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ThreeSixty

Minnesota Teens Report Stories & Issues That Matter



ThreeSixty Focus on...



...the Twin Cities' new mayors

St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter III, Page 23

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey, Page 24

CHANGEMAKERS 2.0

Inspiring positive change in the Twin Cities and beyond, Page 19



ALSO INSIDE

Powerful college essays, Page 15

Innocence Project of Minnesota frees man from behind bars, Page 11

Apply today for ThreeSixty Journalism summer camp, Page 5

REAL STUDENTS. REAL STORIES.

ThreeSixty

VOLUME 8 • ISSUE 3

JOURNALISM

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

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STAFF PHOTO

ThreeSixty students and staff pose for a photo with KSTP anchor Matt Belanger (front, center) on Feb. 17 at the University of St. Thomas TV studio. Belanger joined ThreeSixty's school-year News Team for the morning to help teach students how to anchor during a live news broadcast. Each student had the opportunity to anchor with Belanger.

CONTENTS APRIL

• Summer Camp

ThreeSixty Engagement Manager Bao Vang lays out her top three reasons why you should join ThreeSixty Journalism's summer camps.

Page 5

• Run Like Rel

ThreeSixty Journalism alumni Ariel Kendall helps young people in the Twin Cities discover and follow their dreams.

Page 6

• A Night for Somalia

Our ThreeSixty writer describes how a Minneapolis fundraising event came together to support victims of a 2017 bombing in Mogadishu.

Page 7

• Two options, one future

An 18-year-old Twin Cities student and her family weigh their next steps after learning the parents' Temporary Protected Status will be terminated.

Page 8

• A new twist on tailgating

Young people dish up healthy food and fun during a Super Bowl week celebration at Target Center in Minneapolis.

Page 8

• Blueprint for success

The Young Women's Initiative launches a new plan to ensure bright futures for Minnesota women.

Page 10

• Freed from prison

The Innocence Project of Minnesota frees a Minnesota man after 11 years behind bars.

Page 11



6

• Hope for children

Local teenagers take an eye-opening trip to Colombia through nonprofit Pathways to Children.

Page 12

• A 'mini Target'

How the Roseville Area High School's food shelf came to fruition.

Page 12

• The Dweller

An original comic illustration by one of our ThreeSixty reporters.

Page 13

• Smartphones and distraction

A St. Paul Harding counselor looks for a link between Internet addiction and academic success.

Page 14

• College Essays

Students from St. Paul Harding High School share their powerful life stories.

Page 15

• Changemakers

Profiles of people—including the two new mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul—who are inspiring positive change in the Twin Cities and beyond.

Page 19

• Mental illness in K-pop

Our ThreeSixty writer details the tragic story of a K-pop star and what can be learned from his death.

Page 28

• Mental health in Ethiopia

Our ThreeSixty writer poses questions about mental health treatment in her parents' home country.

Page 29



7



10

Contributors in this issue



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2018 ThreeSixty Scholar: Zekriah Chaudhry

THREESIXTY JOURNALISM HAS selected ThreeSixty student Zekriah Chaudhry as the 2018 ThreeSixty Scholar. Chaudhry receives a full-tuition, four-year scholarship to study Communication and Journalism at St. Thomas starting in the 2018 fall semester.

“I love storytelling and can’t wait to develop new tools to help me do that better,” Chaudhry said. “Journalism is a fast-developing field, and it will be great to have St. Thomas’s COJO professors help me find my place in it.”

Chaudhry, a senior at Minneapolis South High School, joined ThreeSixty in summer 2014 and wrapped up his participation this spring. During that time, he

successfully completed numerous print journalism camps with ThreeSixty, as well as TV and radio broadcast camps.

As part of his ThreeSixty experience, Chaudhry recently reported on activities surrounding Super Bowl LII in Minneapolis, covered a Minnesota Timberwolves game as part of a partnership with the team and Star Tribune, and wrote a profile on St. Thomas College of Arts and Sciences Dean Dr. Yohuru Williams.

In January, Chaudhry took home a Minnesota Newspaper Association “Better Newspaper Contest” second-place honor in the business category for his story on media companies embracing virtual reality as a storytelling tool.

“Zekriah started with ThreeSixty the summer before his freshman year in high school,” said ThreeSixty executive director Chad Caruthers. “He’s grown into a curious, skilled and passionate young journalist. He earned this scholarship and the opportunities that come with it.”

For Chaudhry, the scholarship represents another important step toward achieving his goal.

“I want to be a professional journalist,” Chaudhry said. “I hope to have nationally recognized work and a reputation as an honest and trustworthy journalist.”

Currently, there are four ThreeSixty scholars attending St. Thomas.

*“I love
storytelling.”*

—Zekriah
Chaudhry



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. Currently, there are four ThreeSixty scholars attending St. Thomas.



Samantha HoangLong

Hoanglong, a freshman at St. Thomas, is reporting for TommieMedia, the university's student-run news organization, and living on campus in the Communication & Journalism department's Living Learning Community. She studied theology in Rome as part of a January study abroad program. Earlier this year, HoangLong joined the Public Relations Student Society of America and the Murray Hall Association.



Danielle Wong

Wong, a sophomore, is a co-facilitator for St. Thomas' Feminist Community and also works on campus for the Luann Dummer Center for Women and for media services. Wong also is involved in Cadenza, a women's a capella group, as well as other creative projects. In March, she helped organize the March for Lives walkout on campus.



Amira Warren-Yearby

Warren-Yearby, a junior at St. Thomas, is studying TV, film and communications at Bond University in Queensland, Australia, as part of a yearlong study abroad program. She plans to work on the production team for the 2018 Commonwealth Game—an international, multi-sport event in Queensland—at the end of April. She's also working on the creative team, leading worship and working graphics, at Hillsong Church.



Deborah Honore

Honore, a senior, spent a portion of her final semester at St. Thomas in India as part of a reporting trip for the PBS NewsHour Under-Told Stories Project. Honore, who interns at Under-Told Stories, went on the trip with Fred de Sam Lazaro, the Under-Told Stories executive director and a PBS NewsHour correspondent. On top of her COJO major, Honore also is majoring in Justice and Peace Studies.



STAFF PHOTO

ThreeSixty Journalism students took home seven awards, including two first-place honors, in this year's Minnesota Newspaper Association College Better Newspaper Contest.

ThreeSixty students win 7 MNA awards

FOR A FOURTH straight year, ThreeSixty Journalism students have taken home seven Minnesota Newspaper Association awards.

ThreeSixty students earned two first-place finishes, two second-place finishes and three third-place finishes in the College Better Newspaper Contest, an annual college-level competition. The

awards banquet was held Jan. 25 in Bloomington.

Katelyn Vue, a senior at North St. Paul High School, won first place in the Arts & Entertainment category for her story on local high school students who painted the wall of a Minneapolis domestic violence shelter as a symbol of hope and healing.

Skyler Kuczaboski, a freshman at Dartmouth College, also won first place in the Columnist category for her personal recounting of learning about white privilege.

Zekriah Chaudhry, a senior at Minneapolis South High School, took home a second-place honor in the Business category for his story on media companies embracing virtual reality as a storytelling tool. Mina Yuan, a freshman at Stanford University, also won second place in Human Interest for her "Changemakers" profile on Coralie Maldonado, a Minnesota high school student activist.

Zahra Mustafa, a junior at Burnsville High School, earned third place in the Columnist category for her college essay on rewriting the narrative about refugees. Kuczaboski also earned a third-place honor in the Editorial category for her op-ed on kneeling for the national anthem.

Elezebet Mitiku, a junior at St. Paul Harding, took home a third-place honor in the Feature Photo category for a photo she took for her story on Ethiopian runner Feyisa Lilesa's protest at the 2016 Summer Olympics.

ThreeSixty shines on Super Bowl stage

A SUPER BOWL in Minneapolis wouldn't be a Super Bowl in Minneapolis without sound reporting from ThreeSixty students.

Starting in September, a trifecta of ThreeSixty students and a young alumna descended on the big day's supporting activities to give readers an inside look.

After all, there's more to the Super Bowl than the game itself, as student Loveisajoy Pha wrote in her profile of Super Bowl LII's charitable giving and its leader, Dana Nelson. Pha's story was published in the December 2017 ThreeSixty Magazine.

"I really loved being able to do a story that was relevant to current events," Pha said. "I especially enjoyed interviewing Dana."

Student Zekriah Chaudhry shared a similar thought on his **SUPER BOWL** *continued on page 9*



STAFF PHOTO

ThreeSixty student Zekriah Chaudhry, a senior at Minneapolis South High School, interviews Minnesota Vikings defensive end Everson Griffen during the Minnesota Super Bowl Host Committee Legacy Fund's Kids Tailgate Party on Jan. 31 at Target Center in Minneapolis.

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.

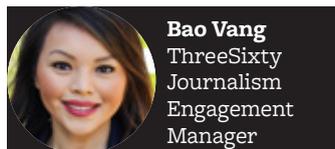
HoangLong, the 2017 ThreeSixty Scholar and a freshman at the University of St. Thomas, participated in summer camp in 2016. She said Boot Camp was “really fun.”

“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 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 grow your network of friends and people who can get you a job or internship later in life?



Bao Vang
ThreeSixty
Journalism
Engagement
Manager

ThreeSixty Journalism summer camp brings a diverse group of high school students together from across the Twin Cities. 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 senior, said his favorite part of ThreeSixty summer camps so far has been “the connections



COURTESY MARIA ALEJANDRA CARDONA, MPR NEWS

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 about \$150,000. 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 at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul campus. The application deadline is May 21, 2018. Space is limited, and it is a competitive application process. Questions? Contact me at baovang@stthomas.edu or at 651-962-5225.



Giving kids a running start

Ariel Kendall helps young people follow their dreams

AS A THREESIXTY Journalism student in 2007, Ariel Kendall developed a love for writing and a passion for helping other people tell their stories.

She honed these skills as a journalism student at the University of St. Thomas, and after graduation in 2011 started writing a blog, called “Run Like Rel,” to motivate other young people to “set goals and cross finish lines.”

In 2013-14, with the help of a mentor, she turned the blog into a nonprofit organization to help inner-city high school students discover and pursue their dreams.

The mission is to help close the high school achievement gap in the Twin Cities, as well as to help students “realize what their skills and passions are, to articulate their vision or dream, and then to figure out how to get there,” said Kendall, a Minneapolis native. “Also, of course, to support them as they work toward their goals.”

Reaching out to students in their mid-teens – or even earlier – is



Stephanie Tapia-Ponce
Culture Reporter

crucial in helping them develop a life plan, Kendall says.

Run Like Rel provides outside-of-school workshops, often run in collaboration with other youth organizations around the Twin Cities, such as the YMCA, YWCA and STEM programs. RLR has served more than 300 students during the past four years.

The RLR workshops focus on education, health and career planning, using such tools as dream boards, mission statements, goal setting and resume writing.

Marcus Styles, a 20-year-old student who attends Minneapolis Community and Technical College, is a graphic designer and is working to become an independent artist. He says the “passion planner” provided by RLR “absolutely changed” his life.



STEPHANIE TAPIA-PONCE/THREESIXTY JOURNALISM

ThreeSixty Journalism alum Ariel Kendall turned her post-college blog, Run Like Rel, into a nonprofit that aims to help young people achieve their dreams.

YOU CAN RUN WITH REL

RLR’s second annual “Start With A Dream” 5K Kids Run will be on Saturday, August 18, at Father Hennepin Park in Minneapolis. You can check it out and sign up online at: <https://runlikereel.com>. All proceeds go to support youth programs and scholarship funding.

FIND OUT MORE

To find out more and to donate to the Run Like Rel “Start With A Dream” scholarship, go to <https://www.crowdrise.com/run-like-rel-2016-17-endowment-scholarship-fund-initiative/fundraiser/runlikereel>

“I probably would not be the organized person that I am” without it, Styles said.

Darrell Thompson, president of Bolder Options, is Kendall’s mentor. He helped Kendall follow her

dream and helped RLR evolve into a mission-based youth development organization.

RLR workshops are sometimes held at Bolder Options, a Minneapolis-based nonprofit that

provides health and wellness mentoring to at-risk youth. The missions of the two organizations are complementary, and Bolder Options provides a fiscal and administrative umbrella for RLR.

Run Like Rel is “led by a strong female who’s passionate about making a difference in the city where she grew up,” Thompson said.

“She’s determined,” he said. “I believe passionately in what Ariel and RLR are trying to do.”

RLR is a labor of love for Kendall, but for now she also has a day job at TADS, which provides tuition management and other services for private schools.

“I hope in the next 3-to-5 years I’ll have my own building – an indoor space where I can do my programming – and I’ll have the funding to do RLR full time,” Kendall says.

Kendall is following her own dream.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ARIEL KENDALL

Run Like Rel participants show off their “dream boards,” which help them focus on what they want to achieve in life.

‘A Night for Somalia’

Minneapolis event raises funds for Mogadishu bombing victims

ON A WINDY and cold Thanksgiving evening, while others were celebrating the holiday with friends and family, I headed to Safari Restaurant in south Minneapolis to view the result of my sister’s hard work: “A Night For Somalia.”

It was packed. The rows were filled with teenagers and young adults, overwhelmed with excitement, their voices bouncing from the walls. My sister and friends who organized the event ran from corner to corner, making sure the event was running as planned.

We were all here for the same reason. I felt a soaring wave of excitement as the crowd hushed and the host gave his introductory speech. It was happening!

