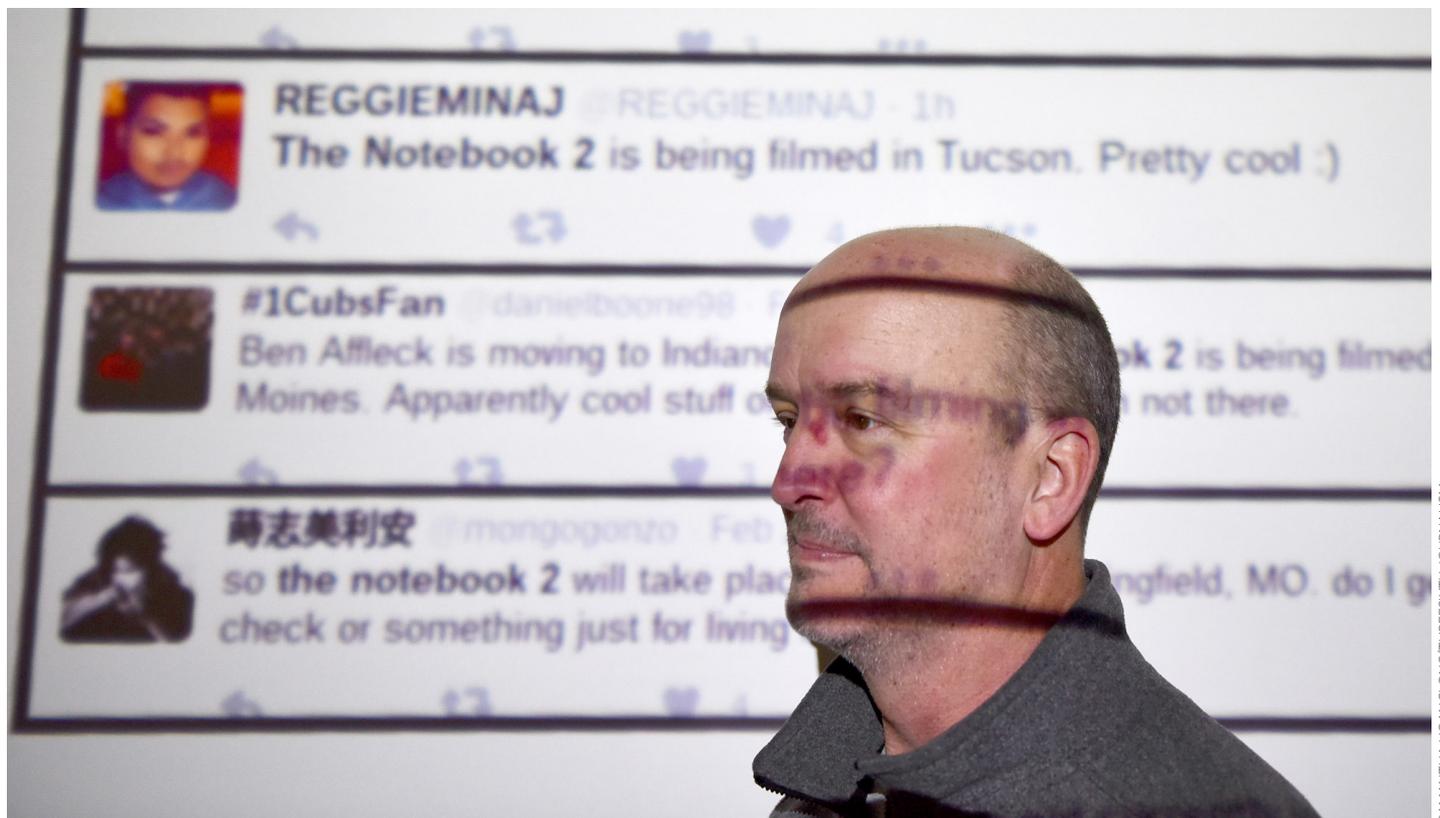
Read more than just the headline of an article. Sometimes, it's easier to assume that you know everything about a subject, despite the fact that you only read the headline. Don't assume that the headline is true because there's always the possibility that it could be a sponsored article, click-bait or fake news.

Verify, verify and verify. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Make sure the information is from a reliable source! Be sure to double check the facts—or at least the general ideas from the article.

—Samantha HoangLong

The reporter quickly apologized, but administration officials jumped on the error and called it, essentially, fake news.

"But that is not fake news, in my opinion, that's a mistake," Justin said. "There is a clear distinction **FAKE NEWS** continued on page 25



Mark Neuzil, a University of St. Thomas communication and journalism professor, says news consumers need to be more skeptical of the stories they see in print, online and on television.



Nothing to fear in fake news

Dissecting the facts takes time, but it's a small price for being informed

SCROLLING DOWN YOUR social media news feed to check what your friends are up to, you notice news articles with bold headlines that say something almost unbelievable.

“Man sues wife for ‘ugly children.’”

“Trump plans to deport American Indians to India.”

“Betty White Dyes Peacefully in Her Los Angeles Home.”

People are certainly talking about these topics, but are these articles really legit? Or are



By **Tony Vue**
Voices Writer

COMMENTARY

they fabrications?

They are fake news, which isn't hard to find online.

Personally, I don't often stumble into fake news on my social media feeds. However, if I do run into it,

I know what to do. That's because I was taught in many of my classes how to fact-check and how to look for good sources. But not everyone has this training, and I worry about how my peers handle the misinformation they see in the media.

First, let's define “fake news” as information presented as news but designed to deceive and not based in fact. It's there to give false information, and it often spreads by social media. The more fake news spreads, the more people may be swayed.

Fake news is accessible to large audiences, and young people are particularly susceptible to it. Nowadays, teens don't often follow the news closely day to day. That makes it harder to know what's true

and what's fake. If teens do happen to read fake news, they might assume it to be fact. That can impact their opinions about what's going on politically and in their community.

It turns out it's relatively easy to find out if the article has merit. I want to share this process with people my age to help them form more fact-based opinions.

1. CHECK THE HEADLINE.

One of the first things we see on a news article is the headline. When we read it, we can get a grasp of what the article is about. Before jumping to conclusions, read the header over. Does it make sense? Does it have that “that-can't-be-true” feeling? Does it make you want to click on it anyway?

Let's look again at this Betty White headline: “Betty White Dyes Peacefully in Her Los Angeles Home.” Many of you caught the satirical spelling of the word “dyes.” But many of you didn't. And you're the ones who can't wait to share this article on your social media pages. Not only is this story satire (and misleading), it also is unkind to White, who may have woken up the next day to read that she's dead.

2. CHECK THE WEBSITE AND THE WEBSITE URL.

The website can help you find out if the article is fake or not. Is the news organization reliable? How about the website interface?

FINDING FACTS *continued on page 22*



Jana Shortal, co-anchor of KARE 11's "Breaking the News."

ThreeSixty Focus on...
Jana Shortal

PHOTO COURTESY OF CARLY DANIEK

one where I didn't know a whole lot about anything else.

I bring that up because obviously I was different, and I knew that, but I didn't know how to express it. And I wasn't repressing myself in any way. I did not know I was queer. I didn't know really that I was a feminist. I didn't know any of those things. I just knew I wasn't fitting in in some ways, but in other ways, I fit in great. ...

I just figured out how to be a teenager, but it wasn't authentic to myself and I think that's why I saw so many changes throughout my 20s and 30s, like radical, radical changes. Changes that included depression, changes that included an eating disorder that went on for over a decade, changes that included trying to present as feminine as I possibly could with as many boys in my phone as I could possibly find—trying to fill something I just couldn't fit. ...

It's a really confusing time and it took me a really long time, literally 36 years, to come into my own, and I don't think it's going to take other people that long. I'm just a late bloomer.

How would you define teenage Jana in a few words?

Shortal: Oooh, interesting. I wish my mom were here to tell you.

Curious. Obnoxious. Funny. Awkward.

When you transitioned from high school to college, how was that transition for you and how did your life change?

Shortal: The first year was difficult because I literally went from prom queen [at my high school] to nobody at a really big school, like 18,000 undergraduates. I'm from a town of 5,000 people. So, yikes. ...

[College] was, you chose your classes where there was learning environments where there were lectures. I was just blown away, I thought I was on a different planet and it was so fun. ... It literally was like "A Whole New Word" [in] Aladdin. I didn't know what was happening. Everything was big and **SHORTAL** continued on next page

The KARE 11 anchor talks standing out, the state of journalism and more

ON A CHILLY Saturday afternoon in March, Jana Shortal pulls up in her Honda Civic and walks into SpyHouse Coffee in Minneapolis.

The KARE 11 anchor and reporter enters SpyHouse wearing black joggers that she says she slept in the night before and a plaid vest. We've never met before. I attempt to shake her hand, and she stretches out her arm and leans closer.

"No, I am a hugger," she says, as she goes in for the embrace.

Shortal was simply being herself. She is quirky, confident, casual, personable and happy.

For Shortal, this didn't come easily. Earlier in life the southern Illinois native struggled, fighting depression, an eating disorder and identity issues, she said. But over the years, she has become comfortable with herself, and now she stands out like no other broadcaster in the Twin Cities.



By Talia Bradley
Active Life
Senior Reporter

Since joining KARE in 2003, Shortal has become a reporter and co-anchor of KARE's "Breaking the News," a show that strives to look at news in a deeper and different way. Shortal has shared her personal life experiences on the air—including that she's gay—as well as her opinion. She doesn't wear the typical attire a female news anchor would wear. Rather, she dresses in more casual and trendy clothing, such as jeans and a blazer.

She has received criticism for her unique sense of style. In September, C.J., a columnist at the Star Tribune, criticized Shortal in a column for the skinny jeans she was wearing while reporting about the death of Jacob Wetterling, whose remains had been found after he went missing in 1989. Shortal responded with a Facebook post, which received more than

6,800 shares and 2,200 comments. The story proceeded to go viral and brought national attention to Shortal. (The Star Tribune removed the column and issued an apology.)

I interviewed Shortal about what she was like as a teenager, how she has come to find herself, what she thinks about the state of journalism and much more.

What was it like for you as a teenager in Illinois?

Shortal: Growing up in a really, really small town (in Illinois) with absolutely zero diversity—there are literally more Asians and people of color in this room right now than I ever saw for my first 25 years of life. ... It was very small. I didn't even know you were supposed to lock your door until college. ... While it was a very safe childhood, nothing bad ever happened there, it was also

*“It took me a really long time,
literally 36 years, to come into my own,
and I don’t think it’s going to take other people
that long. I’m just a late bloomer.”*

SHORTAL from page previous page different and cool. And scary. And then I wound up making friends toward my sophomore year. And then there were hard lessons to learn, too. It was just harder. But by the time I got to my last three years of college, I never, ever, ever wanted to leave. I barely did.

My first job was 20 miles away, purposefully, so I never really had to graduate from college. Stayed with my college roommates. Milked that one until that job was terrible and I got a really good opportunity to move to a really big market, so I finally had to leave college.

How did you find storytelling and journalism when you went to college?

Shortal: There was a tiny, tiny TV in the kitchen [at home during high school], and I would watch SportsCenter, which at the time, it was 1994, 1995, SportsCenter is brand new on ESPN. It was the first program—at that time it was Dan Patrick and Keith Olbermann—that put almost comedic writing [into the broadcast]. What you all know as Jon Stewart and Jon Oliver—it was that, 25 years ago.

It was the first time that satire [was] presented in a news format—albeit sports, so you could do it. I was like, “What is that? I want to do that.” I was convinced that I was going to go to Syracuse, because that’s where sports journalists go, and then I found out how much it costs. ...