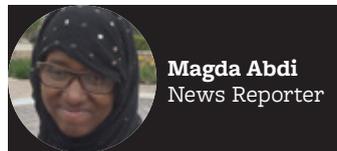
In October 2017, tragedy hit home. In Mogadishu, Somalia, a truck bombing killed more than 500 people and injured more than 300 others. It was the deadliest attack in Somalia’s history.

I think everyone was disappointed, but no one was shocked. Somalia has been in a state of despair for more than two decades. What I think let down everyone is that things appeared to be getting better.

Eight months earlier, we had gotten a new president, Mohamed Abdullahi “Farmajo” Mohamed, who promised that religious extremist groups such as Al-Shabaab would be gone. Things were going to change, until they didn’t.

We took one step toward progress and we went two steps back. It was devastating. Would we continue on this fluctuating path of success and disaster? What could we do, other than donate money to the afflicted?

This is where the story begins.



Magda Abdi
News Reporter

COMMENTARY

Miski Abdi, my sister, knew there had to be a way to act, to respond. A naturally charismatic person, occasionally to the point of embarrassment for her younger siblings, her casual social media conversations turned into a meeting within days.

Six people showed up to brainstorm a solution. “What can we do that would help immediately?” was the first question on Abdi’s mind.

Naima Jama brought donation boxes, which the group distributed to local restaurants such as The Nicollet Diner. Within a few days,

cash started to accumulate, and they had to assign people to pick it up weekly.

They wanted to do more.

The bombing wasn’t the first tragedy to hit Somalia last year. A drought also struck the country, triggering a famine that impacted millions.

Afro Deli and dozens of other restaurants and coffee shops raised money through an event called “Dine Out for Somalia” in the spring. Abdi’s group hoped it could emulate that success with a similar event but found out that other restaurants were already working with the Masjids, or mosques.

They instead decided to host a fundraiser. But in a community that had grown desensitized to tragedy throughout years of hardship, a typical fundraiser wasn’t the right approach.

“We decided to [do] an assortment of fun things to keep the people engaged, because fundraisers are boring,” Abdi said. “Who wants to spend money when they’re depressed?”

Instead, Abdi and her friends



An artist gives a performance during the “A Night for Somalia” fundraiser on Thanksgiving in Minneapolis. The fundraiser aided victims of a 2017 bombing in Mogadishu.

hoped to create something different that would connect and empower the audience. The focus was a celebration of culture and looking forward to the future. This night would also engage Somali youth.

“It’s cool to involve the older generation,” Abdi said, “but to really invoke change, we have to start getting the youth involved.”

Everyone in the group had something to contribute. One girl had a knack for design and made promotional materials ranging from T-shirts to posters. Someone else

had ties to Safari Restaurant and suggested it could host the event.

Once the venue was confirmed, the ball started to move – which was good, as organizers had only three weeks to pull off an event on a limited budget.

Social media was vital to pulling the event together. With tech-savvy young people, word could spread quickly. A video featuring black and white photographs of the organizers, details of the bombing’s impact and uplifting orchestral music laid out the goal for the evening.

Abdi knew that excitement had begun to build in the community, but the response at the event was even greater than she expected. Organizers had to pull in extra chairs and nearly ran out of space as more and more young people arrived.

Several local designers showcased athletic and casual wear in a fashion show. Poets read poems written from the perspective of a young person living in the Somali diaspora. An upcoming rapper performed at the event. T-shirts and red headbands, similar to those worn by angry protesters in Somalia, were available for sale and showed solidarity with the victims of the attack.

The different initiatives raised nearly \$9,500 all together. This money went to Aamin Ambulance, **SOMALIA** continued on page 26



Miski Abdi, one of the organizers of “A Night for Somalia” fundraiser, speaks to attendees during the event.

Two options, one future

18-year-old must decide to leave U.S. home or move to foreign land

Editor's Note: The name of one of the sources in this story has been changed to protect her identity.

WHILE MANY HIGH school students are applying to colleges or concerned about grades, Rebecca is worrying about something else.

Rebecca's parents are among an estimated 230,000 Salvadoran immigrants in the U.S. – thousands of whom are in Minnesota – whose Temporary Protected Status (TPS) will expire in 2019.

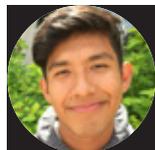
The Trump administration announced in January that protections for immigrants from El Salvador will terminate in September 2019, throwing Rebecca's life into uncertainty as her family is forced to choose their next steps from a list of life-changing options.

"What if one day they do have to leave?" said Rebecca, 18, a local student whose name has been changed to protect her and her family's identity. "We have to have a plan for what we are going to do next."

The U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security may grant Temporary Protective Status to a foreign country "due to conditions in the country that temporarily prevent the country's nationals from returning safely, or in certain circumstances, where the country is unable to handle the return of its nationals adequately," according to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

TPS was given to El Salvador after two earthquakes ravaged the country in 2001. However, according to the Department of Homeland Security, living conditions in El Salvador have since improved.

"Schools and hospitals damaged by the earthquakes have



**Jose Popoca
Palmas**
News
Reporter

been reconstructed and repaired, homes have been rebuilt, and money has been provided for water and sanitation and to repair earthquake damaged roads and other infrastructure," the department said in a January statement. "The substantial disruption of living conditions caused by the earthquake no longer exist."

Rebecca's mother came to the U.S. at the age of 17 to support her two children, who lived in El Salvador with their grandmother, Rebecca said. With only a first-grade education, her mother struggled to get enough money to get by.

"At age 17, she had three jobs working day and night to send money to El Salvador to build a house," said Rebecca, who was born a U.S. citizen.

After years of hard work, Rebecca's mother started her own business and had her own employees. This was all thanks to TPS, which allowed her to stay and work legally in the U.S., according to Rebecca.

"TPS is a temporary protective status and a humanitarian-based protection that exists for people from countries who are experiencing political turmoil and humanitarian or national disaster," said John Keller, executive director of the Immigrant Law Center in St. Paul.

TPS meant a lot to Rebecca's parents because it helped them build a life in the U.S.

FUTURE *continued on page 9*



Eva Hunderfund, a 10-year-old from Rochester, was one of 10 youth chef finalists in a healthy eating competition during the Minnesota Super Bowl Host Committee's Kids Tailgate Party in January. Youth put a new twist on tailgating by serving up healthy foods during the Super Bowl week celebration.

STAFF PHOTO

Tailgating with a twist

Young people serve up healthy foods, fun at Super Bowl party

Tailgating is known for fans parking their cars outside of stadiums hours before football games, grilling hot dogs and drinking cold cans of beer.

But at the Super Bowl Kids Tailgate Party, Minnesota youth exchanged those traditions for healthy food served out of colorful cardboard food trucks.

The Minnesota Super Bowl Host Committee Legacy Fund's Kids Tailgate Party on Jan. 31 at the Target Center in Minneapolis emphasized the importance of children's health in Minnesota. The event was the conclusion of the Legacy Fund's 52 weeks of giving, an initiative that provided a grant promoting youth health and wellness in Minnesota each week for one year leading up to the Super Bowl in Minneapolis.

The cause drew hundreds of



**Zekriah
Chaudhry**
News Senior
Reporter

Minnesota kids and their parents. NFL players and other celebrities were also at the event, including Vikings defensive end Everson Griffen. Griffen spent time at the event signing autographs, enjoying the food – his favorite was the sweet potato skins, he said – and playing around with the kids. But he also made sure to emphasize the importance of the Tailgate Party message.

"Kids should be outside doing activities," Griffen said. "Football, sports, running, playing with friends, instead of sitting [inside playing] a video game. It's

important to have that in your life."

Also attending the event was Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey, who said the Tailgate Party was one of several events that demonstrated what Minnesota did well while hosting the Super Bowl.

"You don't want to have the Super Bowl followed by no lasting legacy," Frey said. "And these funds help encourage different programs that are helping youth and are social justice-oriented for the long haul."

The event also honored 10 Minnesota youth who created healthy recipes to share at the event. Those 10 "youth chefs" were the finalists of the Super Snack Challenge, a healthy food-themed competition that featured Minnesota youth ages 8 to 14.

Eva Hunderfund, a 10-year-old who attends Schaeffer Academy in Rochester, was one of the 10 finalists. Hunderfund spent most of her time standing near center court during the event, smiling and sharing her "Healthy Rainbow Towers"

TAILGATING *continued on page 9*

FUTURE from page 8

“That’s how they got a house and a car, and they worked legally here,” Rebecca said.

Keller says families like Rebecca’s have two options to stay in the U.S.: a U visa or a green card, neither of which apply to Rebecca’s situation. To obtain green cards, Rebecca would need to be 21 years old in

order to sponsor her parents. The U visa is for victims of violent crimes.

Rebecca’s family has thought of another riskier option: moving to Canada. Her family believes it is the best option to allow them to start a new life, according to Rebecca.

“My parents’ plan is to flee to Canada and take my siblings along

with them, in which I will either stay and finish my education or go with them,” Rebecca said.

Keller says families like Rebecca’s won’t find the generous, open arms they expect in Canada.

“People think there is hope that they will be generous,” he said. “We have to educate people that Canada doesn’t just have an open-door

policy for people who lived in the United States for a long time. Unless you have a visa, they will turn you back.”

Rebecca now has to make a decision most 18-year-olds never have to consider: stay in the U.S. alone or go with her parents to a foreign land.

“I don’t know how I will go through my life,” she said. “I don’t

know where I will work or where I’m going to stay, and I can’t depend on my family forever.”

It’s a decision Rebecca says she shouldn’t be forced to make. It makes her anxious. She should be concentrating on school and not thinking about such huge decisions, she said.

“I don’t know what I’m going to do,” she said. “It’s hard.”

TAILGATING from page 8

with hungry passersby. Her snack was made up of foods ranging from bacon and baby spinach to blueberries and pineapple.

12-year-old Princess-Ann Nelson, who goes to Southside Family Charter School in Minneapolis, was also one of the competitors who attended the event. Her snack idea made it to the final 52 before the pool was narrowed down to 10 finalists.

“I feel like this is a really nice event to get the kids out, especially because it’s right downtown, it’s available to the north side and it’s also available to the south side,” Nelson said.

Dr. Edward Laskowski, co-director of the Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Center and a member

of the Super Bowl Legacy Fund Advisory Committee, attended the event and said it highlighted everything the Legacy Fund had been focused on supporting over the 52 weeks of giving.

“It’s so important for kids to have a good foundation,” Laskowski said. “We find that about 80 percent of kids who are obese grow up to be obese adults. So if we get good habits established early and we get them eating clean, eating well, moving, learning the value of exercise and activity, they usually carry that with them through life.”

The Super Bowl Legacy Fund’s final gift was a \$220,000 grant to Anwatin Middle School in Minneapolis for the construction of

a new athletic field.

“The Super Bowl garners so much attention. So what’s happening here, the focus on clean eating and getting kids moving and healthy, that’s going to go out to a lot of different places in Minnesota,” Laskowski said. “That message is an important message that we need to have told.”

While the excitement surrounding Super Bowl week in Minneapolis centered around the big game and the high-profile concerts, the impact of the Tailgate Party was especially memorable to young people like Hunderfund.

“This is amazing that I’ve been able to do this,” Hunderfund said. She paused, before adding: “It’s just really amazing!”



Minnesota Vikings defensive end Everson Griffen signs autographs for young people during the Kids Tailgate Party.

*“Opportunities like these ...
are the reasons I am pursuing
a profession in journalism.”*



STAFF PHOTO

ThreeSixty student Loveisajoy Pha, a senior at Champlin Park High School, poses for a photo with Dana Nelson, vice president, legacy and community partnerships for the Minnesota Super Bowl Host Committee, in the fall at the Super Bowl volunteer center in Minneapolis. Pha featured Nelson in the December 2017 issue of ThreeSixty Magazine.

SUPER BOWL from page 4

experience at the Super Bowl’s Kids Tailgate Party at Target Center (page 8).

“Interviewing the mayor of my city [Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey] and one of the Vikings’ best players [defensive end Everson Griffen] in a span of about 15 minutes is about as amazing as it gets,” Chaudhry said.

From there, it was on to game-day with 2016 ThreeSixty Scholar Danielle Wong. She covered the star-studded Power of Influence Awards Brunch. NFL Hall of

Famers Ray Lewis and Randy Moss, as well as St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter, were among the award recipients.

Wong covered the red carpet and snagged an interview with comedian and actor Kevin Hart.

“It was a fascinating experience to see the scene behind the red carpet and to humanize celebrities,” she said of her opportunity.

“Opportunities like these,” Pha offered, “from writing and sharing stories to meeting inspiring individuals, are the reasons I am pursuing a profession in journalism.”

A blueprint for success

Young Women's Initiative launches plan to ensure bright future for MN women

It wasn't until college that Brook LaFloe learned there were terms for what she experienced growing up – terms such as domestic violence and alcoholism.

Now that she's gone through a healing process, the St. Paul resident is ready to be a voice for her community, especially for women.

"I'm Native American, and I feel like we're a very small population, first of all, but we also don't have a lot of leadership in government and big corporate jobs," LaFloe said. "We're kind of silenced, in a sense."

LaFloe, now an educator, is one of several women working to ensure opportunity and eliminate barriers for young women as a cabinet member of the Young Women's Initiative of Minnesota, a public-private partnership between the Women's Foundation of Minnesota and the state. A new plan through the Young Women's Initiative, called the "Blueprint for Action," could help achieve that.