[Because] my father lived in St. Louis and he paid Missouri taxes, I could get Missouri tuition, and that whole thing about going somewhere where nobody else went, that was my way to go to a four-year university. And it just so happened to be one of the best

journalism schools in the country. That was just dumb luck, literally.

Why did you come to the Twin Cities?

Shortal: When I was in college and then in my second job... we would watch film, VHS tapes at the time, and it would be the NPPA Station of the Year tape, which was the National Press Photographers Association, and KARE always won. ... We were mesmerized. I watched local news where I grew up and where I was living and the way we did it, and then this was like the pros. ...

When I got to my job before this job (in Kansas City), it was a really difficult place to work and there were a couple of photographers [and] we wanted to work like [KARE], and we just worked for a crime-and-grind, run-and-gun station, and it was awful. And to get us through it, we would watch those tapes. We would order them from the NPPA.

That job in Kansas City ended rather abruptly in 2003 and I thought I didn’t want to do TV anymore. It was just a really bad experience and I didn’t like it.

One of those photographers who was my dear friend compiled my work and sent it to KARE 11. While not in TV anymore, at some shopping mall in Johnson County, Kansas, I got a phone call from the news director at KARE 11. And I hung up on him because I thought it was a prank call. And then he called back. ... He flew me up here a few weeks later, and I moved a month after that.

This is the lesson, though, in that, is that you make your own luck ... by being good to other people. The guy who sent my tape did that out of the kindness of his heart. ... That’s why I’m sitting here right



PHOTO COURTESY OF JANA SHORTAL

Shortal was named prom queen during high school in Jerseyville, Illinois. She describes her high school self as “curious,” “obnoxious,” “funny” and “awkward.”

now. This all comes full circle. You don’t know when, you don’t know how, you don’t know why, and you don’t do it for that reason. But if we all help each other, it all starts to make sense when you get to be my age.

When you came to the Twin Cities, how were you received by people?

Shortal: Not good. I was a lot different. I came in 2003. I was one of the youngest people KARE had ever hired. It [had] a national reputation, and to hire a 26-year-old kid who is pretty green, that was a risk. There were some people on staff that just didn’t take it very seriously and that really got to me. I didn’t do very well.

I wasn’t a good employee. I was scared. I was nervous. I didn’t know who I was. It reflected in my work. By the grace of some higher power, they kept me and helped me grow. And some people reached out and said, “No, you can do this.” Over time, and over a long period of time, it started to get easier. But it wasn’t easy when I first got [to Minnesota]. ...

I also, the year I moved here, was in the process of coming out.

It’s not really KARE’s fault, I was in some serious life transitions. 26 was bumpy for me. [Age] 26-29 was really hard, there was a lot going on. That was happening at the same time. It was moving to a city [where] I didn’t know anybody, working at a station that was a legacy station that a lot of people thought I had no business working at, presenting my gender in a very awkward way, at the same time fighting against my sexual orientation. I wasn’t excited about it, which I’m ashamed to say now, but that’s what it was like in 2003-2004.

Eventually you found your voice and your own personal style?

Shortal: Yeah, [after] trying to use somebody else’s for so long. And it’s funny, that’s an overarching theme to my entire life and career, and how I dress and how I present and how I work. And now I’m sitting here with you. People want to talk to me because they see something in how I’m doing this stuff and I’m like, “Oh, well I’m just doing it my way now.”

What’s your take on the criticism of your attire in September and how did you feel when you read C.J.’s column?

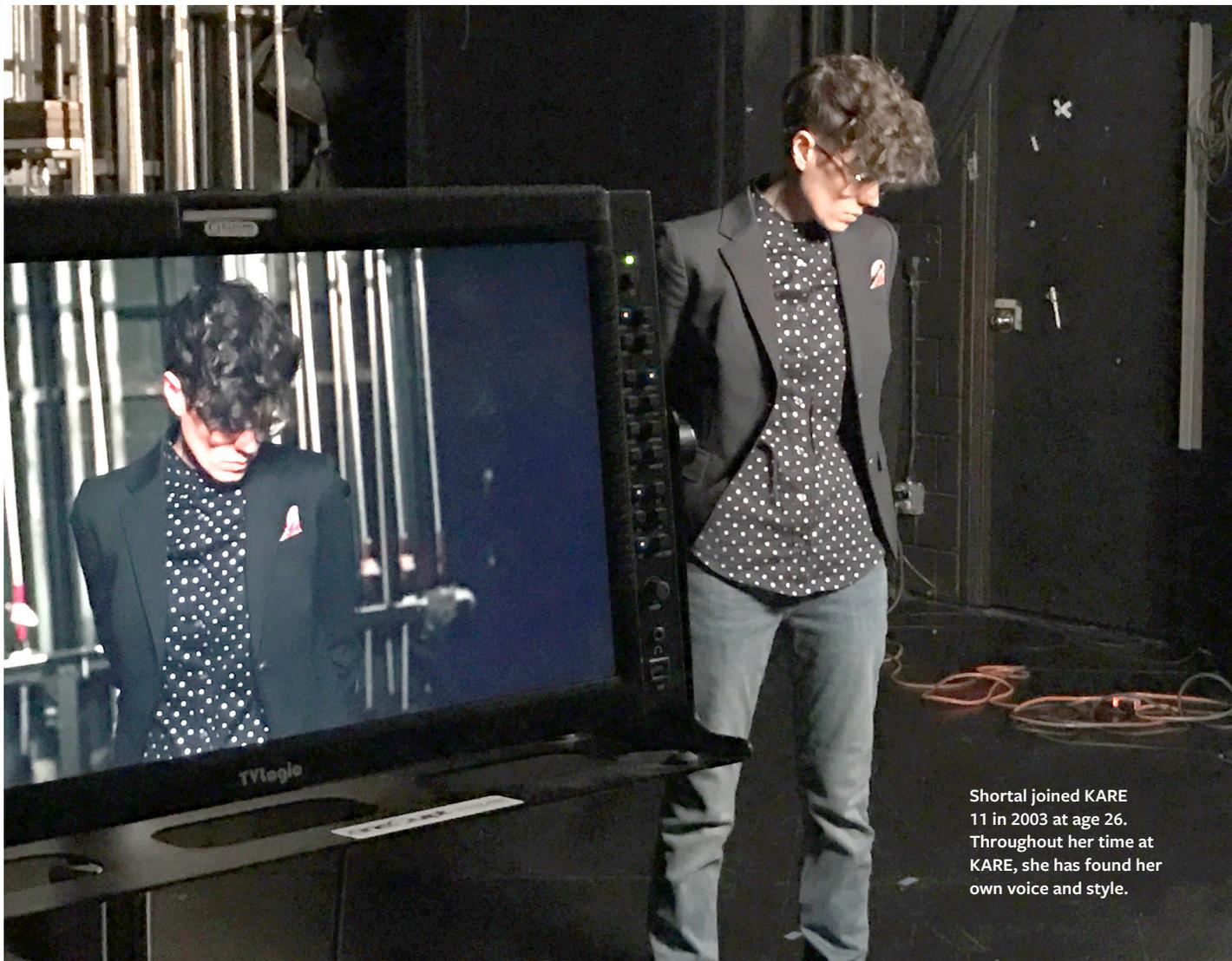
Shortal: I was shocked. I don’t know that there’s another word to use. I was shocked most of all. I know the tenor of her work, but this just seemed worse.

I also felt really embarrassed that anybody who went into Google that night... [and] typed in “Wetterling” in the *Star Tribune*, that would be the first thing that they see. And that really [upset me] that that garbage would be inserted into the story so important to our community, a story that we needed to heal, and that was just trash, thrown into that. It’s just gross. For someone writing for our paper of record, that was embarrassing. I thought the whole thing was gross.

What did you take away from that entire experience?

Shortal: One of these times—if it wasn’t that time, it’s going to be another time—it’s going to be like when ... Clark Kent goes into the phone booth and he’s just Clark Kent, and when he comes out he’s Superman because there’s a transformation. I didn’t know it at the time, because it was a million things going through my body that night, and never for one minute did I think when I said in response [on Facebook] that anybody would give a crap. I was just responding for me and not letting somebody do that. I had no idea that anyone would read it or share it—read it, sure—but I didn’t have that kind of reach. I’m not famous. I’m not popular like the main anchors, I’m just a regular reporter. I never thought it would make that much of an impact.

What I can see now looking back on it was that was the moment I came out of that phone booth just angry as hell for all of the times that anybody ever did that to me, and for all of the times anybody does it to somebody else. It’s not OK. It’s not permissible. It’s beneath the pail. It doesn’t matter if you’re in the fourth grade and you’re doing it on the playground, or you’re a grown woman working for **SHORTAL** continued on next page



Shortal joined KARE 11 in 2003 at age 26. Throughout her time at KARE, she has found her own voice and style.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KARE 11

SHORTAL from page previous page a major newspaper and you do it in your column. No more.

And I think the response wasn't because people felt sorry for me. It was because they felt empowered that somebody said "No. No, no, no."

What were you thinking about when you posted your response?

Shortal: It's funny you ask that. I haven't read it. Probably I did the very next morning because I didn't sleep very well that night, because that whole night was really just like I was living outside of my body. Now I have a lot of empathy for actual famous people. When they do things and they're in gossip columns, I feel so sad for them because I'm like, they're real people. To be objectified in that way, it really feels strange.

What do you think teenagers should take away from your experience?

Shortal: Be yourself. Because everybody else is taken. It's true. It sounds ridiculous, but it is true. There's only one you. And that's pretty preferable because you're unique. ...

I know people would say, "It's easy for you to say," but I was never supposed to be here, ever. From my high school guidance counselor to my freshman year journalism teacher to my first and second jobs, through my own self-sabotage, through my own self-harm—somehow, still kicking. There's a reason for that. ... It was hard. And hard's what makes it great. Otherwise everyone else would do it.

I watched your powerful message about the Orlando nightclub shooting in June 2016 on "Breaking the News." How did you make the decision to publicly say that you're gay on the broadcast?

THE JANA SHORTAL FILE

Profession: Journalist, KARE 11
Age: 39
Hometown: Jerseyville, Illinois
Career Snapshot: Worked as a reporter at WDAF-TV in Kansas City; hired at KARE 11 at age 26; reporter and co-anchor of KARE 11's "Breaking the News"; was thrust into national spotlight when Star Tribune columnist criticized her attire—in particular, her skinny jeans—while reporting about Jacob Wetterling's death
Find her: On Twitter at @janashortal

Shortal: As a queer person at my age, those places (nightclubs) are sanctuaries. ... It's a place where we could be as a community and love who we love, in complete and total safety. And it's also, because there's no lights and windows for reasons of

our safety, it's an open killing ground if someone wanted to do that.

I just closed my eyes and imagined being at ... every queer space that literally allowed me to become myself, and I could just see it, and it was horrifying. So that was just playing in my head.

Then I got home that night, and I don't know if you guys watched any of the coverage, but I was watching CNN, and I know other people did it, but Anderson Cooper went on the air and read 49 names. It took 16 minutes, and all he did was stand there and read their names, ages, and where they're from, and he was weeping, and I was just like—I was sick.

Before that had happened, my mother had called when she'd seen that really did happen. It was like 3:30 and my friend was like, "Let's just meet for a drink," and we went ... we're sitting on a patio, and my

mom called. ... And she was literally distraught, and I'm 38 at that point, [and she is] telling me to go home. It was the first time I understood when I came out to my mom why she was so scared, because I could hear it in her voice. This is what she was worried about. ...

The next day was Monday, and we had our editorial meeting... Through the meeting I just told the story about my mom, and Rena (Sarigianopoulos, Shortal's co-host on "Breaking the News") just was beside herself. She was just like, "Do you want to tell that story?"