The Blueprint for Action, funded through the Women's Foundation, is a seven-year roadmap that offers a list of 20 recommendations to help eliminate barriers for young women. The report reflects research, deep conversations and lived experiences, and was developed through the help of community partners. The work has already begun with a council of 70 leaders across Minnesota.

With women's movements such as "#MeToo" and "#Timesup" spreading awareness of women's rights across the globe, and with a gubernatorial election right around the corner, now's the time to take action, LaFloe said.

"This is it," LaFloe said. "This is kind of our time to advance our work and get it going, see where we



Katelyn Vue
News Senior
Reporter

can take it."

One of the recommendations is to increase awareness of violence against young women. One solution is to increase advocate outreach and victim services within communities and cultures, including immigrants, refugees, LGBTQ, gender non-conforming people, women in greater Minnesota and young women with disabilities, according to the report. Other proposed programs include finding solutions for lack of healthcare access, community-centered child-care and more.

In order to make these recommendations happen, a committee will review applications from organizations across Minnesota and reward grant money to fund programs. These programs will help combat issues affecting young women and align with the Blueprint for Action.

"It's not going to happen overnight," said Mary Beth Hanson, vice president of external relations at the Women's Foundation of Minnesota. "If you've read the 20 recommendations, they're 20 and they're big. So it takes dedicated work and focus, and to break it down because we can't [achieve them] all at once, but we want to make sure the recommendations are valued and moved forward."

The Young Women's Initiative played a crucial role in the research process and in creating the Blueprint for Action. The organization is the first statewide women's



Brook LaFloe, a cabinet member of the Young Women's Initiative, participates in a meeting of the Young Women's Leadership Day on Sept. 9, 2017, at the Minnesota State Capitol. The Young Women's Initiative has created a statewide plan to eliminate barriers for young women in Minnesota.



Members of the 2017-18 Young Women's Cabinet pose for a photo with Gov. Mark Dayton (front, center).

foundation in the U.S., according to its website. It's also the only grantmaking organization in the state to focus exclusively on equity for women and young girls.

Deena Zubulake, director of housing and youth programs at the YWCA, said young girls can expect impactful changes from the Blueprint for Action.

"I think one thing that girls can expect across our state is to be confident that this is not being led by one entity," she said, "but that this

is truly a cross-sector and community-building initiative."

When the Blueprint for Action was released in November, LaFloe remembers the moment as rewarding.

"This was one of our end pieces and we actually did it," she said. "It was a very patient process to get there."

Editor's Note: Katelyn Vue is a member of the Young Women's Initiative.

SIX FOCUS AREAS

The Young Women's Initiative created these six focus areas as the framework for the Blueprint for Action.

1. **Financial stability & prosperity:** Young women have financial stability and pathways to prosperity.
2. **Safety & violence prevention:** Young women feel safe and free from all forms of violence at home, school, work and in the community.
3. **Education & lifelong learning:** Young women have access to formal education and the life-skills training needed to make sound decisions and engage in planning for the future.
4. **Cultural & self-identity:** Young women have a supportive community with positive role models and a strong cultural and self-identity.
5. **Health & wellness:** Young women are physically and emotionally healthy.
6. **Family & caregiving:** Young women are free to pursue their dreams in ways that honor their personal, family and caregiving responsibilities.

Learn more about the Blueprint for Action at wfmn.org.

'A desperate person's last hope'

Innocence Project of Minnesota frees man who spent 11 years behind bars

DAVID SCHULTZ SAT down across from Terry Olson at Stillwater Prison, meeting for the first time in a room designated for private attorney-client discussions.

Initially, Olson's lack of faith in the criminal justice system was in dramatic contrast with that of Schultz, a confident lawyer. Olson had dealt with years' worth of bad lawyers, bad trials, bad luck.

Seven years behind bars weighed on his mind. The constant noise, the impossibility of escape, the pent-up rage of a man without freedom.

"The anger just sort of rolled right off him," Schultz said. "You could just feel how angry he was. He didn't say it this way, but the impression was, 'Who the hell are you? Why should I believe anything you tell me? What do you even know about my case?'"

Schultz, then a partner at Minneapolis litigation firm Maslon LLP, was one of the lawyers tasked by the Innocence Project of Minnesota (IPMN) with reversing the 2007 conviction that sent Olson to prison for the 1979 death of Jeff



Zekriah Chaudhry
News Senior Reporter

Hammill.

IPMN, founded in 2001, is an independent organization that aims to exonerate those who have been wrongfully convicted. It had successfully secured the release of four people before its representation of Olson.

FREEDING OLSON

The organization sent Schultz to Stillwater Prison in 2012 to interview Olson about the case, hoping its team of volunteer lawyers could accomplish what other defense attorneys had tried and failed to do – get justice for Olson.

"[Schultz] said, 'This is going to take a while, but I'm going to get you home,'" Olson said. "You can't forget that coming out of the mouth of any lawyer.

"I knew it. When he left that day, I knew that guy was going to get me out of there. I believed him."



Terry Olson, a Minnesota man who was freed by the Innocence Project of Minnesota in 2016 after spending 11 years in prison, holds the hand of his attorney, David Schultz. The Innocence Project has helped release five wrongfully convicted men from behind bars, including Olson.

IPMN first offered help on the Olson case in 2009 but couldn't officially get involved until Olson exhausted certain appeals. When its official involvement began in 2012, IPMN wanted to show the flaws in the trial that sent Olson to prison in 2007, nearly 30 years after Hammill's death.

Hammill was found on the side of a Wright County road outside of Buffalo with a fatal head injury. Investigators initially ruled the cause of death as undetermined. They questioned Olson, who gave Hammill a ride to a party earlier in the evening. Olson passed two

OLSON CASE TIMELINE

1979	Jeff Hammill's death
2001	Innocence Project of Minnesota founded
2003	Hammill's case reopened
2005	Terry Olson arrested
2007	Olson convicted
2012	IPMN starts work on Olson's case
2016	Olson freed from Minnesota Correctional Facility in Faribault

polygraph tests before the case was eventually closed.

However, in 2003 the case was reopened, and Olson and two others were charged. Olson's arrest came in 2005, and he was held in jail for 23 months awaiting trial.

Controversy around the trial stemmed mainly from the prosecution's use of a witness named Dale Todd, who was one of the defendants in the case and whom the Innocence Project called "mentally ill." Todd testified against Olson but later told IPMN he, Olson and the third defendant were not involved in Hammill's death.

Schultz said he was surprised the prosecution had managed to get a conviction during trial.

"There was absolutely nothing physical tying [Olson] to the

scene," he said.

The result of the trial was a 17-year sentence for Olson.

"I knew how I ended up there. But I had no clue which direction I was going," Olson said. "[Prison] was torturous. Every minute-and-a-half, a frickin' toilet flushed. And you're like, 'Oh my God, this is my life now?'"

Five years later, Olson met Schultz for the first time. Julie Jonas, the legal director of IPMN, said six lawyers and at least a dozen law students contributed in the effort to exonerate Olson.

Jonas put in at least 2,000 hours herself, she said. Schultz said that, based on his then-hourly fee at Maslon, the amount of time he spent on the case was worth more than \$1 million.

"At some points, it was every day that we would talk on the phone," Schultz said about his conversations with Olson during the years of litigation. "More typically, we would go long periods where nothing was happening and I would visit him every month or two, which I know was frustrating to him."

Eventually, the waiting game ended – in large part because of Todd, the man who testified against Olson. **INNOCENCE** continued on page 30



Olson and his mother, Gladys, embrace after Olson was released from a Faribault jail in 2016.



Olson was convicted in 2007 for the 1979 death of Jeff Hammill. Olson's release from prison did not exonerate him, but he maintains his innocence.

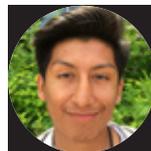
A pathway of hope for children

Trip to Colombia to help poor families an eye-opener for local teens

LAST NOVEMBER, EVELYN Vazquez took a one-week service trip to Colombia and was struck by the sight of homeless children and broken down homes without roofs.

Vazquez, 18, worked with children who had no food, clean water, a place to sleep or parents. She saw families that were malnourished and homeless with nowhere to go. She learned to embrace people with open arms and serve others, she said.

Vazquez and 13 other students



Jose Galvan Castro
Active Life Reporter

from Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Minneapolis traveled to Bogota through Pathways to Children, a nonprofit that empowers children in poverty through education, healthcare and volunteering. They were paired with a group of 14 other students who lived in Colombia and

attend Colegio Anexo San Francisco de Asis. Pathways also brings children and adults on volunteer trips to Ethiopia and India.

“When we were over there, the whole group was all one family,” said Vazquez, a senior at Cristo Rey. “We were all united.”

Grace Strangis, a former pediatric nurse and travel company owner from Minnesota, founded Pathways in Minneapolis in 2009. During a service trip to India after the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004, she was distraught at seeing hundreds of children living on the streets, including 6-year-olds taking care of their younger siblings because their parents had passed away from HIV, she said.

She decided to use her expertise after the trip to bring volunteers overseas to help people in need. Strangis would later receive letters from kids saying that she was their new mother and father.



JOSE GALVAN/THREESIXTY JOURNALISM

Amy Aguilar, left, works with Cristo Rey and Colegio Anexo San Francisco de Asis students to paint a mural in Bogota, Colombia. The service trip was taken through Pathways to Children, a local nonprofit.

“I started Pathways to Children because I wanted to make a difference in the world of poverty, and as importantly help others understand

the needs and work to make a difference,” Strangis said. “I believe that making a difference is the only way **COLOMBIA** continued on page 26

More than community service

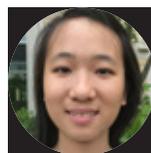
Roseville service learning projects give students chance to understand issues, offer solutions

At Roseville Area High School, there is a small room that looks like a mini Target.

When you walk in, to the right you will see clothes — coats, hats, gloves. There are school supplies on the shelves in front of you. And on the left side, you will see dry foods and home necessities.

The major difference between this room and Target is that everything here is free. This is the high school’s food shelf, the result of a service learning project that was completed in 2012.

When students run out of notebooks or pencils, they can go to the



Shimin Zhang
Culture Reporter

food shelf to stock up. They can also bring food home to help their families.

“My family doesn’t need to spend money [to] buy stuff — that’s helpful,” Roseville senior Pay Poe said. “Academically, because of the resources, it helps us [not] worry ... You don’t have to go buy stuff that’s needed for school, because it’s already there.”

In 2008, students began designing service learning projects to benefit people in and around Roseville Area High School. Eventually, an idea formed that would have a lasting impact on students — a food shelf.

The idea came after the Roseville Student Council visited the food shelf at the Anoka-Hennepin school district. The student council felt Roseville needed something similar, according to teacher Concetta Smith, who helped with the project.

Students began to plan what is now known simply as the “Food Shelf.” About 40 students were involved in the project.

Through the college readiness program Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), students found the opportunity to fund the program.

“I think the question was, ‘If you have \$1,000, how would you change your school?’” Smith said. “And so, that was what one of our students decided to do with that money.”

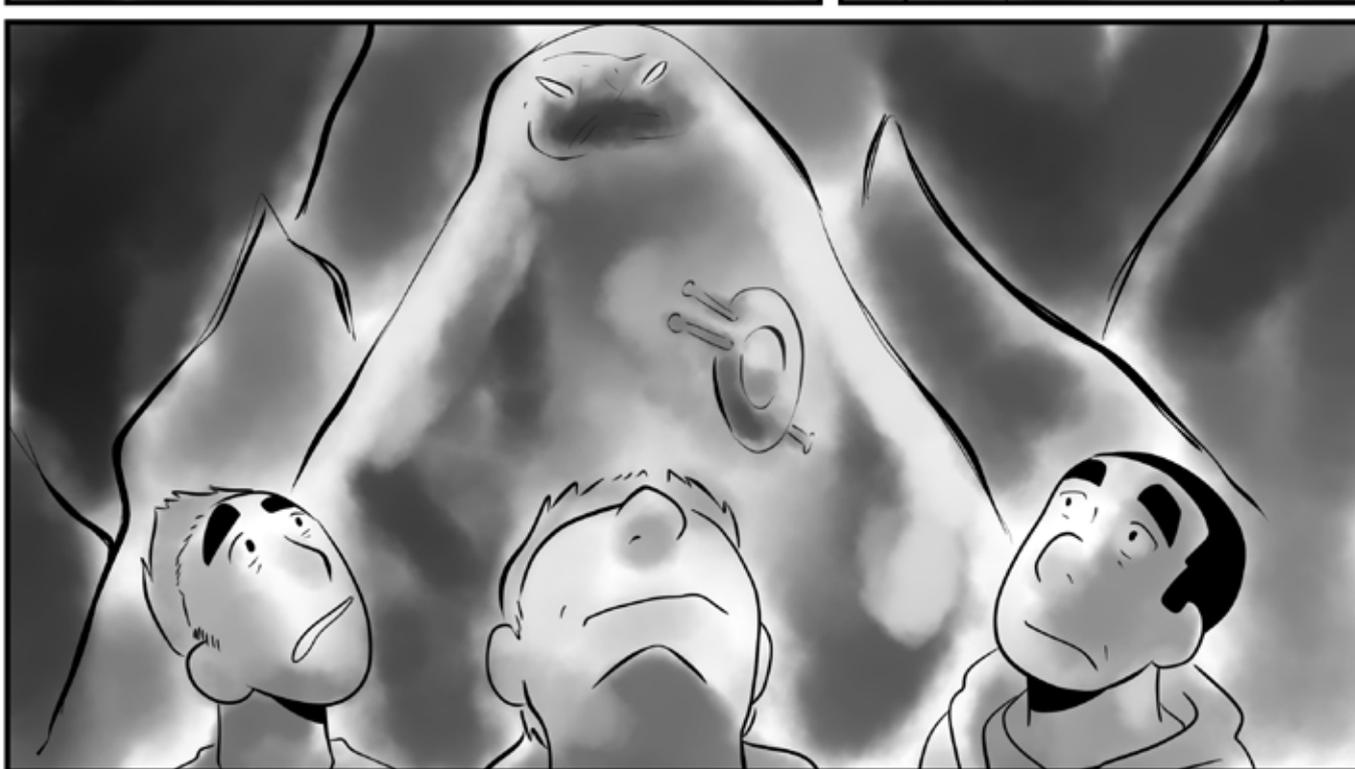
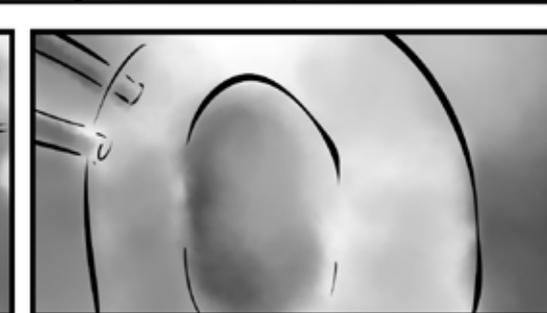
Starting in 2011, students worked an entire year to bring the project together, between preparing the **SERVICE** continued on page 26