... I said, I could, but I wanted to do it a very specific way. I didn't want it to be on live TV, because I didn't know how I was going to react. I wanted to tape it but only do it in one take, because I wanted it to be real. And then, on the back end of that story, I wanted to do similar to what Anderson Cooper did, but I wanted to just type their names, and play music and then the show to be over. I didn't want any talking or any debate. So, they gave me that permission to do [the show] that way.

I thought that it was transparent. I'm sure a lot of people that you could interview, because a lot of people don't like it, they would think, would say it was self-serving—and that's fine. I mean, as a journalist you're never supposed to cross that line, but I don't believe that anymore. I think I'm a different kind of journalist, and I'm comfortable with that. If that makes other people uncomfortable, that's fine.

As part of this issue of our magazine, we're featuring different stories that talk about the state of journalism now, and I'm wondering what you think the state of journalism is and where we are now?

Shortal: Someone described this [as] similar to the state we were probably in maybe in the '60s but maybe even more so after Lincoln was elected. And I'm not saying this to be anti-Trump. I'm saying at a fundamental destruction of everything we know as the norms in media and how the country is run has been [blown up]. [Media **SHORTAL** continued on page 30

ThreeSixty

COLLEGE ESSAY BOOT CAMP

Kicking students' college essays into shape!

TAKE 41 TERRIFIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS—students who were born in the United States, Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Congo, Mexico, Gambia, Burma, Thailand and South Africa—16 volunteer writing coaches and three ThreeSixty staff, put them together in a couple rooms over spring break, add some pizza and Subway, and charge everyone with one monumental task: Complete a polished, adaptable college essay by week's end.

That's College Essay Boot Camp. It's tough, emotional and meaningful. In early April, students from Roosevelt High School in south Minneapolis and Harding Senior High School on the East Side of St. Paul sat down to share and transform their diverse life stories. The completed essays will help land these students in colleges and universities from coast to coast. They'll also show you why College Essay Boot Camp is our favorite week of the year.

—Chad Caruthers,
ThreeSixty executive director



Students from St. Paul Harding and Minneapolis Roosevelt high schools pose for a photo with staff and volunteers after completing ThreeSixty Journalism's College Essay Boot Camp on April 7 at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul.

PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

On the right path, after tragedy and turmoil



By Elizabeth Rypa
St. Paul Harding High School

BAM! BAM! I heard this sound early in the morning. People screaming, “Mungu nisaidie” (God help me). My body shaking and numb. My face hot. I knew how to run at the age of 3. Should I run, or stay and wait for my parents? They were in the fields, working, when the chaos began.

I heard a voice calling me:

“Da-eli, kimbia, nitakua nyuma yako” (Sister Eliza, run! I will be behind you). My legs could not move one step. I later find the courage to run through the woods. Then bam! A body fell to the ground behind me. It was my 18-year-old sister, Faisa, shot dead. I stood numb, again, with no one to turn to, again. I mourned for my sister, and then my cousin Bwamungu reached around my waist and picked me up. My eyes swollen, I heard voices, laughter and talking. The boat was crowded, sweaty and stinky. A tear-drop fell from my eye. I was frightened but knew I was safe, because Bwamungu and Fatuma, another cousin, were with me. When the boat landed, my life and parents were still in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we were in Zambia.

In Zambia, children my own age bullied me for not speaking Nyanja

or English. I learned how to take a slap and not give one back. Five years later, Bwamungu was arrested. Fatuma was in boarding school. I was homeless.

“Nini kimetokea?” (What happened?), an old Congolese man asked me one day. I was quiet, and then I told him. My cousin was gone, taken by the police, I said in Swahili. “I have no place to go.” He took me to his house. I trusted him, because he was Congolese. I lived with him for five years, and he paid for my school. All of a sudden, I only had to eat, go to school and take care of myself. It felt like a miracle.

“You will be going to the United States on Monday,” the old Congolese man—now “Grandpa”—told me one day. I was in eighth grade, and those words hit my heart like a bullet. I was sad. I wanted to go to the United States to be with my



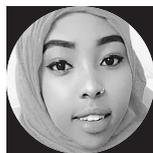
St. Paul Harding junior Elizabeth Rypa reads her college essay during ThreeSixty Journalism's College Essay Boot Camp celebration on April 7 at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul.

only living family member, my uncle Bantari, but this was fast. I would be leaving in four days. My face wore a smile, but inside I felt dead.

ESSAY continued on page 18

PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

‘Changing the world, one girl at a time’



By **Nimo Abdi**
Minneapolis
Roosevelt
High School

WHEN HOoyo (“MOTHER” in Somali) picked me up from school in our Ethiopian refugee camp, we’d walk the long way home so people wouldn’t know that I went to school. Girls were expected to cook, clean and be housewives. School was for boys.

There were barely any girls in my class. The classroom was big, full of students and books. The students were noisy as they practiced their language. It smelled like old books and dust, and it was hot. I remember the sounds of the rain hitting the roof of the building. Being there made me happy.

Not only did Hooyo encourage my education, but she and my aunt would sit with me under an isolated tree and ask me what I learned. “Aqoon la’aan waa iftiin la’aan,” (“Without knowledge, there is no light.”), she would say. So, in addition to being a student, I was also a teacher.

I was around 6 when I started teaching my mom and my aunt how to read and write. They wrote the Somali alphabet that I showed them in their old dirty notebooks. I taught them for about six years.

Sometimes, we would talk about what it would be like if we told people I was in school. I wondered how they would react.

I’m guessing that few of the camp people have had the inspiration that I got from my mom to be the first in my family to go to college. She has taught me the importance of grades, getting involved in school and community, sports and volunteering as a translator. I believe those values will translate into a career where I can help young women.

My parents were born in Somalia and they left their homeland because of the civil war. They went to Ethiopia to escape. They met in Dhagaxbuur, a small town in Ethiopia. They had 12 children but eight died young because of starvation and lack of healthcare in the refugee camp where they lived. Only four of us survived.

When I was 12, in June 2012, we moved to the United States. We arrived in New York. It felt like another world. The way people dressed, the food and buildings amazed me.

The first place we lived was Dallas, for about six months. Starting school there gave me a mixture of feelings: Happiness to be in school again, fear of how I would be received



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

Minneapolis Roosevelt junior **Nimo Abdi** reads her essay during **Threesixty Journalism’s College Essay Boot Camp** celebration in April at the University of St. Thomas.

and, quickly, knowledge that I was different.

I didn’t know any English and everyone else did. I was the only Muslim girl in the entire school who wore a hijab, and it used to draw people’s attention. People would have curious questions. For example: “Are you bald?” “Isn’t it hot?” “Why are you wearing it?”

In America, education is viewed differently from the camp in Ethiopia. In the United States, girls have equal opportunities in education. Nobody asks why we are going to school.

Once here, Hooyo told me to find what I’m passionate about and, when I find it, don’t

give it up. Forget the past as you struggle to find the education that you were willing to work toward. Her words inspired me to be strong, independent, hard-working and active, doing what it takes to be a hero and legend for those who are looking up to me.

At Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis, I’m involved in varsity girls’ soccer, track, badminton, the Key Club community organization and a committee for assembly programs and in welcoming new students.

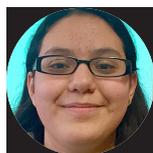
My biggest dream is to go to college. I want to make my Hooyo proud for all her sacrifices that made me who I am and what I stand for today. I will always keep my head up and look forward, after all of her hard work for me and for helping give me education when I was younger.

I’m very passionate about helping people, especially girls. One of my goals is to study political science and work for the government. After what I experienced in learning, I need to help those who are interested in being educated.

My mother used to remind me about how she didn’t get an education when she was my age. Her support and my progress continue to inspire me. “Use your voice,” she said. “Your voice is your power.”

I am using my voice. And I have promised myself I’ll transform young girls’ lives from darkness to brightness, changing the world one girl at a time.

Determination and optimism from ‘Mama’



By **Janet Valdez**
Minneapolis
Roosevelt
High School

BLOOD RAN FROM Mama’s—my grandmother’s—arm and through the IV as the nurse said, “We will have the results in a couple of weeks and have you stop by then.”

The week seemed eternal before we knew the results. Finally, we got the call and rushed to the hospital.

As I entered the examination room, the smell of cleaning supplies and chemicals made its way to my nose. The sounds of nurses and babies echoed loudly through the halls. Sitting in the chair, my eyes scanned the hospital room until they met the doctor’s. The doctor looked at us with a sorrowful face as he shared the news that the blood results showed cancer—leukemia, to be specific.

Leukemia? I was six and didn’t know what that was. From that day on, there were endless trips to doctor appointments and treatments, and I became Mama’s translator. I learned phrases and words that an everyday kid shouldn’t know. Two of the most complicated were blood pressure (presion arterial) and chemotherapy (quimioterapia). I learned how to translate

two of the doctor’s favorite phrases: “We have to take your blood to run some tests,” (Vamos a tomar tu sangre para hacer unos análisis) and, “We will see you again next week for your chemotherapy” (Nos vemos la siguiente semana para su quimioterapia).

As time went on, I learned many medical terms, met new people and started to be recognized at the hospital. For a month at a time, Mama would get better for a bit, then worse again. Yet, with each stay at the hospital she would always find a way to feel better. When I was there with her I became more than her granddaughter. I was her caretaker, her support system and a reason for her to keep fighting.

I was the one who helped her get up and move around our apartment. I was the one who washed

her clothes and cleaned. One of my fun responsibilities was to help her stay happy by playing my clarinet, chatting and simply watching TV with her. While taking care of her, I noticed no matter how much pain she was in, she would always try to have a smile on her face. With every smile, she would look at me and tell me in Spanish, “Never forget that you are a strong woman, and that no matter what I will always be with you and never leave you.”

One of Mama’s biggest dreams was to see me graduate from high school and college. She told me stories about how some of my family did not have the opportunity to go to school, and that the ones who did wasted it. She told me that I was going to be the first with a college degree.

When I am struggling with school, I remind myself that I am

not only doing this for me but also for her. Knowing that one of the reasons she fought for so long was to see me graduate motivates me to work hard.

After eight years of trying different treatments and home remedies, she passed away. Whenever I cannot find the answer to a problem and I feel like quitting, I simply remember her smile, her positivity and the strength she had.

Having determination and being optimistic is important because succeeding in school and in work is difficult, and you cannot give up right away. You have to find the person or thing that motivates you to always give your best and to never settle for anything less. I learned this through helping my grandmother, and being at her side even through her worst moments.

Grappling with—and overcoming—a tough decision on the mat



By **Larry Sanchez**
Minneapolis
Roosevelt
High School

CLASS STARTS AT 8 a.m. But I have been at school since 6 a.m.—running stairs over a puddle of my own sweat and pushing my limits in the weight room. I only thought about how I could break those limits, all for the sole purpose of getting better at wrestling. After school, it was straight to the wrestling room. When it came to wrestling, I was not going against my teammate, but I was going against myself.

Only 48 student-athletes in my weight class earn the chance to wrestle at state for Minnesota. Sections were in two weeks, taking place on Friday night and Saturday morning. I would toss and turn at night with the thought of the tournament, mainly because I knew I'd have to give everything I had. Soon, though, I was confronted with a hard decision that could change everything.

I wrestled in my weight class at 145 pounds my sophomore year, and my friend Will was junior varsity at the same weight during his senior year. At sections, I could have wrestled at my weight and been ranked first in my seed, but that would have eliminated any chance Will could have to wrestle at state. Otherwise, I could jump up a weight class to 152 pounds and be ranked sixth place, with my odds against me, but I would open an opportunity for Will to wrestle at 145 pounds, something my coach disagreed with. Unable to understand my situation, my coach defiantly said, “Larry, you need to be selfish and worry about yourself.”