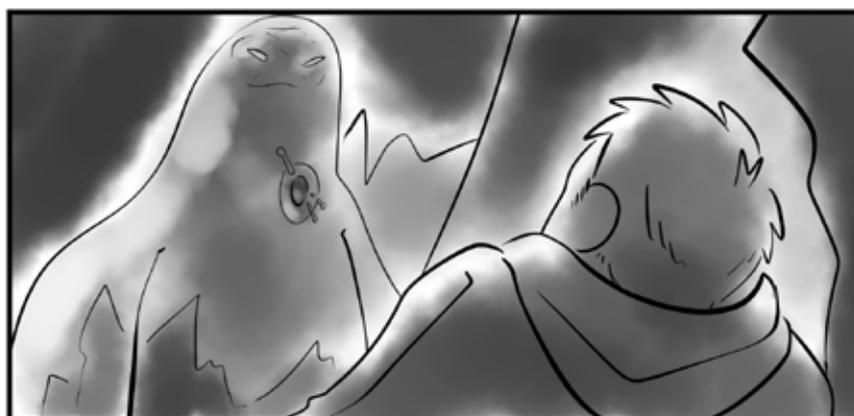


SHIMIN ZHANG/THREESIXTY JOURNALISM

Students from Roseville Area High School in the school’s food shelf, the result of a service learning project by students several years ago.

CULTURE





Smartphones: Not the only distraction

**St. Paul Harding
counselor looks
for link between
Internet addiction
and academic
success**



Tony Vue
Culture
Reporter

MARIANNA SULLIVAN NOTICED a problem.

A counselor at St. Paul Harding High School, Sullivan saw last year that some seniors were not graduating at the last minute due to a lack of credits, she said.

“I thought this was very strange, so I wanted to try to figure out, what’s the common denominator?” Sullivan said. “Why is it that all of these really wonderful and smart students suddenly didn’t graduate because of one credit or one course?”

She wondered if social media and smartphones were part of the problem. She had heard from teachers that smartphones and other technology could be a distraction in class, she said.

As part of a districtwide project, Sullivan gave nearly 100 St. Paul Harding students surveys on Internet addiction and found no clear link between students’ Internet addiction scores and their academic success. The study is still ongoing.

“My whole objective is to be able to help students be successful and graduate on time,” Sullivan said. “But now with the research [I’ve done], I don’t know for sure if it’s specifically social media.”

The 2016 four-year graduation rate at St. Paul Harding High School – the most recent data available online – was 80.3 percent, according to district data. The four-year

COUNSELOR *continued on page 29*

ThreeSixty

COLLEGE ESSAY BOOT CAMP

Kicking students' college essays into shape!

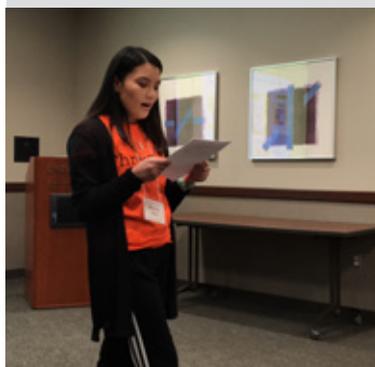


PHOTO BY CARMELLA HANLON, ALL OTHER PHOTOS OF COLLEGE ESSAY BOOT CAMP BY BAO VANG

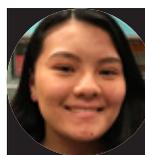
COLLEGE ESSAY BOOT CAMP is each student's entry point into ThreeSixty, and for those who continue with the program this summer and beyond, it's just the beginning of their ThreeSixty story. For all, though, boot camp is the chance to transform and share their diverse life stories, and to create that polished, adaptable college essay that will help land students in colleges and universities from coast to coast.

In April, despite wonky wi-fi and a snow day (ah, April in Minnesota), a classroom of eager Harding High School teens joined ThreeSixty and a half-dozen all-star volunteer writing coaches over spring break to kick their college essays into shape! These students brought their trust, poise and fearless perspectives into camp and produced powerful, personal pieces that we—and they—proudly share with you.
—Chad Caruthers, ThreeSixty executive director

Life's Short, Go See the World

When I rushed into at my grandma's house on the morning of February 26, 2012, she was already dead. I was 8 years old and I knew she was sick. Her death was still sudden and unexpected. And it took a part of me that cannot be replaced. This experience taught me to try to live life to the fullest.

My grandmother was my caretaker. Both my parents worked full-time jobs as teachers and I stayed with my grandma until I started school. One of my most special



Aleena Thor
Harding Senior
High School

memories includes watching my grandma reach to the top of her wardrobe, grab her secret stash of goodies and hand me a delicious lucky strawberry candy when I behaved well. The last memories I have of her were from the night before she passed. At my aunt's wedding, I remember

seeing my grandma, only 63 years old, laughing and dancing and posing for photos with our family.

Little did I know, that would be the last time I would see her alive. The next morning, I woke up in panic to my dad yelling.

"Wake up! Your grandma has died, wake up!"

When I arrived at her house, the living room was maxed out with more people than it could hold. Everyone was crying. My grandmother's body was lying peacefully on the ground, on her back, with her head resting on a pillow. To this day, I can still hear the wailing in my head.

The next thing I recall was heading to a Girl Scout camp trip later that

morning. Throughout the bus ride to the camp, I rested my head against the back of the seat in front of me. I avoided people. I just needed time alone to reflect and process what had happened. I tried to still have fun. And I did. I remember learning how to ice fish. If I didn't go, I wouldn't have had the chance to learn something new. In hindsight, I'm glad I went to distract myself from my grandmother's death.

Days after she passed, I felt incomplete because my grandma was no longer here to greet me and give me her goodies or hugs when I went to her house. Weeks later, seeing her again at her funeral was really comforting to me because she was no longer suffering from kidney failure, and I knew she would soon be reunited with my grandpa and our ancestors.

My grandmother has taught me the greatest lesson of all. She inspires me to realize that life is short and limited. I should never take anything for granted -- from the people in my life to my education, to my future. And I'm already starting. Last year, in

eighth grade, I accepted a new risk and challenged myself to go on a school trip to Washington, D.C. It was a three-day adventure without my parents. While I was nervous to go, I thought YOLO -- you only live once. In the nation's capital I saw many things that expanded my understanding. For example, at the Holocaust Museum I saw emotional videos and artifacts on the persecution of Jews during the Holocaust. At Arlington National Cemetery, I was thankful I did not have to make that ultimate sacrifice as a young soldier. At the National African American museum, I learned how horribly blacks were treated as slaves and in our recent history.

That trip opened my eyes and curiosity to the world. I want to travel more and learn more things that textbooks and the internet cannot teach. And thanks to a great teacher, my grandmother, I will not allow myself to miss out on any opportunities to learn and explore. I plan to go to college and study journalism, travel, and share and tell stories from around the world.

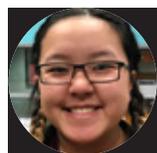


Divorce Teaches Independence

When my dad flipped over the tables and shattered all of the glass in my house one night in 2016, I knew my house wasn't safe anymore. He and my mom were fighting again. I packed what I needed to move out and find a new place to sleep the next night.

My mom disappeared for two weeks after my dad had this meltdown. I didn't know where she was. I tried contacting her countless times, with no luck. She turned off her cell phone and the familiar but frustrating auto message greeted me each time.

"Your call has been forwarded



Alyssa Xiong
Harding Senior High School

to . . ."

I felt so lost without her but I understood that it was best for her safety for her to leave. My dad was still in the family house but I didn't think staying there was good idea, and my older brother was living elsewhere.

I became homeless. I have a large, extended family, and I bounced from house to house every night for

a month because I didn't want to become a burden on anyone. I often didn't arrive until 10 p.m. because of tennis practice. I still did my homework, which meant I would not go to bed until 2 a.m., and then I would be up early to go to classes at Harding High School, where I was a sophomore. Life was hard and I was tired!

I settled in with a cousin for a couple of months. My mom finally reconnected with me, and we went out to eat one day. There, she told me something that changed my life completely.

"Your dad and I are filing for a divorce."

My body froze. I didn't know how to react.

"It's okay, don't cry," my mom told me. "We'll talk about it later.

Don't cry."

I didn't even realize that I was crying. I stayed quiet and wiped away tears that wouldn't stop flowing down my face.

When I was finally able to see my mom regularly, she'd moved into an apartment and I split my time with my mom and my cousin. Eventually, my mom and I moved back into the family house after my dad moved to California.

Fortunately, during these tough times I always enjoyed school. My two favorite subjects are chemistry and biology. Because of that I'm interested in becoming a physician's assistant. I know it will take a long time to achieve that career but I will get there with a lot of hard work and dedication. I'm proving that with my involvement in College Possible,

a college readiness program. My coach has helped me prepare for the ACT and to apply to colleges. I'm also doing well in tennis. I play No. 2 doubles and our girls' team has won the St. Paul Conference four straight years.

I've learned a lot in my short life. And I'm not done learning. Being homeless taught me how to become more independent and strong because I was alone and had to provide for myself. I know I will have to do this when I attend college -- where my classes and the new environment will test me.

In the end, I want to show my mom my appreciation for her sacrifices. Between my enjoyment of school, my strength and my independence, I will succeed and become the person I want to be.

Music Opens Doors to Opportunities

The beauty of the piano was that it became a large part of who I am. The consonant and dissonant sounds of jazz, classical, and modern music fill my limbic cortex with everlasting joy. Music has helped me cope with the loneliness of childhood and to gain self-confidence, and leadership.

My love for music will always be a center of my life even if college and career take me elsewhere. The piano also has led me to pursue other interests such as poetry, acting, biology, writing, and computer programming, including after-school extracurricular activities such as College Possible, Jazz Band, and Piano Club.

I did not fit in with classmates



Jacky Thao
Harding Senior High School

during my childhood years. I was somewhat awkward and aggressive, bored and very lonely.

On a sunny afternoon at my cousin's house, I became fascinated with the piano as I heard my cousin play a solemn tune that sparked inspiration deep in my atria. I asked my father that day to buy me a piano. He did, and I taught myself. I sat down at my family's electric piano more and more. YouTube videos, music lessons, and simple practices. Slowly, the piano became

part of who I am.

The bliss of listening and playing my favorite pieces on piano always excited me. Despite the difficulty learning everything by myself, I felt the need to feel the pleasant sounds bring a chill down my spinal cord and that I wanted to finish it to the end.

I developed muscle memories on piano pieces without having to look back at the recording. Then I progressed on to play piano pieces by watching Synthesia piano tutorials, analyzing pieces by ear, learning how to read music notations, and how to improvise using major and minor scales.

Although I was able to learn and complete complex piano pieces, I wasn't able to share my playing with anyone else.

That changed when I was a high school freshman when I was asked to play in a piano class. I felt

insecure and pressured wondering whether my music teacher would disapprove of my style and seeing other students gaze stiffly at me. I laid my fingers on the polished wooden white and black keys and let loose the sounds of a summer vacation tune as if I were free to do anything I wanted. Free from the pressure and insecurity.

I had never had the feeling of performing in front of audiences before. To have my accomplishment acknowledged as they applauded made me feel at home. It was an insight that was sudden and new to me like receiving a jolt of nourishing life from a lightning strike. It has helped me gain self-confidence not only in music, however into making new friends too.

Playing the piano strengthened my character in other ways, too. I became president of the Piano Club. It was fun, but I recognized

that I lacked the leadership skills for the job. So I dedicated most of my summer my freshman year to developing leadership skills in a program called the Center for Hmong Arts and Talents or CHAT. I created songs with friends and learned to improve expressing myself on stage and attracting me to other summer opportunities.

I've changed my life significantly. I've become self-driven in music, schoolwork, and discovering new opportunities -- competing in musical competitions, volunteering, performing as an actor as well as a musician, trying to bring joy in communicating to audiences.

Although I may not major in music (following my parent's wishes), my eyes have been opened to so many other areas of interest, especially in arts and communications, where I can make a contribution in college and career.



Working Hard to Get Ahead

I cook. I clean. And I'm already a parent to my younger siblings. I have no other choice at the age of 16 than to man up and act like an adult while my mom and dad are working long and exhausting labor jobs. They expect a lot from me and I plan to live up to their expectations by going to school, getting good grades and enrolling in college.

Their childhoods differed from mine. They grew up in Mexico and dropped out of high school in 9th grade because they had to work on their parents' farms. Life in their hometown of Puebla, most people were poor, held labor jobs and traveled by bike or horse. They



Jose Torres
Harding Senior High School

lacked technology and resources for a better living. In the 1990s, they moved to the United States.

I have learned a lot of things from my parents, who know we all have a better chance to get ahead by living in America. Seeing them work day and night and not getting enough sleep shows me their courage and dedication. They work at least 10 hours a day and have just enough money to rent an apartment, put food on our table, and buy clothes

for the family.

My mom impresses me when I see her wake up at 4:30 a.m. to get ready for work in a factory. My dad also works early and sometimes arrives home as late as 8 p.m. I notice their tired eyes struggle to stay open some nights. They work so hard and they never give up.

When my parents are at work, I slave over chores and take care of my siblings. It's my duty to protect my brother and sister. It's like I am a parent at age 16. It seems hard, but in reality, it's a good way to prepare myself for when I move out and start a new life on my own.

Because they didn't finish high school, my parents want my brother, sister and me to graduate high school, go to college and have a career.

"Education will take you far," my parents have said.

"You don't want to end like us. Do something that you like and use it for your future," my dad has told me. "Have faith in what you want to become." I always have that quote in my heart and mind.

I am a junior at Harding High School in St. Paul. I like school and my favorite subjects are history and math. I was on the soccer and track and field teams. Playing sports showed me the value of being respectful to others and never giving up. When I ran the 4x100 relay at the conference meet, I ran the anchor leg, and even though I got tired I had no choice but to surpass my limits and finish the race. In my junior year, I took a break from sports to work. I average 27 hours a week as a cook at Chipotle in downtown St. Paul. At this job, I am learning to stay flexible, time management and customer service

-- skills I know I will need in the future.

I also love photography. When I take a picture of a person or an object, it reminds me of something special and precious. It really is true that a picture is worth a thousand words. No matter where I go, I take pictures. Photography shows me to how to embrace life and not be shy, to make new friends every day, and to help people deal with their struggles.

I want to become a therapist because I like helping people. I know have to go to college. I know why I'm here in this world: to show what I'm capable of. I want to get ahead and be successful in life. I have learned a lot in school and from my parents, and I know I will succeed if I follow their example of hard work and perseverance.

Golf: A Driving Force

My arms were shot. They were heavy and numb. I'd been practicing my swing for three hours straight. But I knew it was the only way I could improve.

The 18-hole conference tournament at the St. Paul, MN, Highland National Golf Course -- the most important match of the whole high school season -- had finally ended. It was supposed to be a time for players to shine -- but it certainly hadn't been for me. Multiple times throughout the match I swung the ball off course and missed simple putts and chips. I was just terrible, and it showed. From swing to contact, everything went wrong.



Xixu Yue
Harding Senior High School

I mustered up courage to keep my composure and hoped that each shot would be the one I longed for. I was desperate, but by staying focused on my passion for the game, I was able to keep myself in the right frame of mind.

When my group finished the round we rushed into the club house to tally our scorecards. I had accumulated 134 strokes through 18 holes, about double what my

teammates had hit. I felt embarrassed that I wasn't even close to their scores, even though I was conscious that they had been playing for years while I had only been playing for three months. But I also knew I stood no chance of ever being in the winner's circle if I did not elevate my game.

After the season ended, I used the next year's tournament as my motivation. Every day from June to August I disappeared to the driving range and chipping green. I consumed multiple hours crafting my game together. I would strike balls over and over until I could feel the pain in my shoulders. Even in the rain, if I could not get my shots to improve, I would stay until I got it right. I could not stop because I couldn't lose to the other players. I had to work harder to be able to

beat each of them.

During my second season of golf it appeared as if my hard work had finally paid off. It was starting to show. My swing was better than ever. The consistency in making good contact with the ball was off the charts. My coach was amazed at how much I had improved. I was amazed at myself. My mind erased any trace of last year's tournament. It was set for a rematch at this year's tournament. I felt I was ready to challenge the other players fairly now -- and perhaps even place or win at the upcoming tournament.

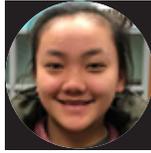
What life lesson did I learn from all this? Just like golf, I was performing poorly in school. I had already given up on my grades-- and likely my life. I didn't care about what happened to me, I just wanted to have fun. I thought

my life was just another one that didn't matter in the world. Until golf appeared and I gained two attributes: the ability to work hard and maintain a positive mindset. When I felt like my homework was too hard and that I wouldn't be able to achieve anything, I pushed myself to try harder--just like golf.

The ability to work hard and maintain a positive mindset are two important attributes in golf -- and in life. They both had helped me overcome obstacles in ways I never believed were possible. As I look forward to college, I hope to apply these two characteristics to propel me further in life. I'm grateful to the important lesson that golf has taught me: That whatever I do, as long as I put my mind into it and work hard towards achieving it, I will succeed.

The Day I Saved My Brother

Flashing in front of me were two worlds that would soon come shattering into millions of pieces at any second: mine and his. Even though I am younger than my brother, he depends on me because he is disabled. Back in Thailand when my brother was still just a couple months old, he became really ill. Clueless, my parents suggested they should take my brother to the hospital, hoping doctors could help save their child. Unfortunately, taking my brother to the hospital was a big mistake. Back then, physicians lacked the skills to distinguish the difference between what kinds of medications and shots were for infants and adults.



Pa Dee Yang
Harding Senior
High School

My brother was born a healthy baby, but, after receiving bad care from the physician, he was left permanently physically and mentally disabled and part of his life was taken away.

At the age of 16, I was chosen to be in charge of nine kids while my parents were out of the house. The kids ranged in age from my youngest brother who was 9 months old to my older brother who was 19. I felt a lot of pressure because of the

big responsibility on my shoulders. I gave my older brother a snack and then turned my attention to my baby brother for just a second. The moment I diverted my attention back to my older brother, I noticed his face was desperate for attention and turning purple. His eyes glistened with tears; he was in desperate need of air. I swiftly ran toward him. I shouted at my sisters and cousins for help, while I made my way behind my brother. I lifted him with all my might and settled him onto my lap. All I could think was to do the Heimlich maneuver, which I learned from watching YouTube videos. I didn't know if I was doing it correctly, if I would injure him internally, or if I was wasting time.

My older, disabled brother depends on me to take care of him, and I had failed him.

Once my sisters and cousins made their way up, I shouted for my cousin to grab water. For a split second I remembered what my grandma said to my mom: "Never drink water if you feel like food isn't going down." Loudly, I shouted at my cousin to abandon the water. I noticed my sisters and cousins were panicking, and I too was in the mode of a disoriented emotional breakdown. However, as the oldest one there, I had to hold back from letting my emotions loose and focus on keeping everyone from panicking. My emotional distress was high. It was between life and death.

Without pausing to catch my breath due to exhaustion I continued to perform the technique. It seemed endless. Surprisingly my sister shouted, "He got it out!" with strands of tears streaming down her cheeks alongside my brother, too.

There, in the palm of her hands sat the big piece of bagel that was lodged in my brother's throat moments ago. I finally took one big relieving breath after checking the tone of my brother's face, let that ball of emotion out, and bawled like a baby.

After coming face-to-face with the challenge of saving someone so dear to me, I realized I am confident working my way through decisions under pressure. In the future, when I'm in college or at my professional job or with my friends and family, I know I can tame challenges when I'm faced with them. Because of the experience I had, I know I can rely on my instinct when making decisions for myself or for others. The situation helped naturally unfold my individual independent strength in self-trust to build a bridge between my goals and my motivation.

Opening Up to Therapy

The door to the doctor's office creaks open slowly. A thin Indian woman sits down next to me. She's a psychologist. Concerned, she drowns me with questions.

"Have you experienced any suicidal thoughts in the past month? Any safety concerns? How are you right now? What are you thinking right now? Do you see yourself in the future? Headaches? Crying? Does your mom think you need help? Do you want help? Do you think you need help?"



Ta'Vasia Johnson
Harding Senior
High School

Overwhelmed, I only felt numbness. I was speechless. I couldn't feel the tears pouring from my eyes until she suggested I take a tissue. I couldn't look at her nor my mom, but their eyes were beaming on me. I couldn't pull my eyes off the snow-covered tree across

the street. I listened intently as my mom answered every question the psychologist asked.

"Do you want help?" I wanted to say "no." "Do you need help?" I knew I needed help but did I want it?

"Do you see yourself in the future?" I never knew the answer to that question since I thought suicide was my only answer to every problem.

Looking back, I'd been angry, nervous, doubtful, quiet and at that very moment confused. I was fourteen years old and stubborn. I wasn't going to cry, show emotion or even talk. To this day, though, a snapshot of that same tree appears in my head and distracts me from negative thoughts

about my future.

Therapy sessions were a huge struggle for me. They eventually were easier, and I learned a lot about communicating, managing stress, anxiety and thinking positive. My psychologist challenged me to speak out my thoughts and find a hobby. I became passionate about photography.

Photography has helped me express my mental illness as an art form. I focus on facial expressions to symbolize my experience, pain and suffering, or to capture smiles that expose great energy. Holding a camera and looking through a lens takes me to a happier world.

At school, teachers call me "The Camera Girl." I volunteered to take

pictures at prom, homecoming and sporting events. I worked, I saved and I purchased my first camera, then started earning money from my hobby, a great achievement at 16. More important, photography was the passion I needed. It gave me hope.

Therapy and photography have changed my life. Learning to communicate and express myself, manage stress and anxiety, and to think positive helped me improve my grades and gain new friends. As I steer myself toward college, I now know to use my time, knowledge and other resources wisely. I focus on hard work and positive outcomes. I understand the importance of my future and education. I'm ready to succeed.

The Fight to Succeed

The first fight of my life was in the forest of my Thai refugee camp. It was hot, so hot, and we battled for three minutes in the first round of our bout. Countless punches struck my stomach. My father sat under the tree and watched.

My father severed his leg when he was in the Karen military in Thailand. He and his friend, Saw Dae, relied on each other to get



Yar Shay
Harding Senior
High School

through intense days as guerrilla fighters. After years serving Karen National Union, my father was promoted to sergeant. Saw Dae was filled with jealousy and

misanthropy. Driven by his hatred, Saw Dae planted a landmine on the path where my dad walked every evening back to his bunker. After my father was done patrolling the base, without any awareness of Saw Dae's nefarious plotting, my father stepped on that landmine. His leg was gone.

A few years later, when I was 6 years old, on a sunny day while we were in a Thai refugee camp, my father took three of my friends and me hunting. During the hunt, my father wanted to teach my friend Koke and me a lesson by having

us box. This was my first fight. I had my head down during the first round and was scared to fight back. Before the second and last round, my father told me, "The only way to get through the most difficult moment of your life is to lift your head up and fight your way through." I took my father's advice and fought better in the second half with my head up.

It took me six years to understand my father's actions and words meant. My father wants me to depend on myself, create my own path, and focus on my dream. I

hope my story and experiences can bring inspiration to others. I want to help those who need assistance by going into the medical field.

Through determination and persistently pursuing my dream, I've been able to apply countless lessons from my father. I am grateful for him passing his knowledge on to me. I learned how to be independent, self-sufficient and that I can overcome any hardship. My fight with Koke is not the last battle I will have in my life, and my father's lessons will help lift my head and overcome them all.

CHANGEMAKERS

In 2016, ThreeSixty Journalism students profiled a handful of “Changemakers.” We defined them as people making the Twin Cities a better place for young individuals.

In this issue, the Changemakers are back. On the following pages, you will find compelling profile stories about people who are inspiring positive change throughout the Twin Cities and beyond.

2020

Carlson blazes trails for other women



PHOTO COURTESY OF GRETCHEN CARLSON

Former Fox News host Gretchen Carlson, an outspoken advocate for women who face sexual harassment in the workplace, has become one of the leaders of the “#MeToo” movement. Carlson settled with Fox for \$20 million in 2016 after suing former chairman Roger Ailes for sexual harassment.

Former Fox News host broke barriers when she went public with her story of sexual harassment in the workplace

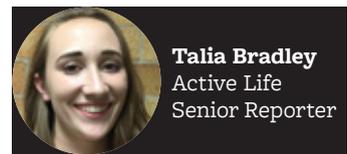
The night before Gretchen Carlson came forward with her story in 2016, she told her 11- and 13-year old children what was about to happen.

“My career was going to be ended for me, and it wouldn’t be my choice,” said Carlson, a former Fox News host and a Minnesota native.

“It was just a small circle of people [who] were aware of what I had been going through and what I was about to do,” she added.

The next day, she went public with her story, alleging in a lawsuit that Fox chairman and CEO Roger Ailes had sexually harassed her and fired her for complaining about sexual harassment in the workplace. She had no idea the tidal wave she was helping unleash.

Since then, Carlson has played a leading role in the “#MeToo” movement and been a leading



Talia Bradley
Active Life
Senior Reporter

voice in the push to end workplace harassment. She’s written a book on ending workplace harassment and started her own leadership training to empower victims.