Giving Will a chance to wrestle was really important to me because it was his last year and he would not have a chance to compete again in high school. Growing up, my mother taught me about caring for others and to not give up when obstacles get in my way. When time came to make my decision, I confidently explained to my coach I would be wrestling at 152 pounds, and that I am not afraid of the challenge. In that moment, I could see the disappointment in his eyes, but I knew I was making the right choice.

The morning of sections is a day I will never forget. Through school, all I could think about were my matches, about every scenario and how to prevent any mistakes. The night came and my heart was racing. The only thing keeping me from state was this match.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

Minneapolis Roosevelt junior Larry Sanchez reads his essay during ThreeSixty Journalism's College Essay Boot Camp celebration at St. Thomas.

When I entered the gym, I gave a determined stare to my competition as we both stepped onto the mat. We shook hands firmly, but no words were exchanged because we both knew what was at stake. Everything I worked hard for would be tested in this one match.

As a result, I left with a gold medal that night, but what really made my night was that Will got fourth place despite starting the night ranked last place out of 12 schools. I was proud, stoked and thrilled as the referee raised Will's arm in victory during his last match of his high school career.

Overall, this event in my life means a lot to me, not only because I went to state, but

because I did not let obstacles stand in my way. A week later, I had my state tournament match, and in the crowd, I saw Will cheering me on. Seeing Will in the stands made my season great—because I made a decision that helped Will end his senior high school wrestling season on a high note.

It is important to me that I do not lose sight of what I believe in and that I can accomplish a challenge regardless of how far it pushes me. I proved this to my coach, Will and myself. Now I know that with hard work I can overcome obstacles and accomplish anything without changing who I am and what I believe.

Full speed ahead



By **Prosperity Moore**
St. Paul Harding
High School

BANG! THE GUN goes off! I thrust out of the starting blocks with full force and accelerate forward. As I run, my breaths become shallow, my chest tightens and I hear myself breathing loudly. I deeply inhale to capture air into my lungs. The air smells fresh and pure. My vision blurs. Only one thing is clear: the finish line

straight ahead.

A voice in my head tells me to stop because it's too hard and I begin to question whether I should continue. However, my mind is set on completing the race and it pushes me forward to the end. I cross the finish line. That was the longest 1 minute, 20 seconds of my life! The pain that I felt was no longer there, just the feeling of my happiness and joy, despite coming in last.

Past the finish line, the blurriness went away and I began to see more clearly. My teammates and coaches surrounded me and cheered me on. Looking back

on my first organized track and field race brings me so much joy. Even though I finished last, I am amazed by where I started and how much I improved. And I can't believe I swore off running races years ago.

As a middle schooler, I decided to join track and field because I thought I enjoyed running, but I did not expect to be so out of shape. When I wasn't able to run one full lap around the school, I decided to quit because it was too hard. I couldn't keep up with my peers. I couldn't accomplish what my coaches asked. I didn't want to let down my team.

Track prepared me with the skills and discipline to be successful.

One day in my sophomore year of high school, an announcement came on our morning news about track tryouts. “Why not?” I asked myself, and made it to the first practice. It was like the first practice in middle school all over again. I was tempted to stop. I wasn't ready. I wondered why I tried again, but I didn't quit. After week one, my body was adapting to the quick sprints and endurance exercises and I surprised myself with how good I was.

Through track, I learned that if I work hard enough, I can get better. Having a positive outlook on difficult situations will help me be more successful. I am capable of doing more than I thought I could. I never thought that I would have made varsity during my first year of running track, but I have.

Now, in my junior year of track, there are new runners who are where I was when I first started. I am able to share the experience that I had with them and encourage them to try their best and not give up. Running has given me the ability to test my limits, see how far I can go and share what I learned.

Revisiting track was one of the best things I have ever done because it never gets easy or too comfortable. It challenges me, and because of that, it has become my absolute favorite activity. Track prepared me with the skills and discipline to be successful and I am looking for my next challenge. I hope to run for a college team that performs at an even more competitive level.

A visit to Thailand and a new outlook on life



By Houa Yang
St. Paul Harding
High School

I STARED AT the red dirt stain on my Nike shoes. My throat dried up and sweat trailed down the side of my face. Despite the musty heat and my sore foot, I kept walking. I look toward my baby niece, crying while being carried on my sister's back. My sister also holds hands with her other four children. We walked for more than an hour along a curvy road to reach the school. Cars and motorcycles zoomed by incredibly fast, throwing filthy dust all around us.

Everything was surreal.

I worked so hard all summer long to afford my own plane ticket to go with my parents to see my homeland and visit my sister, Yee, in northern Thailand. When I was 5, my family and I fled from Thailand to America and Yee stayed behind with her husband and his family. Thirteen years later, we are reunited and I'm realizing we live drastically different lives.

I noticed on the hike to school she wore an old torn-up flat sandal. Yet she never complained about being tired or her feet aching. This was her daily routine. Before sunrise she would wake up to prepare breakfast and get her kids ready. She trudged back and forth for miles to get my nieces and nephew to school every day. American children like me would complain and cry at the thought of walking two full hours to get to and from school.

My 12-year-old niece, Tida, is impressive. She is so fascinated that I can speak, read and write English,



PHOTO COURTESY OF HOUA YANG

Houa Yang with her niece, Tida, in Thailand. Yang writes about how her experience in Thailand changed her outlook.

skills that I take for granted. I was honored to help Tida with her English homework. An assignment as easy as writing the English alphabet was extremely difficult for her. I saw how much she appreciated my knowledge. I wish everyone would have as much passion for learning as Tida.

While I was there, I thought of my older brother in America. At age 17, he dropped out of high school. He was influenced by the wrong

groups of friends. Instead, he found a job as a cashier at a grocery store. His bad attitude is now affecting me because he sees no value in education and doesn't understand my passion for going to college. If only he were able to see how Yee's family would like nothing more than the chance for public education and access to transportation.

The day before my departure, I watched my nieces and nephew sit on the dirt floor to finish their

school work. I realized that this could be me, had I never received the opportunity to come to the United States. Maybe I will never know how it really felt, but I knew I would be willing to do whatever it takes for my education, even if that means I have to walk in sandals for hours to get to my school.

This visit remains the most memorable and special experience of my life. The hardships of my own sister and her family helped strengthen my dedication to achieve my goals. It took so much for my niece and nephew to receive an education. It pushes me to go after my dreams when I have the chance.

I'm not limited to making choices for my future because there are so many opportunities and resources over here that can help me to succeed if I'm willing to work hard. I greatly appreciate my educational opportunity and I will never take anything for granted. I am eager to put my full effort into what I want for myself and value my learning.

Mexican school system teaches a valuable lesson



By Rodrigo Estrada Morales
Minneapolis Roosevelt
High School

WHEN I ARRIVED in Mexico City from my home, Minnesota, two years ago, I was petrified when I saw a place that looked hopeless. No trees, roads built out of sand and the buildings looked old and close to collapsing.

I decided to take my first trip to Mexico when I was 15 years old to see how my parents had lived in a little village in Tlatlaya. I was super excited to see how my parents' lifestyle was back then. When I arrived to my parents' village, it was way worse than I expected. There were no trees, it was a desert with no hope and the people looked exhausted.

During the last week of my month-long trip, I had the courage to examine how my cousin's

high school system worked. When we arrived, I noticed that it was difficult for most of the students. There were students who didn't have enough money to buy their notebooks and they didn't have the resources to find a place where they could obtain free notebooks. I saw most of the students struggling to sharpen their pencils with a knife in order for the lead to come out. There were students with bloody and cut hands from the knife. In my country, I have a computer lab, library and teachers who will give you a free notebook.

"I've lost all hope in trying hard in school," said David, my cousin who attends school in Tlatlaya. "There's not many opportunities for us." He said kids in this village don't have school materials and lose interest in school. When we got done talking, he said to me, "Have you ever lived in a place where you don't have many opportunities?"

My parents didn't have many educational opportunities growing up in Tlatlaya, either. My parents stopped going to school after eighth grade. My mom went to Mexico City to clean houses for rich people. My dad started working for companies that build houses.

During my flight back to Minnesota, I reflected on what my cousin had told me

that last day in Mexico. He reminded me that during my freshman year, I did not really care about school that much and did not try to get good grades. I realized that I had not been taking advantage of all the opportunities around me, including an afterschool tutor program that teachers would organize for students who needed help.

When I started my sophomore year, I put more effort in trying to attain help after school from my teachers. After I failed to get a "B" in geometry, I went to check in with my teacher during lunch a few times a week to try to figure out what I could do, and I ended up with a "B." At the end of my sophomore year, I received the opportunity to get my first job at Target as a cashier, in order to contribute to my college fund. I also got involved in College Possible, a program that helps kids go to college.

I will go to college to become a businessman in order to go back to Mexico to help families in need and send their kids to school. I know I'm going to face obstacles in life that are going to hold me back from accomplishing my goals. My parents' and cousin's situations inspire me to overcome challenges and take advantage of all the opportunities along my way.

ESSAY from page 15

Fatuma would go with me. We said our goodbyes to Grandpa and his family through tears. The first time I got on the plane, it scared me to death. What if there are snakes on the plane, like the movie? We arrived in the United States at 8:04 p.m., Tuesday, June 3, 2014.

Nearly three years later, I live in St. Paul with my uncle, his wife and children, and Fatuma. I am a junior at Harding High School and I am on the Student Engagement and Advancement Board. I plan to go to college and become a doctor.

Why a doctor? When I think of my sister laying on the ground, shot, I feel empty, like something is missing in my life. I still feel helpless because there was nothing I could have done to stop her from dying. It makes me think, "What if I was there now? Could I have helped her?" I know I could have if I had been a doctor.

Right after her death, my life could have gone in so many directions. With the help of Grandpa, I got on the right path. He always told me this: "In life you can be whatever you want. Just make sure you make me proud."

I will, Grandpa.

'Hard work does pay off'



By **Ashley Vang**
St. Paul Harding
High School

SWEAT DRIPPED DOWN the faces and bodies of the 14 exhausted teen dancers and scattered onto the slippery hardwood floor. Several stifled yawns.

"Let's do one more round, then we can go home, ladies," leisurely said my captain. The group pushed through one last routine as the clock struck 12:30 a.m. It was hot and musty in the spacious basement studio at Sunrise Plaza in St. Paul. There were no windows to let in the cool breeze. Instead, a fan by the door wailed loudly, forcing us to turn the music up higher.

We were days away from the Minnesota Hmong New Year dance competition, an annual event that draws in as many as 60,000 people. At that point, we were eating,



St. Paul Harding junior Ashley Vang (right) poses for a photo with her writing coach, Libor Jany of the Star Tribune (center), and Harding junior Isaiah Jackson during College Essay Boot Camp in April at St. Paul Harding.

breathing and dreaming about dance. Our lives were already packed with homework, jobs and house chores, but we squeezed in practices, too. Our lower backs, knees, ankles and shoulders were strained and bruised. But instead of stopping, we massaged and iced them and pushed forward.

The night before our intense competition, we were at it again, practicing. While we rehearsed in our brown and maroon edgy-like

fitted costumes, we cheered each other on. Cries of, "You can do it! Push through! Together, we got it girls!" filled the air. We reminded ourselves that there was a lot at stake. The money. The fame. The trophy. But most of all, we wanted to show people what we were capable of.

On the day of the competition, Hmong families crowded the massive arena in their finest traditional clothing adorned with

coins that jingled and swished. Some people tossed a ball back and forth while flirting with other attendees. Others devoured some delicious, greasy Hmong food and sipped on sweet cold drinks. The vendors sold crispy fried egg rolls, and the scent of the spicy peppery papaya salad had my mouth watering.

Uneasily, I arrived in the backstage area and walked up to my teammates, who looked superb in their costumes. As we started preparing for the competition, my nerves were shot. My heart was about to burst from beating so fast. Pausing, I took a minute to remind myself of how profoundly dance has impacted my life.

Dance trained me to heartily motivate myself to unexpectedly be the champion I wished to present. Struggling to push through, doubting myself and my abilities, I leaned on others for support and to never give up. I mentally and physically felt stronger when I gained the self-confidence to express who I am and strengthened what I had planned for my future. "Dream. Believe. Achieve," as I recall our dance slogan.

That evening at the 2016 Minnesota Hmong New Year dance competition, we were named champions. Hard work does pay off.

STAFF PHOTO

Conquering a new language and a new home



By **Istahil Abdi**
Minneapolis
Roosevelt
High School

FEAR AND HAPPINESS hit my face. I was "home."

Finally.

I had been traveling for two long days, from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to Louisiana, wondering what my new life would be like. Here it was!

It was 2011. I was 10 years old. I spoke no English. Every neighbor's door was closed. I felt alone. When I sat in class, I was different

than the rest. Communicating was impossible. I was left alone to whatever my luck was. Everything felt so strange, yet my dream of becoming a doctor empowered me to succeed in my new country.

My six months in Lafayette, Louisiana felt like a lifetime. When I moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota—and finally around people like me again—in 2012, everything changed for the better. I had an opportunity to improve. I was more comfortable because Minnesota was more accepting and it was home to a large population of Somali refugees, like me.

I arrived and I knew that it would take time to adjust. Even though Somali was my first language, math was always my favorite subject in school. Although I was learning it in a different language, the principle and foundation were the same. Math was the only constant at that time. Solving problems made

me feel good. It comforted and enlightened me. I had a reason to keep on moving. In history class, I was blinded by the language barrier. I couldn't pay attention. But as soon as I walk into algebra class, I am alive and wide awake. Knowing substitution and elimination made me feel smarter and encouraged me to follow my dream of becoming a doctor. I finally belonged.

Now, I volunteer at a Minneapolis middle school to tutor students in algebra. I was able to be myself after seeing my improvements. I was able to speak up. With all my great efforts and opportunities, I joined afterschool programs, including college preparation, leadership and cosmetology. I also played badminton. And I am also taking classes that will prepare me for the medical field, such as healthcare and medical terminology. Six years ago, I didn't think this was possible.

Going to a Minneapolis library

*I encourage every immigrant
who feels like they are never going to learn
the language to have hope.*

near my house helped me improve my English. It shaped me to be who I am. Afterschool tutoring programs got me involved in reading, drawing and competing in math. I saw my darkest moments when I failed tests. People's judgments empowered me to work hard. I had hope. I gained confidence. I learned to be brave and stand up for myself. After three years, I was finally fluent in English. Now, I'm at the top 10 percent of my class.

After I became fluent, I felt prosperity and that I could do anything and overcome any obstacles. I can be successful if I managed to learn a foreign language in such a short time. Even when people made negative assumptions about

me learning English and told me to go back to my country, I persevered. I was empowered by their negative comments. I continued learning English. I had a purpose to keep on going. I encourage every immigrant who feels like they are never going to learn the language to have hope.

Learning English taught me to believe in myself to do anything I plan to do, which is the most inspiring thing in my life now. I conquered a new language and a new country in a few years with determination and perseverance. Because I overcame a difficult task, I can succeed as a college student and as a doctor.

‘Your shield, protector and defense’



By **Abdulqadir Maalin**
Minneapolis
Roosevelt High School

WHILE I WAS cleaning the living room at the age of 10 years old in South Africa, my sister, Halima, ran up to me and said, “Brother, brother, brother! Our brother is in danger!”

“What happened?” I said. “Where is Abdisamad?”

“He is getting bullied by some gang teenagers who are trying to take his money,” she said.

I drop my broom and run fast, like Usain Bolt in the 100-meter relay, knocking the teenagers as if they were the finish line. Seeing my brother getting bullied by a teenager made me furious. I started to punch the kid in the face.

The teenager took a sharp pocket knife and tried to stab my little brother, but I jumped in the way, putting my hand in front of the knife. It started to bleed out, but it wasn’t as painful as seeing my brother scared and crying. I kicked his legs and his face slammed on the floor. That’s when I picked up my brother and ran for safety.

This was just one way that I had to step up and help raise my six siblings with my older brother because my parents were busy working. This experience taught me patience, problem-solving and how to be organized.

After I arrived home, my hand had been covered with blood, dripping on the ground. I could no longer feel it. I commanded my brothers and sisters to immediately come to me.

“No one can leave without me or Abdirahman,” I said. “Without you guys, I can’t feel happy. It will feel like I have a gap in my heart. You’re the only people I have left as a family. I do not want to see you suffer. I am like your shield, protector and defense!”

The eight of us formed a circle and hugged each other. Since 2008, I was a leader of a big family with my older brother.

I was born in South Africa and raised in Cape Town City. In 2008, my mom had a baby and had to stop working. My dad was working far away from home. He couldn’t come home. My older brother was feeling depressed and hopeless, thinking he wasn’t doing anything for our parents.

As the second elder of the family, I knew I had to do something to make him cheerful.

“Don’t think of yourself as a wasted person. You’re a gift from God. We are lucky to have a big family that wants to be together. We are a chain that can never break as long we stick together,” I told my brother.

That day he and I started to pitch in to take some responsibilities off our parents until we

I felt worried that the six of us are now homeless. We packed up our heavy furniture and dishes and locked them away in a storage unit. The rest of our belongings came with us to a shelter called Mary’s Place in downtown Minneapolis. It’s a nonprofit charitable organization that uses donations to provide transitional apartments for homeless families with children.

Our apartment at Mary’s Place had two small rooms, one bathroom and a huge living room connected to the kitchen. They offered us free food and clothes. On the weekdays, we rode to school in big buses or taxi cars with strangers because we didn’t have other transportation to school.

When we got home from school, my brother and I pretended to be

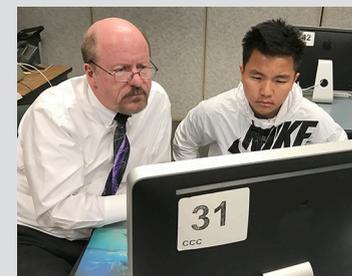
like race cars riding down the long hallways. In one room, students and teachers were scattered working on homework. We moved around the building using magnetic-striped cards that we used to enter and exit rooms. I visualized my parents as being spies.

For the most part, I felt grateful for a warm place to stay for all of us. But, for two months I was home-sick because a shelter never felt like home and people were always watching. I felt like a prisoner sinking into the huge ocean that was swallowing us up.

After two months, my dad finally found a job to support our family. We moved out of Mary’s Place and found a nice apartment in St. Paul for us to settle in. Moving out, I felt



Students work—and have fun—with their writing coaches during ThreeSixty’s College Essay Boot Camp in April at St. Paul Harding High School. During Boot Camp, each student works closely with a volunteer writing coach, a professional who helps students craft their essays throughout camp.



STAFF PHOTOS

moved shortly before Nelson Mandela passed away. When we came to the United States on June 29, 2012, my parents had more time with the family, but my brother and I still had big responsibilities.

There were times the kids got upset and angry. I told them to take it out on me to help them relieve their stress. I also did laundry, kept the house clean and organized my siblings’ school uniforms. My older brother cooked.

Being a leader in my family has helped me lead in education and pursue my future dream. I want to be a computer engineer,

and I signed up for Genesys Works. It helps students like me work at Fortune 500 companies such as 3M, Ameriprise Financial and Google.

In order to be good as a leader, I have to be a good communicator. I have showed this to my family. Through those experiences, the scar I have on my right hand gives me strength and is a symbol of a family bond. I got the scar for protecting a family member that I love. When life is rough I will always have my family with me. When I look at the scar, it motivates me to lead the family when a parent is not at home.

Overcoming homelessness



By **Kassey Schiung**
St. Paul Harding
High School

HOMELESSNESS CAN HAPPEN TO anyone. I know because I experienced it. One day in fifth grade, my parents sat my siblings and me down together in our tiny apartment. Mom is calm and says, “Dad got fired, and we don’t have a place to stay.”

I felt worried that the six of us are now homeless. We packed up our heavy furniture and dishes and locked them away in a storage unit. The rest of our belongings came with us to a shelter called Mary’s Place in downtown Minneapolis. It’s a nonprofit charitable organization that uses donations to provide transitional apartments for homeless families with children.

Our apartment at Mary’s Place had two small rooms, one bathroom and a huge living room connected to the kitchen. They offered us free food and clothes. On the weekdays, we rode to school in big buses or taxi cars with strangers because we didn’t have other transportation to school.

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like race cars riding down the long hallways. In one room, students and teachers were scattered working on homework. We moved around the building using magnetic-striped cards that we used to enter and exit rooms. I visualized my parents as being spies.

For the most part, I felt grateful for a warm place to stay for all of us. But, for two months I was home-sick because a shelter never felt like home and people were always watching. I felt like a prisoner sinking into the huge ocean that was swallowing us up.

After two months, my dad finally found a job to support our family. We moved out of Mary’s Place and found a nice apartment in St. Paul for us to settle in. Moving out, I felt

like a bird flying freely in the big, beautiful sky. I don’t ever want to be homeless again.

As soon as I could legally work, I applied for a job at an organization called Urban Roots. I said to myself, “I need this job so I can save money for college and earn a good job that can support my family!”

At first it was hard for me to display my personality and communicate with my coworkers. By the end of the summer, I gained confidence to talk with more of my peers and open up. I returned a second year and I was promoted to having more hours and took on more responsibility at Urban Roots. During the summer, I learned how to become a leader to the new employees and teach them what I

learned. My team and I helped fix the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary in St. Paul, and also helped with a huge project for the Department of Natural Resources to create a better environment for visitors. We also fixed Dayton’s Bluff Elementary School’s garden while working with young students.

Working at Urban Roots for two years allowed me to save money to help my family and to pay for college. Urban Roots, just like the kind, compassionate people at Mary’s Place, provided opportunities for people like me to feel like they’re a part of a community. And I want to do the same for others. My family and I are a long way away from being homeless, but we will never forget our experiences.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HOUSE OF PEACE

A group of young artists painted a mural in the basement of a Minneapolis domestic violence shelter as a symbol of hope. The mural shows six smiling women of different Asian nationalities wearing their traditional clothing and embracing one another.

A mural of hope for brighter days

Students paint wall of Minneapolis shelter to ease pain for Asian domestic violence victims

CHILDREN OFTEN STEERED clear of the dark and uninviting basement inside the House of Peace shelter in southeast Minneapolis.

The basement, with its gray walls and cement floors, was where their mothers went to share memories of violence they suffered in homes where they were supposed to feel safe.

This past fall, local high school students helped transform the dingy space into a colorful canvas. Ana Keller-Flores, Maggie Yang and Olivia Reinhardt, who attend Great River School in Saint Paul, teamed up with others to paint a mural to brighten up the basement for the shelter.

"They wanted to have this mural painted as a symbol of hope for the women there," said Keller-Flores, a 15-year-old sophomore.



By Katelyn Vue
News Reporter

The mural, spanning most of one wall, shows six smiling women of different Asian nationalities wearing their traditional clothing and embracing one another as the sun beams down on them and the mountains in the background tower over them. The mural's message was to remind the women of their identities and their strength.