“I could never have predicted we would be in this tsunami right now when I decided to come forward with my story, and I feel like giving the gift of courage is contagious and we see it happening one woman at a time,” Carlson said. “Collectively we are realizing we have this incredibly strong voice when we stand together and say something. So sometimes it takes one or two people to start the wave, but look at

how powerful we are when we start saying, ‘Me too.’”

Carlson and Fox settled for \$20 million in September 2016. Ailes resigned as Fox chairman and CEO before passing away last year.

In a January interview, Carlson said society has not yet made enough progress in dealing with sexual harassment.

“I really feel like you can’t put the genie back in the bottle now,” Carlson said. “There are so many stories and revelations that the American public is really just fed up with it and I think that is why they keep talking about it months and months after.

“I may have started the motion but I hope it trickles down to communities and people feel comfortable speaking out.”

Since Carlson came forward, other women have come forward with their stories of sexual harassment, too, bringing down the likes of Harvey Weinstein, Bill O’Reilly and Roy Moore.

Carlson said she was shocked by the number of people who spoke **CARLSON** continued on page 30

Changing the world, one refugee story at a time

Mohamed Malim is reshaping the refugee narrative in Minnesota.

MOHAMED MALIM UNDERSTANDS what it means to be a refugee.

In the 1990s, Malim and his family fled from Somalia because of the civil war. They eventually landed in Minnesota.

Now a senior at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Malim is helping reshape the narrative about refugees in Minnesota.

Last year, Malim founded Dream Refugee, a nonprofit that connects refugees to the broader community and shares their stories. He started the nonprofit after seeing negative portrayals of refugees in the media.

“It’s very important because there’s a lot of hate toward our refugees throughout the nation,” said Malim, who lived in a Kenyan refugee camp as a child. “... It’s my job and it’s my duty to tell my story and my other refugees’



Ba Po
Voices
Writer

stories.”

The mission of the nonprofit is to connect refugees to other communities in Minnesota through the power of storytelling. Dream Refugee has a mentorship program and also highlights local refugees’ stories on its website.

Abdirahman Mohamed is one of more than a dozen refugees the nonprofit has highlighted. A Somalia native, Mohamed fled in 2006 due to the civil war and eventually came to Minneapolis. He now attends Concordia University in St. Paul and is in the U.S. Army.

Dream Refugee also

CHANGEMAKERS
2.0



Tu Lor Eh Paw, a senior at St. Paul Como Park High School, is the first mentee in the Dream Refugee mentorship program. Paw immigrated from Burma (now Myanmar).



Mohamed Malim, a senior at the University of St. Thomas, is the founder of Dream Refugee, a nonprofit that connects refugees to the broader community and highlights their stories. Malim is a Somali refugee.

has highlighted Ka Vang. As a child, Vang and her family lived in appalling conditions in a Thailand refugee camp before gaining admission to the U.S. in 1980. Now, she’s the director of impact and community engagement at American Public Media, as well as a writer, poet and social justice activist.

Halima Aden is another example. Aden is a 20-year-old internationally-known Somali model who has challenged traditional beauty stereotypes. She became the first model in a hijab and burkini to compete in the Miss Minnesota USA contest in 2016. Since then, she has modeled for Nike and been on the cover of Vogue magazine.

“It’s our job not to forget those kids who are still living in refugee camps but to go back and show them it’s okay to be a refugee,” Aden says in her Dream Refugee story. “They need to know you can still do amazing things. A lot of people are scared to tell that side of their story because of the stigma, but you have to talk about it. Other kids have to see that that’s not

where their story ends.”

CONNECTING REFUGEES

Dream Refugee’s mentorship program aims to help refugee students gain access to professional mentors, scholarships and networking opportunities so they can become more successful in their high school years and in college.

Tu Lor Eh Paw is the first mentee in the program. Paw, who is Karen, came to the United States as a Burmese refugee seven years ago and is now a senior at St. Paul Como Park High School. The program connected Paw with a mentor, Diana Chaman, who is helping her with the college process, she said.

“Not only do they give me this mentor,” Paw said, “but they give me this really good friend who’s always there for me. Someone to call when I need help with anything. ... She’s really helping me in getting my higher education that I need to get.”

Paw is the youngest of nine children and grew up in a small village in Burma (now called Myanmar) where her family farmed for a living,

she says in her Dream Refugee story. In 2002, her mother died from a life-threatening disease. Seven years later, her father moved her and three of her siblings to a refugee camp in Burma to live with her aunt. She later came to the United States and landed in Minnesota on her 11th birthday (March 9, 2011).

Paw is determined to go to college, she said, and her top choices are Bethel University, Augsburg University and the University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

“My brother just went back to Burma last month and he brought back all these photos of our village and you just see these kids, and they need better opportunities,” Paw said. “They need a chance, and I’m like, I have to do something for them. I have to go to college, get a good job and go back there to see what I can do. They motivate me to do better.”

Malim says connecting refugees with non-refugees is important.

“That breaks the stereotypes,” he said.

‘CHANGE THE WORLD’

Malim lived in a refugee camp in Kenya as a child. He recalls in his own Dream Refugee story that, at age 3, he realized “that when it comes to war, mercy doesn’t exist.”

When he came to Minnesota, he went to school at a Somali charter school until eighth grade and then attended and graduated from Edina High School. He’s studying marketing and marketing management at St. Thomas and preparing to graduate in May.

In addition to Dream Refugee, Malim also has started Epimonia, an apparel company that gives a percentage of its profits to organizations that support refugees.

Dream Refugee recently received a 2018 Minnesota Campus Compact award. Many refugees don’t share their stories, Malim said, but Dream Refugee provides a platform for these stories.

“If I could change a mind [with] these stories, I accomplished my goal,” Malim said. “It motivates and inspires me to wake up every morning and go out there and change the world.”

BA PO/THREESIXTY JOURNALISM

BA PO/THREESIXTY JOURNALISM

‘Dreaming without limits’

How a young woman with Down syndrome made history in the Miss Minnesota USA competition

MIKAYLA HOLMGREN BELIEVES in “dreaming without limits,” and that’s exactly what she’s doing.

Holmgren, 23, of Stillwater, made national headlines earlier this year after becoming the first person with Down syndrome to compete in the Miss Minnesota USA contest. She didn’t win the pageant, but still went home with two awards and inspired many.

“Ever since she was born in the NICU, she’s had this determination,” said Holmgren’s mother, Sandi. “She has that attitude that’s she’s going to achieve above what they say she’s going to achieve.”

Mikayla is passionate about supporting people with disabilities who want to do art or dancing, she said. She showcased both of these passions in the pageant in November.

“I like doing art with [kids] and teaching kids how to do art,” said Holmgren,



Pay Poe
Culture
Reporter

a sophomore at Bethel University who’s studying art education.

Down syndrome is a genetic disorder affecting a person’s chromosomes. Common symptoms include distinctive facial features, low muscle tone and cognitive impairment.

As a child, Mikayla was almost nonverbal, according to Sandi. It was hard for her to fully understand what was going on, which made it challenging for people to communicate with her, she said. Mikayla would get frustrated easily.

Dancing, however, became a big part of Mikayla’s childhood. She started when she was 6 years old. Sandi signed her up for

2.0
CHANGEMAKERS



Mikayla Holmgren



Mikayla Holmgren, a 23-year-old Bethel University student, became the first person with Down syndrome to compete in the Miss Minnesota USA contest in November. Holmgren, shown with 2017 Miss Minnesota USA winner Meridith Gould, won two awards during the competition.

dance after reading an article about how dance can be good for kids with special needs.

As time passed, Mikayla ended up loving dance. “I like to dance,” she said, “and I love music.”

As she grew older, Mikayla opened up more through activities such as dance. She represented Minnesota in the Junior Miss Amazing pageant in 2015 in Los Angeles and danced during the talent portion.

When Mikayla was interested in applying for Miss Minnesota USA, her family didn’t initially think she would make it, Sandi said. However, in order to satisfy Mikayla, her mom went online and applied, noting that Mikayla has Down syndrome and thinking they wouldn’t hear back.

But they did.

The family wasn’t prepared for the next steps, but with the help and encouragement of others, Mikayla competed at the pageant

“The biggest accomplishment for her is that she makes such a big impact on society through being herself.”

—Anna Korger, Miss Minnesota USA contestant and Mikayla Holmgren’s friend.

and made history.

“I’m glad she did it,” Sandi said.

The Miss Minnesota USA pageant is competitive and not everyone makes the cut. Only 15 of the 50 contestants make it to the top of the competition. After the cuts, Mikayla was backstage, comforting the girls who didn’t make it, telling them they were beautiful and encouraging them, her mom said.

Mikayla did win two awards at the pageant. The first was the Spirit of Miss USA Award. When she was presented with this award, her mother said, people were in tears and excited for Mikayla. She also won the Director’s Award, which was another surprise.

Anna Korger, Mikayla’s close friend and one of her “go-to” people, met at the pageant. Korger was inspired by Mikayla’s ambition, she said.

They also both attend Bethel University, and after the pageant, they would meet up on Wednesdays and practice walking in heels. Korger said she admires that Mikayla is the first woman with Down syndrome to compete in the state pageant, a huge accomplishment.

“The biggest accomplishment for her is that she makes such a big impact on society through being herself,” Korger said.

After the pageant, Mikayla has continued pursuing her goal to start a dance studio to support people with disabilities to be creative and enjoy life. She is working with state agencies to try to get a grant to start her studio. She wants others to dream big, she said.

“Just because you have a disability doesn’t mean that you can’t achieve what you want,” Sandi said.

Mikayla also was nominated for Miss Congeniality in the first-ever Global Beauty Awards in March in Seattle. She’s the only nominee with Down syndrome. As of February, Mikayla planned to wear a custom-designed black dress.

Her inspiring story continues.

“I inspire people when I smile and bring them joy,” Mikayla said, “and just brighten someone’s day.”

PHOTO COURTESY OF FUTURE PRODUCTIONS, LLC

Changing the face of justice

Sophia Vuelo Appointed First Hmong-American Judge in Minnesota

On Nov. 30 last year, Gov. Mark Dayton appointed Sophia Vuelo as a district court judge in the second judicial district of Minnesota. Vuelo, a native of Eau Claire, Wis., was officially sworn in Dec. 18, becoming the first Hmong-American judge in Minnesota.

“I’ve really considered myself a judge, first and foremost,” said Vuelo. “And then I happen to be a judge of Hmong descent.”

As a district court judge, Vuelo oversees a wide range of cases, including criminal, family law, family custody, and child protection cases, plus traffic offenses.

“It’s been more



fun and exciting than I could ever anticipate, and I’ve enjoyed every day that I’ve been on the bench,” said Vuelo.

Vuelo’s legal experience indicates she’s well suited for the job. She was a special assistant Ramsey County attorney, assistant

public defender for the second judicial district, assistant Rochester city attorney, and managing attorney for Catholic



Judge Sophia Vuelo

Charities. She has experience as a former prosecutor and as a criminal defense attorney.

Her civil experience comes from her solo practice at Vuelo Law, where she worked on cases related

to juvenile protection, family and criminal matters.

“Having done three substantive areas of law, it gave me tremendous insight and ability to be able to understand the law substantively as well as how we do things here in Ramsey County Court,” said Vuelo.

Vuelo applied three times before receiving district judge appointment, which she says is typical. She believes it was “both the depth and breadth of” her legal experience and her life experience that led her to achieving her goal.

“Ms. Sophia Vuelo has dedicated her career to pursuing justice for all Minnesotans, through her work with Minnesota courts, charities and in her own private practice,” said Dayton said in a press release. “Ms. Vuelo’s commitment to public service has prepared her well for this important new role.”

Vuelo recognizes the role of a judge in society as broad and significant.

“It’s important to have judges who understand the community who are going to be thoughtful and patient, willing to listen, because

they’re there to solve problems and help people get out of crisis,” said Vuelo.

Dayton’s appointment of Minnesota’s first Hmong judge supported his efforts to increase diversity and inclusion in the state’s workforce, specifically in his judicial appointments. He also appointed the first Native American woman, African-American woman and openly gay justice to the Minnesota Supreme Court.

In a recent ThreeSixty Magazine feature on him, Dayton said, “In district court, people say, when somebody walks into a courtroom, they look around [and say], ‘Is there anybody that looks like me?’ And if you’re a minority and everybody else there is white, right away you’re thinking, ‘I’m not gonna get a fair shake here.’”

In April of 2016, Star Tribune reported that nearly 37 percent of the state’s prison population is black -- despite only making up 6 percent of the state’s population.

“If it’s brown families and black families that are coming into the legal system at a greater percentage than your average Minnesotan, our legal system absolutely needs to reflect the lives and experiences of people who are coming before the court,” said Vuelo. “That is how we ensure that we are doing justice.”

Vuelo said that diversity is more than just a good thing. It is a necessity to ensure “we are doing the work that our constitution intended for us to do, which is to treat everyone equal under the law.”

“I’ve always said that eradicating sexism and eradicating racism has to be intentional, otherwise it doesn’t just go away on its own,” said Vuelo. “When Governor Mark Dayton appointed me, he literally changed the face of justice. My hope is that our bench will continue to reflect all of the lives who live in our communities. My hope is that our legal system can gain greater confidence and belief from our community.”



Threesixty Focus on...

St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter

St. Paul's first African-American mayor is a hometown kid who hopes to create lasting change

ST. PAUL RUNS in Melvin Carter III's family.