"That is what inspired me to do a mural here," said Sipra Jha, shelter director of House of Peace. "Because it's one of the richest and oldest art forms, and for women to see that,



KATELYN VUE/THREESIXTY JOURNALISM

Ana Keller-Flores (left) and Maggie Yang, both sophomores at Great River School, were part of a group of students who helped paint a mural in the basement of House of Peace in Minneapolis.

it would be empowering, to see them holding hands from different cultures. Different, but we are all one."

According to the Oakland-based Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence, 41 to 61 percent of Asian women report physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner.

"I have family that has been victims of domestic violence, so I think for me, that's what motivated me," said Yang, also a sophomore at Great River. "I thought to myself, that if I'm painting this, [this is] one step to making a change."

MURAL continued on page 29

Recognizing—and addressing—white privilege

A reflection on how society can treat people of color differently

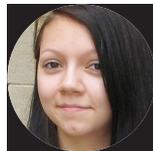
I PLACE A bag of Peanut Butter M&Ms in our shopping cart, without asking my dad first. As our cart's wheels squeak down the aisle, my dad laughs as he tells me, "Put it back."

As we continue shopping, we notice employees of the store seem to follow us around. We watch one approach us and ask, "Do you need any help finding anything?"

My dad, replying to this question for the sixth time that day, flatly responds, "No thanks, I'm good."

I always wondered why my dad became angry when employees at stores insisted on helping him. When I was younger, I thought it was very kind of them. Besides, I figured my father should feel lucky that they offered to help him, because whenever I went to a store with my mom, we were never followed or asked if we needed help.

As I became older, I finally understood why he was upset. My father is Native American, and he has been racially profiled all his life.



By Skyler Kuczaboski
Voices Section Leader

I have watched employees actively discriminate against him for having a skin tone darker than theirs. They decide to follow him and ask him if he needs help in order to watch him and make sure he doesn't steal anything as he shops.

My mother, who is white, does not experience this treatment from employees. She does not have the same burden of representing her entire race or suffering from negative stereotypes.

I am white and Native American (Polish and Ojibwe from Leech Lake, to be specific), but I take after my mother in terms of looks. I have very light and pale skin and light brown hair. Even though I am two races, I represent one to the world: white.

I too am not bothered by

employees when I go to a store by myself.

As I became more aware of racial injustices and as I wrap up my senior year, I've begun to look at colleges more seriously. My top college's school newspaper (and other news organizations) reported recent racially charged incidents on campus between students. A total of 82 incidents were reported between January 2016 through February 2017, which were categorized as anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim, racist, homophobic/transphobic and sexist/misogynistic.

Seeing numbers like this from the college I want to attend the most was unsettling for me and made me cautious about my choice. As I spoke to my mother about this, she told me, "Racism will happen no matter where you go. It exists everywhere."

One college I applied to is in Canada, and I was telling one of my past Ojibwe teachers that. "Don't get stolen," she told me. She said

"Even though I am two races, I represent one to the world: white."

"If recognition of white privilege becomes addressed on a larger platform, then we, as a nation, can stop and fight for those who are treated with less respect than those who are privileged because of their skin tone."

that because there is an epidemic of indigenous women going missing or being murdered. As I began to think that might actually happen to me, I realized it never would because I don't actually look indigenous. I realized a racist incident might never happen to me because I look white.

This realization has given me a sense of security, but that security comes with guilt for witnessing racism without actually having to deal with it. I have white privilege because I look white. With this privilege comes the luxury of not fearing racism wherever I go.

Some people believe white privilege does not exist. Those who don't see it in society also usually think that the word "privilege" means to have more of something than others. When "white" is put in front of it, they think it means white peoples' lives are easier.

While that isn't necessarily true,

I believe white privilege means that white people have the privilege of not dealing with hardships formed around race.

While much progress was accomplished during the Civil Rights Movement, there are still many inequalities in our society today. If recognition of white privilege becomes addressed on a larger platform, then we, as a nation, can stop and fight for those who are treated with less respect than those who are privileged because of their skin tone.

One way to decrease today's inequalities is to recognize, address and stop white privilege. To recognize is to see that people of color, like my father, are sometimes harassed and profiled in stores.

Addressing it can be difficult. For some, it's hard to stand up in public and fight injustice, but it is a civil duty in order for equality to be achieved.

FINDING FACTS from page 11

For example, ABCNews.com is a trusted and reliable news organization, but there used to be a counterfeit website, ABCNews.com.co, that posted fake news disguised as real. In the fake website, the so-called ABC News logo was more oval than circular, with more spacing among the letters, while the actual ABC logo is a tight circle, with letters pressed against the edge.

The contact information really gave it away: It listed the Topeka, Kan., address and phone number of the Westboro Baptist Church, which is known for a homophobic agenda and propaganda. This raises a red flag for the website being suspicious and lacking

credibility, and it's a sign that you should just close the website and clear your history.

3. TAKE A HARDER LOOK AT THE SOURCES

Sources will usually have something to do with how the article is shaped. Do the sources in the article seem to be reliable and honest?

An article that had circulated the Internet since 2004 claims that a Chinese man sued his wife for having ugly children, according to a news organization in Heilongjiang, China. Other news organizations published the story.

Then in 2012, the article started to gain traffic when someone attached a photo of a good-looking couple and three children

who are less attractive than their parents, according to Snopes.com, a website that debunks fake news and rumors. The photo was originally an advertisement on plastic surgery and had nothing to do with the article. And in fact, one of the models filed a lawsuit over the misappropriation of her image in the photo, according to Snopes.com. Sometimes, even checking the photo caption can save you time because it will discredit a story immediately.

4. USE COMMON SENSE.

Headlines and sources aside, there's this thing inside us that reads something and immediately tells us "Noooooo way." This is pretty

self-explanatory. It's using all of the steps above, as well as life experience and interests, to factor into whether we will click on an article and readily accept it as fact.

Use your noggin. It's there for a reason. If you're too skeptical to rely on your own common sense, there are websites that can validate and debunk these kinds of articles, such as Snopes.com, which helped expose the bogus story about the man suing his wife, and Factcheck.org.

I hope that these steps teach people my age about the spread of fake news and how it can misinform. If we learn to identify the truth, we'll be more informed and better prepared to take on society's challenges.



Nat Shogren, a senior at Minneapolis Southwest, shows the wearable health tracker he uses while taking an online gym class at his high school.

AIDAN BERG/THREESIXTY JOURNALISM

A digital option for physical education

Some Minneapolis students opt for 'online gym'

WHEN JOSIE KLEIN tells people she takes online gym, she gets a lot of raised eyebrows.

Klein, a senior at Minneapolis Southwest High School, said most people comment on the irony of a physical education course that requires sitting in front of a computer.

"It seems like an oxymoron that there would be something called online gym," Klein said.

While many people are unaware of its existence, the course has been offered in



By Aidan Berg
Active Life
Senior Reporter

Minneapolis Public Schools for more than a decade. Jan Braaten, the head of the district's Health and Physical Education (PE) department at the time, introduced it after a conversation with a co-worker in 2004.

"She just threw out the idea of online PE, and of course I

laughed like everybody did," said Braaten, who retired in 2010. "Then I went home and I started to think about it.

"We were having a hard time in high schools with scheduling. Kids just couldn't find room for the Health and PE credits."

Soon, Braaten approached her teachers with the idea. They were skeptical.

"They all just raised their eyebrows and shrugged their shoulders," she recalled. "I said, 'Let's just give this a try, and if it's a failure, I'll take the responsibility, but if it's a success, it can help some of the issues we're having.'"

Students earn credit by turning in online journals describing their physical activities from each day and how they felt about it. As the course developed, it came to include fitness tracking equipment such as heart rate monitors and FitBits, wristbands that measure the number of steps a person takes and other health

"It seems like an oxymoron that there would be something called online gym."

—Josie Klein, Minneapolis Southwest student who takes online gym course

data each day. This information can be uploaded so that teachers can track their students' progress in real time.

A common question about online gym is one of honesty: how can teachers know if students are actually doing the requisite exercises?

Teachers are supposed to follow up with parents to make sure students are working out. This has produced some interesting experiences.

"One kid turned in 1,000 push-ups, 1,000 sit-ups every day," Braaten said. When the teacher followed up with the student's mother, she told him that it was part of her son's track regimen, Braaten said.

However, the system is far from foolproof. Some students say they've deceived the FitBit and tracking devices by taking it off of their wrist and shaking it, attaching it to a ceiling fan and even tying it to a pet dog. Others say they've made progress by simply playing the piano.

Nat Shogren, a Southwest senior who takes online gym, enjoys the fact that he doesn't have to change clothes or work himself into a sweat in the middle of the school day in a traditional gym class.

"Forcing someone into a pool to swim because they need their physical activity for that day, that doesn't actually help them get any healthier," Shogren said. "It's just getting them mad."

He also believes the course can help students maintain good physical self-care after they leave high school.

"It's kind of the philosophy of, 'Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day, teach a man to fish and

he'll eat for the rest of his life," he said. "If you teach someone how to exercise properly, that sets them on the track toward being a healthier person."

This view is shared by Brian Devore, a health and physical education content specialist at Cobb County Schools in Marietta, Georgia. Cobb also offers online gym, and Devore says the system can assist students in developing healthy habits.

"If I know how to take care of my body and I know how to work out, then I don't have to pay a personal trainer \$50 an hour," Devore said.

Devore sees a lot of potential for further developments in the use of technology in the class.

"Maybe [teachers could] start looking at having students submitting videos of their activity as part of the assignment," Devore said. "Maybe a student does a self-analysis of the skill or activity so they can see what they did well, what they didn't do well and how they can improve."

The program has its shortcomings, too, he said. While it can be more personal for students to learn something on their own, Devore says students sacrifice the social aspect of working with peers and learning the skills of a new sport in class.

With more online gym courses popping up across the country, there is likely to be more discussions of the concept's merits and limitations.

"I would say it's been very successful," Braaten said. "It's been copied pretty much all over the country, and nobody really says too much about it anymore."

What people
are saying about
ThreeSixty Journalism

Quotables

“My favorite part of summer camp was figuring out that I actually want to do journalism as a profession.”

—Zahra Mustafa, ThreeSixty student

“With the help of my writing coaches and ThreeSixty, I knew my college essay was good.”

—Samantha HoangLong, ThreeSixty student

“I really enjoy working with you guys and helping develop stories. Particularly now with the media under so much attack and scrutiny, it’s really important to have young people who are excited about this profession.”

—Jessie Van Berkel, Star Tribune reporter

“My favorite part about summer camp was being surrounded by writers and people who are passionate about writing. And I really, really like the food at St. Thomas.”

—Skyler Kuczaboski, ThreeSixty student

“I love working with [ThreeSixty students] because you are the future. We want to make sure you’re better than the rest of us.”

—Paul Klauda, Star Tribune editor

“ThreeSixty is one of the best things that happens in all of Minnesota.”

—Britta Greene, freelance radio producer

“Every day I looked forward to coming into camp. The essay concepts you shared with us were very useful and I know I will be able to use those skills and apply them to other things in my life.”

—Prospirity Moore, ThreeSixty student

ECHO CHAMBER from page 8 shared a common set of facts, even if they had different interpretations, he said, and politics were more consensus-driven.

Now, with more niche media outlets to choose from, people's news feeds are becoming personalized to reflect what they already believe, Bedingfield said.

The result? More misunderstandings, teenagers say.

Jaffe, of Mesa, Arizona, considers himself a "moderate Democrat" and discovered the existence of his own echo chamber only after working for Senator John McCain's reelection campaign in 2016.

"I had seen the GOP as one-dimensional prior to working on the campaign," Jaffe said. "I was expecting, to be honest, mostly older, white males since that is the stereotypical image [I] have of Republicans thanks to media renditions and political parodies."

Yet after working for Sen. McCain's campaign, Jaffe better understood the diversity in age,

race and political views within the Republican party, he said.

As an intern, he went canvassing door-to-door and retweeted Twitter posts supporting the campaign. This led him to constantly read and contemplate conservative arguments, some of which he has now adopted into his own political beliefs, he said.

Several teenagers shared Jaffe's eagerness to better understand alternative viewpoints.

"I find value in reading the ideas of people [who] do not agree [with] me because I only have one life," said 18-year-old Kevin Omans of Alexandria, Virginia. "I [can't] experience what others have, but by reading their words, I am able to gain an appreciation for their worldview."

Now, some even say that young adults may be more adept at finding multiple sides of the picture than older adults. Teenagers who have recognized the Internet's power to share more perspectives have a distinct advantage over adults, said

Bedingfield.

"They're just at home in this digital environment in a way that I'm probably still not," he said.

This Internet literacy allows for easy access to a plethora of news for teenagers like Isa Turilli, a 17-year-old from Arlington, Virginia, who regularly receives BBC News notifications on her phone and laptop. A wider range of perspectives, too, is accessible to youth like Omans, who reads foreign media reports on American events every day to gain a more well-rounded understanding of current events.

This style of news consumption is an integral part of avoiding and escaping echo chambers, said Pioneer Press capitol bureau chief Rachel Stassen-Berger.

"I read liberal blogs and conservative blogs, liberal news sites and conservative news sites," she said. "I get to have a very mixed, omnivorous news diet."

Yet even with this omnivorous diet, echo chambers are difficult to avoid without proper training, said



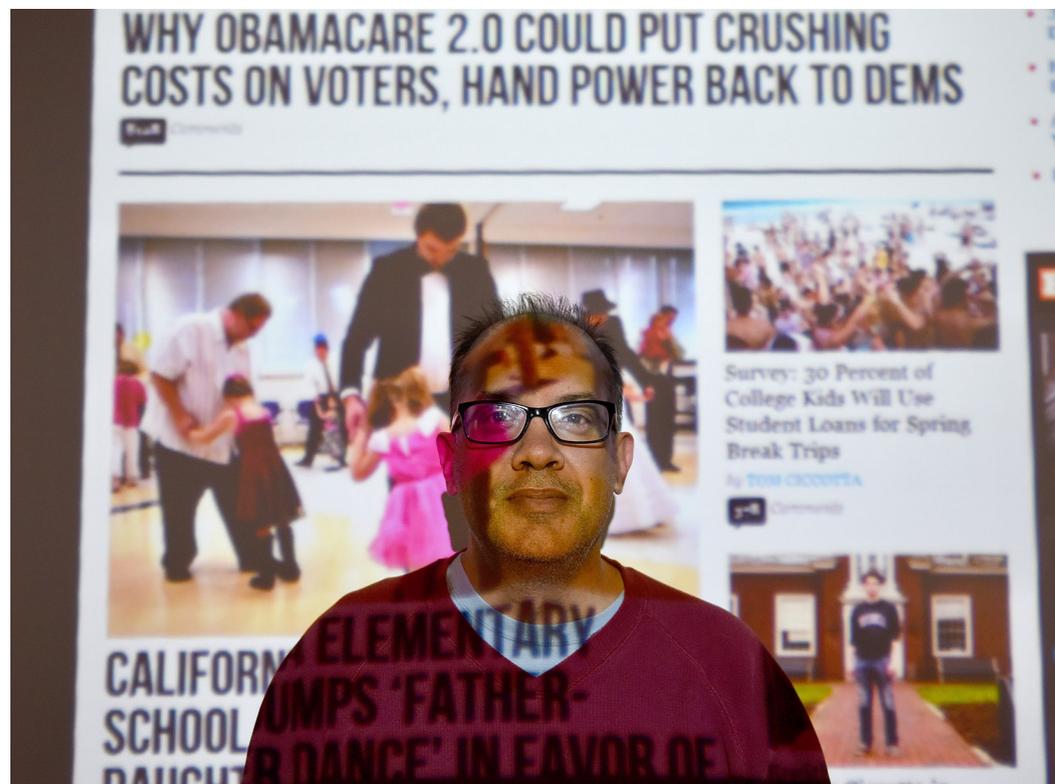
PHOTO COURTESY OF DAPHNE YUAN

Sid Bedingfield, a professor at the University of Minnesota, says the echo chamber is 'a very dangerous thing.'

Bedingfield. He is currently revamping his own introductory communications classes to emphasize how to think critically and evaluate sources. He wants readers to analyze

information rather than "just take it in and spit it back out."

"Don't believe anybody," he said. "You don't want to be cynical, but you do want to be skeptical."



SAMANTHA HOANG/LONGTHREESIXTY JOURNALISM

Neal Justin, a Star Tribune TV and radio critic, says everyone should have two or three "go-to," trustworthy news sources that can be used to measure the fairness and accuracy of other news reports.

FAKE NEWS from page 10 between the two."

Fake news isn't pushed out by advocates for only one political party. Some Democratic-leaning news organizations have endured criticism for headlines asserting that Russia hacked the election, despite there being no clear evidence that reported hacks threw the election to Trump.

Mainstream news organizations are starting to forcefully push back against allegations of fake news.

On March 2, more than 80 journalism-related organizations—responding to Pres. Trump's charges that the "fake media," the "failing media" and the "dishonest media" are producing "fake news" that's biased against him—wrote a statement supporting freedom of the press.

"The effort to delegitimize the press undermines democracy, and officials who challenge the value of an independent press or question its legitimacy betray the country's most cherished values and

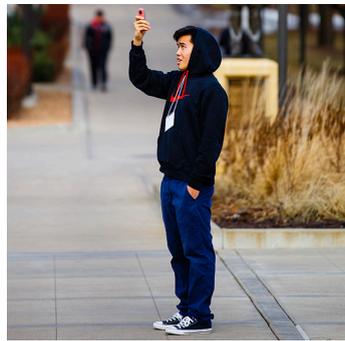
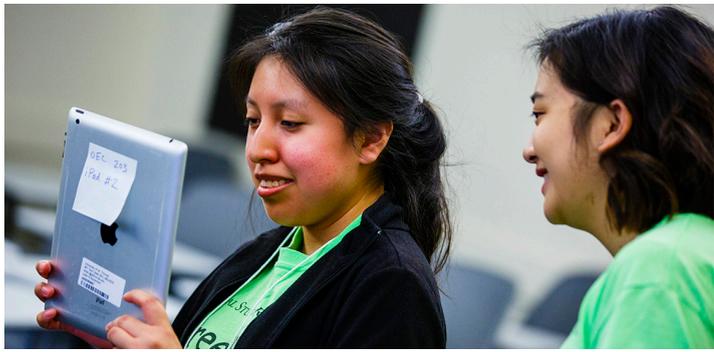
Fake news is a deliberate attempt to set an agenda and disrupt legitimate information."

—Neal Justin, Star Tribune TV and radio critic

undercut one of its most significant strengths," the letter said.

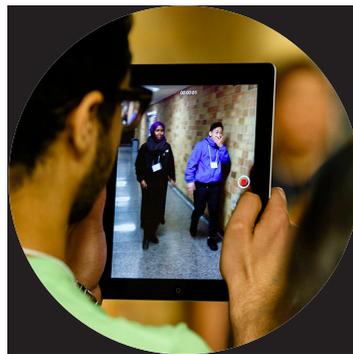
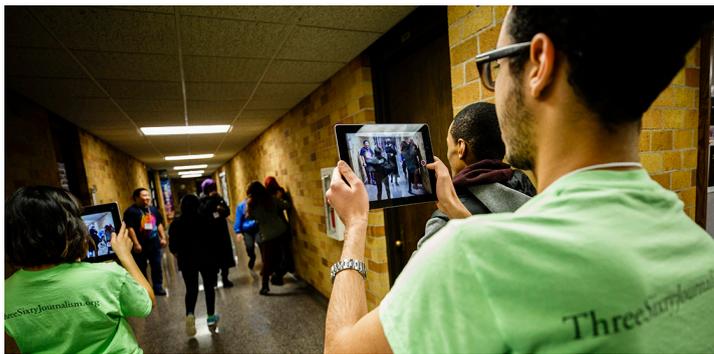
That's what's at stake in the battle over fake news, Neuzil and Justin said.

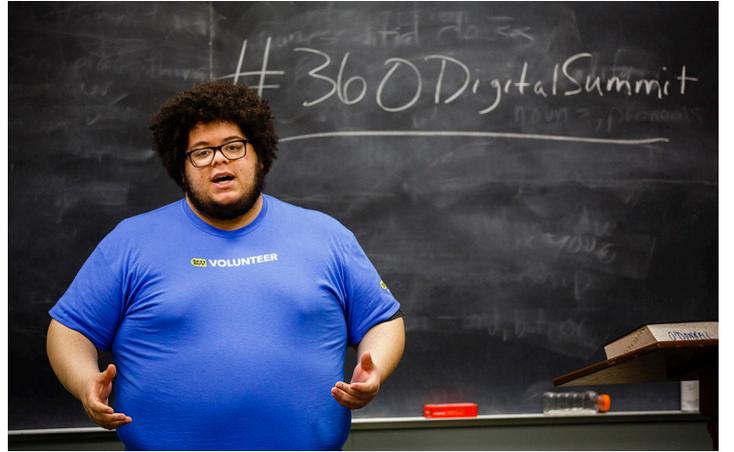
If young people are going to be effective citizens in this environment, Justin and Neuzil said, they need to care about what's going on in the world around them; to develop critical thinking skills; to be willing to do the work that's necessary to stay informed; and to not rely on only social media for news.

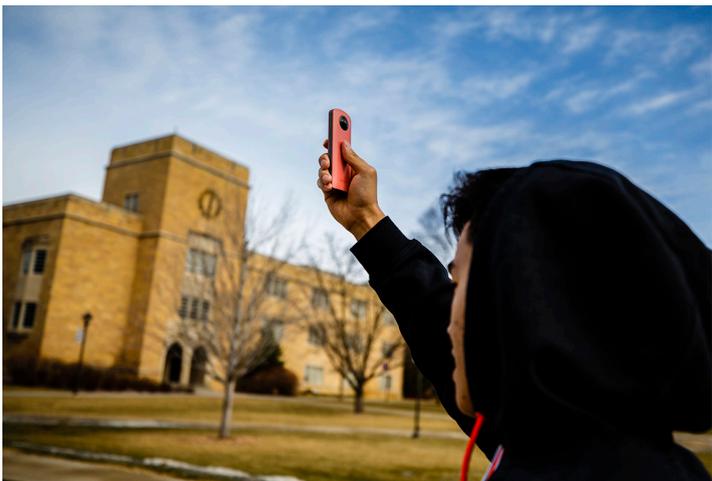
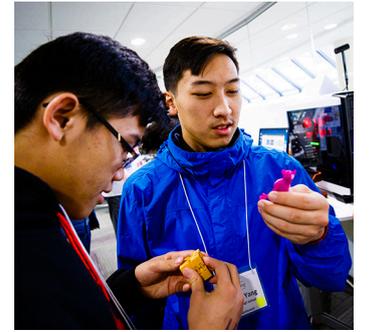
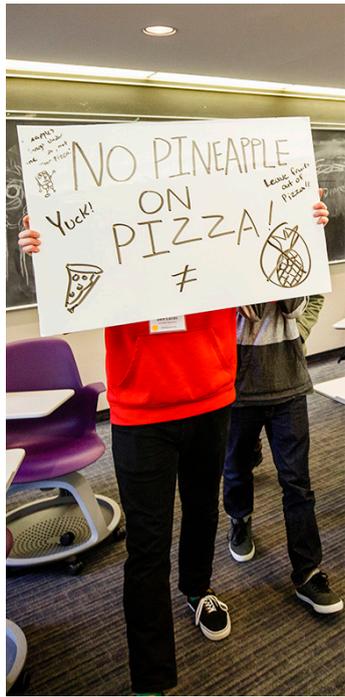


snapshots

A LOOK INSIDE THREESIXTY







MURAL from page 21

Many women in the shelter grew up with cultural customs that made it hard for them to take their children and flee their abusive relationships, Jha said. The mural is a way to help the women remember that they are not alone, no matter where they are from, she said.