He's a fourth-generation St. Paul resident and graduate of St. Paul Central High School. His grandfather was a longtime janitor at St. Paul Humboldt High School. His mother is a Ramsey County Commissioner and former teacher. His father is a retired St. Paul police officer.

Now Carter, 39, is St. Paul's first mayor of color and one of the youngest since the Minnesota capital's founding in 1854.

In the November mayoral election, Carter won by a landslide, defeating his opponents by earning more than 50 percent of the vote on election night. He previously served as a St. Paul City Council member from 2008 to 2013, as director of the Minnesota Office of Early Learning and as executive director of the Minnesota Children's Cabinet, advising Governor Mark Dayton.

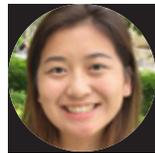
During college at Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Carter's passion for civic engagement began when his brother-in-law was turned away from Florida voting polls in the 2000 Presidential Election.

Since then, Carter has focused on strengthening equity, innovation and resilience in St. Paul. Two of Carter's early initiatives as mayor include raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour and creating a \$50 college savings account for every child born in St. Paul.

I spoke to Carter in January, after he'd given a speech at the University of St. Thomas, about his upbringing, his vision for St. Paul, how young people can play a role in his vision and more.

Q: I heard you were a student at St. Paul Central High School and your grandfather was a janitor at Humboldt High School. What was it like growing up in St. Paul?

A: It was a unique experience. I love this city, and in many ways, I grew up in our schools, our recreation centers, our libraries, just kind of as a community child. We have a saying, and in the African-American community in particular, that it takes a whole community to raise a child, and I always felt like that child. I was simultaneously surrounded by caring adults who just poured a whole lot into me



Katelyn Vue
News Senior
Reporter



from literally every direction, and in a community where I would hear stories about old Rondo [a neighborhood in St. Paul], where our historic African-American community was destroyed to build a freeway.

I was in a community where my father is a retired St. Paul police officer, so we'd go watch the Super Bowl or go watch the big boxing match with police officers – and I grew up getting pulled over by some of those same police officers when I turned 16 and started driving around our community. In many ways, it was a beautiful childhood in this city, and this is the city that



PHOTO COURTESY OF BENNY MORENO

Melvin Carter III, a fourth-generation St. Paul resident, was elected in November as St. Paul's first black mayor. Carter, a St. Paul Central graduate, is a former city council member.

poured a lot into me, which is why I came straight back after college. And it was an illustrative experience in how far we have to go toward this promise in building a city that works for everyone.

Q: Was it always your dream to become mayor?

A: No. I ran track. I went to college on a track and field scholarship, and Plan A was to go to the Olympics, and I think Plan B was to just go to the World Championships, and it went down from there.

But as I really got involved as a college student I got really involved in social kind of stuff, like community activism. I went to college in the capital city of Florida and during Election 2000, which was my first chance to vote in a presidential election, we ended up kind of in the middle of something of a constitutional crisis of democracy.

... We went to vote in Florida and my brother-in-law, who I was living with at the time, got turned away from the polls. We found out later that hundreds of our classmates had gotten turned away from the polls. The Florida recount ended up being in the Supreme Court and we found ourselves at the center of it.

At that time, as a student, a lot of us really committed ourselves to changing the world. The student who was our student government

president at the time is actually currently the mayor of that city, Tallahassee, and he's running for governor in Florida right now. There's a lot of those kind of young folks who came up in that same era who are just committed to service in different ways across the country.

Q: What does it mean to you to be the first black mayor of St. Paul? And also, you're 39. How do you think being a young person of color is going to impact your time in office?

A: In every way. We talk a lot about building a city that works for all of us, and in the Twin Cities metro area, and in Minnesota in general ... we face some of the worst disparities in the nation. And so often, we talk about that as it's coincidental to the fact that no person of color has ever held our city's top office. Our focus is that true representation is bringing just not my voice and my experience, which is different than anyone who's ever held that office, but bringing yours as well. I can't bring yours, which is why we're so focused on this Serve St. Paul initiative. We're asking people to come do the work with us, and say we have to build this city together. It's just not the job of the mayor, it's all of our job to build this city together.

It informs my perspective on the city, it informs the way I look at our

THE CARTER III FILE

- **Name:** Melvin Carter III
- **Age:** 39
- **Occupation:** Mayor of St. Paul
- **Career highlights:** Elected as first African-American mayor of St. Paul in 2017 ... Served as St. Paul City Council member from 2008 to 2013 ... Worked as former director of Minnesota Office of Early Learning and executive director of Minnesota Children's Cabinet ... Former high school track and field standout.
- **Find him** on Twitter at @mayorcarter3 and @melvincarter3, and on Instagram at @mwcarter3.

community, it informs my ability to see promise and potential where other people might see problems and challenges, and it probably informs other people's perspective of me, for better and for worse.

Q: What are some major challenges you face as mayor and how do you plan to overcome those?

A: This is a big city and I really think there's an incredible set of opportunities in front of St. Paul right now. There's also an incredible set of challenges, and as we build this kind of big vision for the city and work around big things like putting \$50 away for college for every child born in our city, we also have to **CARTER** continued on page 27

Threesixty Focus on...

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey

Frey's running career has shaped his experience as a politician

MORE THAN A decade ago, Jacob Frey was a young law student running through Minneapolis during the Twin Cities Marathon. It was his first experience in the city.

Now, Frey, 36, is running the city of Minneapolis in a new way: as its newest mayor—and also one of its youngest.

A Virginia native and an avid runner, Frey was elected in November 2017 and was sworn into office in January 2018. The Democratic-Farmer-Labor candidate defeated incumbent mayor Betsy Hodges and more than a dozen other candidates on election night.

Before becoming mayor, Frey was a Minneapolis City Council member for the Third Ward. Prior to that, he worked as a civil rights attorney and became a social justice advocate in the Twin Cities.

Frey has enjoyed running since he was young and ran professionally while he was in law school at Villanova. During the Twin Cities Marathon, he qualified to compete on Team USA in the 2007 Pan American Games marathon, in which he finished fourth. Running has steered his career as a politician, he says, providing him with a mentality of hard work leading to success.

One of the first things Frey plans to tackle as mayor is affordable housing in Minneapolis, he says. His priorities also include fighting segregation, improving the local economy and repairing the relationship between police and the Minneapolis community.

In January, I sat down with Frey to interview him about his goals, his experience with Minneapolis and about how young people can play a role in his vision for the city.

Q: Growing up as a teenager in Virginia, did you ever imagine becoming a mayor?

A: As a teenager, my passion was distance running. I was a track and field athlete in high school and got a scholarship to attend the College of William and Mary, so no, it wasn't like a political aspiration.

My running career brought me a mentality and a connection between hard work and success. The brilliant thing that I loved so much about running is there is this direct correlation between hard work and success. If you work hard, you get



Talia Bradley
Active Life
Senior Reporter

2.0
CHANGEMAKERS

better and better and better. If you work harder than the person standing next to you on the starting line, you are probably going to beat them. But that isn't the case in larger society. It varies on how you grow up, who your parents are, what side of the tracks you grew up on, which in many instances determines your outcome in life.

Seeing that direct correlation that I saw in running is something that drives me. So did I know I was going to be mayor? No, I didn't even know I would end up in Minneapolis, but there has always been a drive to



PHOTO COURTESY OF OFFICE OF JACOB FREY.

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey, 36, is the city's second-youngest mayor. The former city council member's first experience with Minneapolis came during a Twin Cities marathon more than a decade ago.

work in the community.

Q: I heard your first experience with Minnesota was during a marathon. Can you tell me more about that?

A: I came to the Twin Cities and actually stayed in a hotel in St. Paul to run the Twin Cities Marathon. I remember thinking, "This is a pretty spectacular city." They call it the most beautiful urban marathon in the country, and it really is. It is very much a city within the park.

So when I was looking around for jobs following graduation from law school, along with looking at some of your typical East Coast firms, I looked in Minneapolis and I got a job. I moved on out here.

Q: What is your vision for the city of Minneapolis, and how can young people play a role in that vision?

A: Not only can they play a role, they're going to be absolutely critical to it. I hear a lot of people talk about all our young people don't vote, young people don't get involved, young people, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And I went, wow,

you know, it used to be the case that it was difficult to get a 100 young people to [be politically active], but we have seen that 20 of them can change the whole freaking world. We've seen it time and time and time again throughout history. There are plenty of people who said that [St. Paul] Mayor [Melvin] Carter and myself were too young to be mayor. I don't think they have that mentality anymore.

Q: How can local politics become even more accessible to young people?

A: In terms of how they get involved, I think there's broad scope ... Yes, it's running for office, but it's not just running for office. I mean we need young people who are running with great ideas to become entrepreneurs and CEOs of the next Medtronic. We need young people to be activists in the community and working around important social justice issues like affordable housing and police-community relations. We need young people to be police officers and public servants and work at the city. There's

THE FREY FILE

- **Name:** Jacob Frey
- **Age:** 36
- **Occupation:** Mayor of Minneapolis
- **Career highlights:** Elected as mayor of Minneapolis in 2017... Elected as Minneapolis City Council member in 2013... Finished fourth in PanAm Games marathon in 2007... Moved to Minneapolis after running Twin Cities Marathon.
- **Find him** on Twitter at @Jacob_Frey and on Instagram at @jacobfrey1.

a broad spectrum and I think people need to be involved.

I think it's the community that drives the decision as to whether a government is more accessible to young people, and more than 50 percent of the population in the Twin Cities is younger than me right now. I believe in doing affirmative outreach to young people. It's the same as if you are doing affirmative outreach to communities of color and to impacted neighborhoods.

We talk a lot about listening rather than talking. Listening is really important, but it's also important that the engagement we do is not fake. If it happens early enough in the process and it's real and genuine, then that engagement actually can be incorporated into a policy that is passed. I think that's where we've been lacking in Minneapolis. Minneapolis has done a lot of outreach and engagement. Oftentimes the engagement, especially with communities of color, is tokenized or fake, and I want to make sure that if we're doing outreach it is real and genuine.

Q: One of my peers recently interviewed Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo. One of his priorities is improving the community's trust in the police force. In your opinion, what needs to happen for that to improve?

A: I'll say that Chief Arradondo is an exceptional leader. We are united in the mentality that there needs to be a shift in the way the work is done in our police
FREY continued on page 31



PHOTO COURTESY OF IMANI WINDS

Grammy-award winning wind quintet Imani Winds has carved out a unique lane in classical music with its diverse sounds and perspectives. The group has four albums.

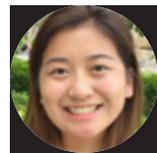
Shaking up classical music

Grammy-nominated Imani Winds highlights diverse sounds, perspectives

WHEN MEMBERS OF the Imani Winds learned they were nominated for a 2006 Grammy Award, they couldn't contain their excitement.

"I think the first thing I did was call Valerie and we screamed in each other's ears," said Toyin Spellman-Diaz, an oboist for the wind quintet, referencing flutist and composer Valerie Coleman. "It's just a validation of all the work you've been putting into this ensemble and into your life, so that was great."

A highlight, they say, was walking past fellow Grammy-nominated artist Beyoncé. They didn't win in



Katelyn Vue
News Senior Reporter

2006, but their proven success has made them a highly sought-after wind quintet that not only represents diversity in classical music, but that also gives back through teaching.

Members of the Imani Winds are Jeff Scott (french horn and composer), Monica Ellis (bassoon), Spellman-Diaz (oboe), Coleman

(flute and composer) and Mark Dover (clarinet), who became the newest member after joining in 2015.

The group has released four albums, including the Grammy-nominated "The Classical Underground," and has toured all over the world since its founding 20 years ago. The Imani Winds has performed in places such as New Zealand, Brazil, Paris and China.

One of the draws of the ensemble is its unique ability to combine diverse sounds, including African, Latin American and American influences.

"We felt like ... it was time for a change to come to what was called quote-unquote classical musical," Spellman-Diaz said. "And it was time for it to expand in a new way, and so we thought we could have a say in that."

In November, the Imani Winds made a stop at the University of St.



Thomas in St. Paul.

"Two years ago we had them here, and people were weeping in the audience," said Sarah Schmalenberger,

an associate music professor at St. Thomas who invited the award-winning group to return to perform and teach at the Upper Midwest Chamber Winds Symposium at St. Thomas.

She added: "This is the best musical ensemble that has ever been on this campus."

They're not just musicians. They're also teachers. From performing at elementary schools and

critiquing masterclasses, the Imani Winds continues to share its passion with others.

The group spent part of its visit to Minnesota with band students at St. Paul Central High School.

"Outreach is something that we're really intensely passionate about because we all grew up in the public-school system," Dover said, "and none of us would be where we were if it weren't for those public music programs."

In 2008, the Imani Winds started the Legacy Commissioning Project, in which the group commissions and premieres new works by composers from diverse musical backgrounds. It also holds the annual Imani Winds Chamber Music Festival, a 10-day intensive summer program that includes masterclasses, coaching, workshops and more at the Manhattan School of Music in New York City.

Through 2018, the group also is the University of Chicago's Don Michael Randel Ensemble-in-Residence. As part of the residency, the Imani Winds collaborates with students and the music department and features world premieres at the university, according to the group's website.

Still, they say performing on stage together is the best part about being a member of the ensemble. Even after thousands of performances over two decades, they still get nerves – and it wasn't any different when they took the stage at the O'Shaughnessy Educational Center at St. Thomas in the fall.