House of Peace is run by Asian Women United of Minnesota, a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending domestic violence by offering support programs and spreading awareness. The organization has created a welcoming safe house and a safety net for Asian women and children dealing with domestic violence.

Those who come to the shelter often face long and difficult challenges, including with their immigration status, housing and employment.

"They don't have an income, they don't have a place to live, they might not even have a green card status, so they might get deported," said Bea Vue-Benson, an on-site therapist at AWUM. "I just hope to validate their decision to leave the marriage or the abusive family and help them go through this difficult time."



KATELYN VUE/THREESIXTY JOURNALISM

Keller-Flores (left), Yang and the others who participated bonded while painting the mural.

The idea for creating a mural started with Vue-Benson's daughter, Karah. Bea Vue-Benson told her that the shelter was in need of a mural downstairs. Her daughter had already painted murals in her own house, but she couldn't do this project all on her own. She reached out to her friends Keller-Flores, Yang and Reinhardt.

"Our goal for it was to show the kids another representation of Asian women, instead of the

"They put so much work into [the mural], and there was so much compassion in the room."

—Bea Vue-Benson, on-site therapist at Asian Women United of Minnesota

mainstream media [view] of what Asian women look like, and to give them an ulterior image," Bea Vue-Benson said. "Hopefully they can pick up the smiling and the arms up as a sense of community."

Starting in October 2015, the students came to the shelter once or twice a week to fill in the mural. They spent weeks researching Asian culture, sketching out landscape designs and buying

materials before finishing the mural in September.

Keller-Flores said House of Peace felt more like a home than a shelter. "You could feel like it was really safe there," she said, "and you could smell food cooking upstairs."

After hearing that the women enjoyed seeing the progress the girls were making on the mural, Yang said it helped her feel "more motivated to finish and make a difference."

Research has shown art in hospitals can have a positive effect on morale of patients and staff members. According to one study in the United Kingdom, 43 percent of frontline clinical staff believed art had a positive effect on healing and 24 percent considered the arts improved clinical outcomes.

During their nights at the shelter, the girls jammed out to music, ate cake and bonded over the message they were working hard to convey. They want to continue to paint the rest of the basement with more murals.

Bea Vue-Benson fondly remembers the students putting the final touches on the mural.

"... They put so much work into it," she said, "and there was so much compassion in the room."

DIGITAL MEDIA from page 6

University of St. Thomas STELAR (St. Thomas E-Learning and Research) Center. Eric Tornoe, associate director of research computing at St. Thomas, led the session, in which students used Theta cameras to take 360 photos and video on campus, and then used the Oculus Rift and HTC Vive virtual reality headsets to get the full effect.

The youth-led breakout sessions were a hit. In one session, titled "How Brands Connect with Audiences Using Instagram and Snapchat," ThreeSixty students displayed examples of how their favorite brands use the social media platforms to reach their consumers (i.e. Old Navy, the Kardashians), and then sent students throughout the building with iPads to capture

"As someone who leverages digital storytelling every day, it's fantastic seeing the next generation of storytellers diving into the industry."

—Phyllis Welsh, 3M

Instagram and Snapchat content for the "Youth Digital Media Summit brand."

In another session, "The World is Watching: The Art of Viral Videos," ThreeSixty students showed examples of well-known viral videos, such as the "Mannequin Challenge" and the "ALS Ice Bucket Challenge," discussed what made those videos viral and then helped students create their own versions of viral videos with iPads. Laughter

from these activities could be heard echoing throughout the building.

A third breakout session, "Emerging Technology: Telling a Story Through Different Lenses," allowed students to practice different storytelling techniques and viewpoints with Snapchat Spectacles, a GoPro and a drone. ThreeSixty students learned about the benefits and limitations of each piece of technology before using each while role-playing scenarios.

ALUMNI from page 7

Collette interned as a digital copywriter at the Minneapolis Star Tribune and as an interactive designer at Broadhead, which hired her after graduation in 2013.

She started in that role at Broadhead, where collaboration is a big part of the job, she said. With a work-hard, play-hard mentality, the ad agency has a different culture from other organizations she had worked. "It's a lot of moving pieces that all come together nicely," she said.

At Broadhead, Collette is now transitioning into a strategist position.

"As a strategist, I will be conducting consumer research to help brands really get to know the stories of the people they are

"Every year I had an internship."

—Maggie Collette, 2009 ThreeSixty Scholar

marketing to," she said. "My job is to take all that research from interviews, surveys and desk research, and synthesize it into a smart and usable strategy for a brand."

Taking advantage of the opportunities she's gained in the Twin Cities, Collette uses her experience from back home to assist her clients, mostly agricultural companies, which keeps her connected to home while working in the big city.

SHORTAL from page 14

being] banned from press conferences, being called the enemy of the American people by our president and his staff, on more than one occasion. That's a little scary.

A significant percentage of the population is spouting off things like fake news when they just don't like something. Fake news is now used like, if you don't like something I'm saying, "Fake news!" That's not fake news. Fake news is something that's intentionally made up. Me saying, perhaps, that the health care plan has bad parts to it, that's not fake news. It's a weird time.

I think our industry will have to change because of it. I think it's really uncomfortable. I can tell you that newsrooms are uncomfortable right now, because even, I think, and I hear this from friends in other newsrooms, even managers don't really know how to handle this. You don't know what to do because no matter what you do, somebody is mad. That was the case before, but not like this. It wasn't vicious and vitriolic. And so I think there's some real gut-checking going on, and everything should be happening within the journalist and within the newsrooms, a big soul searching of, what is this going to look like?

I think right now we don't know, because it's exhausting. I think we will know. A year from now, I think we'll have a little bit more of an idea of how to handle this, because we have been in this ride for a bit longer. Right now, it's just crazy.

What would you say to people who want to do journalism?

Shortal: It's never been more important. Ever. Ever in my lifetime, in your lifetime, in my mom's lifetime. I don't think it's ever been more important to do the work. ...

I hope that we'll find some sort of sense of calm for all people, because I don't know how sustainable this is. But, the last thing that should happen is for journalists to get scared and stop being journalists because it's too hard. I know for

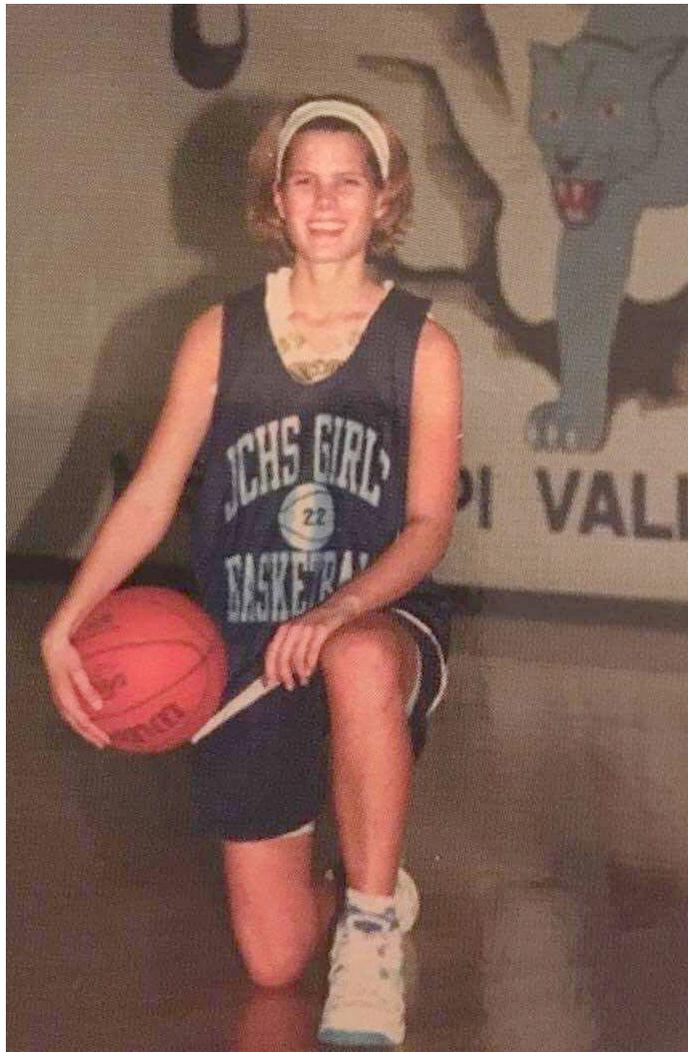


PHOTO COURTESY OF JANA SHORTAL

A photo from Jana Shortal's basketball playing days in high school.

*"I think I'm
a different kind
of journalist, and
I'm comfortable
with that."*

me, I've worked harder in the last year of my life than I have in the previous 17 years, and that's okay. ... I think right now we have to, and we'll see what that looks like.

What would you say to teens who get their news from social media?

Shortal: You know, somebody asked this at [a recent] panel [I spoke on]. This woman asked because her son is 18 and he asked her if CNN was a Democrat channel. Fair question, but that's what we've come to, right, that you're one or the other. ...

The woman was asking what to tell her son, and I'm like, you need to be a conscious consumer, just like you are with food. You can't have everything done for you. You need to find out what foods are bad for you, and what foods are good for you, or what foods work for your body, and you need to do the same with news.

There is not one place that you're going to get news that's going to make you the most well-rounded citizen of our democracy. I read 30 news publications a week, easy, all over the spectrum. Do you have to do that much? No. It's my job. But, think of it like sports, you know. Do you think someone at the level of the NFL only watches, like, one other team? No, you watch every form of football you can find, to formulate new ideas and new plays.

This transcript has been edited for length and content.

VIRTUAL REALITY from page 9
barbershop in Riverside Mall.

Pinkley says this form of storytelling "immerses you in a situation like nothing else can."

"We don't necessarily have the chance to experience situations like that," she said. "That's about the closest you can get."

Worku used virtual reality for the first time at ThreeSixty Journalism's Youth Digital Media Summit, a one-day digital media workshop for high school students, and received a new experience from 360-degree video.

"It really changes the perspective of what they may have thought if they had just read a boring article online," Worku said. "[Users] see how it is to be out there, so they also understand what the people out there are going through. It's more likely to get people to love the news more and enjoy it."

The higher costs of producing virtual reality stories means there are "pretty high" barriers to more widespread use of virtual reality in journalism, Tornoe said. He believes that it may be about five years before

virtual reality storytelling is accepted as a common journalistic method.

However, due to recent spikes in demand for virtual reality gear and systems, Tornoe says, some VR systems have already seen a \$1,000 price drop since their release last year. This price drop could boost accessibility for more consumers to determine for themselves the purpose and importance of VR journalism.

For journalists like Pinkley, the future of virtual reality seems close. She hopes that within the next year, virtual reality will take strides toward becoming an important method in journalism.

Pinkley eventually wants more people to see these stories for themselves by putting virtual reality systems into schools and libraries where consumers can access them.

"You are seeing it unfiltered, uncut. You are seeing it raw," Pinkley said. "... You're not seeing it through my eyes, you are seeing it through the eyes of a 360 camera and you are moving around the room the way you want to move around the room."



A student uses virtual reality at the Youth Digital Media Summit in February.

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