"The day of the concert I usually like to have pretty much nothing else going on," Dover said. "I really want to just relax, so I'll watch a movie or just call my wife, because you know, I usually get quite nervous."

"We felt like ... it was time for a change to come to what was called quote-unquote classical music."

—Toyin Spellman-Diaz, oboist in Imani Winds

SOMALIA from page 7

which provides free medical assistance for people in need in Somalia. Many of the surviving victims of the attack lack access to healthcare, Abdi said.

Abdi also hopes to prepare the Minnesota community for whatever challenges lie ahead. She is working alongside the same group to develop a youth community center where young people can find a foundation for success.

The mission to empower is not over. It has only just begun, with those rows of teenagers and young adults moving forward in the world, inspired and eager for change.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KENDY SUNDVALL

Merchandise in protest of the Mogadishu bombing was sold at the event.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PATHWAYS TO CHILDREN

Grace Strangis (top row, fourth from left) and students who went on the Bogota trip pose for a picture after a visit to an orphanage. The group spent a week in Bogota building and painting homes for families.

COLOMBIA from page 12

people can truly be fulfilled in their lives.”

Pathways this past year helped provide healthcare and education to 250 impoverished children in Kolkata, India. It has created job opportunities and offered free healthcare to illiterate mothers. It’s also given 309 children the opportunity to attend school in Bellisa, Ethiopia.

Strangis also has started “Home of Grace,” an orphanage and school in Kerala, India.

Pathways is funded by a variety of corporate and other sponsors.

The youngest of 12 siblings, Strangis grew up on a small farm in Minnesota.

She was raised mostly by her brothers and sisters – just like the people she is serving now around the world. Living on the farm, Strangis learned to be independent and creative and to think for herself, she said.

“I daydreamed of traveling the world and meeting people from all over the world and helping people,” Strangis said.

Amy Aguilar, an 18-year-old senior at Cristo Rey, also went on the trip last fall to Bogota. On top of helping to build a home, she and other students spent a day at an orphanage. They read books and drew with the children.

“I think that they just need love and

support, and I think that that hit me the most,” Aguilar said. “I think about my little brother, about how he would be if he didn’t have my mom. I think that was the best experience overall in the trip.”

Aguilar’s experience at the orphanage changed her perspective. Now she wants to go on more service trips.

“I’m not going through hard times, but there are people who are,” Aguilar said. “If they need help and you have the opportunity to help them, why not go out and do it?”

Cristo Rey senior Jennifer Roldan also went on the trip. It was Roldan’s first time out of the country, and she was welcomed with open arms by her Colombian partner. She initially felt apprehensive and uncomfortable when her partner’s group was leading an icebreaker by dancing. But she shed her inhibitions and joined in the fun.

“It’s a lot of dancing and singing and not really caring and being free,” Roldan said. “I let my spirit run free in Colombia.”

Roldan’s intent before traveling to Bogota was to serve the families, children and the elderly, but she felt different about the experience when she got back home.

“I thought that we were going to do the serving,” Roldan said. “But they ended up serving us.”

Editor’s Note: Jose Galvan Castro attended the Pathways to Children trip to Colombia.

SERVICE from page 12

physical space and securing funding. The food shelf received \$1,000 in startup funding in May 2012 as part of a school competition sponsored by the Greater Twin Cities United Way and Ashoka’s Youth Venture. The physical work took place from June 2012 to September 2012 — stocking the shelves, cleaning the space and painting the walls.

After the students finished the physical work, it was time to solicit donations. Slowly but surely, the items for the food shelf started rolling in. A woman donated backpacks. A woman donated toiletries. Love INC, the National Guard, Keystone Community Services and other organizations also helped to fill the food shelf, according to Smith.

“It was a really great way for us to connect to the community,” Smith said. “They know what they need to do, and they want to help.”

In September 2012, the shelf opened.

In the winter, students without enough money to purchase winter gear could get coats, hats and socks from the food shelf. It also benefits students facing difficulties caused by a lack of transportation, senior Ba Po said. In her family, her dad and older sister are the only people who drive.

“Winter time is really tough,” Po said. “Sometimes my dad will be sick and sometimes my older sister goes to work, and then my mom and the rest of us don’t know how to drive. It’s hard to go buy food and sometimes we don’t have the money.”

The food shelf is not the only service learning project that Roseville students have completed. For instance, other students created an outdoor classroom space from an existing high school courtyard to help students get outside. Some students are collecting books and donating them to organizations, while others are writing encouraging letters to the elderly or injured in hospitals.

If students are interested in helping their own communities, they should start with a specific problem, according to Roseville AVID teacher Kerri Werner. A small idea can make a big difference.

“An important part of AVID has always been doing community service,” she said. But service learning projects can be much more meaningful because students find issues in the community on their own, have responsibility over them and make connections, she said.

The projects can also help students be more aware of the issues impacting their communities, Werner said.

“[They develop] awareness of what’s going on in the community, whether that is a school community or community in Roseville, or even beyond,” Werner said. “They gain an awareness of all the issues that they are exposed to outside of their teenage life. It’s amazing to watch.”



The food shelf has canned goods and other items for students.

SHIMIN ZHANG/THREESIXTY JOURNALISM

CARTER from page 23

stop to clear the snow when we get 12 inches in one day, like we did last week. There's just a whole lot to juggle and manage, and the secret to success in this role is building a really good team and trusting the team to kind of help do the work. I'm actually really excited about the team we've got coming together because it's a fantastic group of people who is doing that work together.

Q: How do you envision young people playing a role in your vision for the city?

A: Young people oftentimes aren't specifically invited in and young people often times end up waiting to get engaged, right? We wait till we're 18 and then we turn 18, and then we wait until we get out of college and then we're out of college, and then we wait until we're set in our career, and then we wait until the kids get out of the house or whatever it is, and there's this perpetual 'I'm going-to-get-involved-at-some-point-in-time.'

The truth is, and I share this with folks at the time, is that if you look at any era throughout history that's been transformational and that's changed the course of this country for the better – whether it's civil rights or labor rights, or women's rights, or whatever it is – if young people had waited, it wouldn't have happened.

So I think right now is one of those moments where we just don't have the luxury of waiting, where we have to be engaged and be involved. Our focus is on high school and on college students. Our focus is on the young workforce who is kind of moving into the city. They're demanding a different kind of city-building. As we debate over whether bike lanes are okay and whether transit is okay and whether ... density is okay, the now 50 percent of our workforce that is millennials is demanding more bike lanes and more transit.

Providing those microphones and those spaces for folks to get engaged and to get involved has got to be critical, and so a part of our Serve St. Paul work that we've launched is going to be inviting young people, in particular, to serve on the different task forces and commissions that I appoint people to, to serve as board members on their district councils or on their local nonprofits, to come serve as volunteers and mentors in our schools and tutors in our libraries and coaches in our rec centers, and just to get plugged into the process, and to come to the Capitol and advocate for some of the change that we seek in the Capitol with us as well.

My hope is that as our young people graduate from high school, as our young people graduate from college or at St. Thomas right now – I have no doubt that this spring a bunch



"I think right now is one of those moments where we just don't have the luxury of waiting, where we have to be engaged and be involved."

—St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter

of young people are going to graduate from this space, brilliant and prepared to make an impact on some community – I want them to have an investment in St. Paul, to know that we're invested in them. And I want them planting their impact on the future right here in St. Paul.

Q: You're working toward raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. Why is this important to you and what can Minnesotans expect happening in their communities if this goes through?

A: We have families who work full-time, who work overtime jobs and are still stuck living in poverty. There's an author who talks about families that have too much month at the end of their money – as opposed to too much money at the end of the month, there's too much month at the end of their money. And that's a problem for all of us.

As a community, we spend a lot of time and we spend a lot of resources managing poverty. And the truth is, our economic development conversations, our education conversations, our public safety conversations, all of our conversations are conversations about trying to manage the impact of the fact that we have so many just deeply poor people in our community. Right?

In St. Paul, 72 percent of our children in our public schools qualify for free or reduced lunch. If children show up to school not knowing where they're going to sleep tonight or how they're going to eat tonight, then of course our social studies scores are going to fall, our math and reading scores are going to fall. And so, our focus is to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour so people can afford to just live in our community with dignity and know that that's going to have really strong, positive impacts on every other aspect of life in our community.

Q: You've mentioned also starting a college savings fund for every St. Paul student, and it's sparked a lot of attention. Why did you make this an important part of your vision?

A: Oh, I don't know if we even have time for me to say all of it. I'm so excited about it. We know again, children on the right start is important. There's a lot of research that

suggest that the experiences that a young child has in their first 3-to-5 years of life create a momentum that is most likely going to continue throughout the rest of their lives. We have a window at a time right there that we can really change the course for children and families in our community.

But we have very, very precious few public resources committed to that area. We think about our public education system as something that starts at age 5, right? When we know that 95 percent of brain development occurs before age 5, right? We have to do some really intense investment in young children. By saying we're going to have a \$50 college savings account, we're telling every child born in this city that, 'We believe in you, we're invested in you, and we know that you can do great things in the future.' Planting that seed in their minds is so important for the future of our community.

We're saying to the parents, 'You're not here on your own, and we're going to invest in you and your family,' which gives them a reason to want to plug their child into our child development infrastructure as a city earlier, so we can start helping and engaging that child a lot earlier. ...

And then beyond that, those low-income families I was just talking about, research shows that low-income families spend up to 10 percent of their income just on financial services. You can never get out of poverty if you bank at pawn shops and same-day lenders. At the same time, through this, we're going to be introducing families all over our city to financial institutions that are reasonable, that are responsible and that are accountable. If you can save for college, you can save for retirement, or you can save it for a rainy day, you can save to buy a house. Connecting families to savings and real financial institutions is a part of this as well.

If you think about the \$50 dollars a child each for the 5,000 children born in this city a year – I can't come up with anything that's that cost effective, that we could do, that could have that profound an impact all across our city.

Geoff Canada, who was the founder of the Harlem's Children Zone, which we patterned the St. Paul Promise Neighborhood after in

many ways, I've heard him say many times, 'Let's stop helping kids beat the odds, and start changing the odds.' So I see those college savings accounts as an odd-changing initiative.

Q: How did you react when you found out you were elected mayor? Describe how you felt in that moment.

A: I was with my wife. We had poll watchers to go watch a set of precincts and bring back numbers, and our analysts, our number-cruncher folks ... came up, and it was just my wife and I, Sakeena, and they came up and let us know that not only were we in the lead, but that we had really outperformed all of our expectations in every part of the city. It was humbling and overwhelming to not have only won, but to have carried the type of margins that we did, to have won all over the city in the way that we did.

I'm a fourth-generation St. Pauler, and our family's experience and our community's experience with this city, you know, if you have that long of a relationship, it's not going to always be positive. And I think in a moment, I was thinking about my children and the fact that they get to see me lead this city forward. I was thinking about all of our communities of color who have felt locked out and kind of left out of our city's prosperity for a long time, who we get to do this work with. I was thinking about my parents who have served this city, my dad as a police officer, my mom as a teacher, my grandparents – you talked about my grandfather sweeping floors at Humboldt High School, and losing their houses on old Rondo – and it's a dream come true.

It's overwhelming in all the most amazing ways. It's just the honor of a lifetime that people in this city would entrust me with such an important role. It's never lost on me the incredible privilege it is to be able to do this job. Or the weight of the responsibility because all of the work impacts people.

One of the challenges is, when I first got elected to the city council, I remember thinking on the day of my inauguration, that I never get to use the word 'they' anymore. 'They ought to do this, they ought to do that.' And it was like, we are the they. And we get a chance to do the things that we've been saying forever that they ought to do.

Honestly, it's scary in a lot of ways. But it's really helpful to know that we've got help from our staff, our team, to just the people all over the city who said, 'We're not electing you to send you to city hall, we're electing to go with you to city hall and we're here to help.' It's exciting.

This interview has been edited for length and content.

Mental illness in K-pop

Learning from the death of a K-pop music star

Writer's Note: I wrote this story in memory of Kim Jong-hyun because I've also felt depression and been told to "suck it up," that I can't be selfish. I am a huge fan of K-pop and I want to share the story of how two idols, Jong-hyun and Min Yoongi, have shared their mental health issues.

K-pop, a subculture of music that comes from South Korea, has a reputation of being a demanding business.

K-pop groups typically consist of four to 15 members, including vocalists, dancers and rappers. Some of the biggest entertainment companies in K-pop are rumored to require artists to train for hours on end, to monitor their lives closely and to control their dating. The public and the companies expect much from the idols, such as keeping up appearances and being fashion icons.

Some idols have come out and shared their struggles with depression and anxiety. Yoongi,

Fans also should realize that these idols are just as human as you and I.



Heidi Sanchez Avila
Voices Writer

an underground rapper and one of K-pop's biggest idols, expressed his struggles with social phobia and depression in August 2016 through a mixtape titled "Agust D."

"Behind every idol rapper who

succeeds, there's a weak self standing. It's a little dangerous. I fall sometimes again into depression and compulsion," Yoongi raps in Korean in a song titled "The Last." "Sometimes I'm afraid of myself, thanks to my self-hatred and the depression that came to play again. ... I was afraid of people, so I hid in the bathroom and stared at myself."

The entire track describes how his transition from an underground artist to K-pop idol put pressure on him and made him not recognize himself. In one song, he raps about going to a psychiatrist with his parents and them feeling like they didn't know him anymore.

In December 2017, idol Jong-hyun, a member of SHINee, died of an apparent suicide.

"I'm broken from the inside," Jong-hyun, 27, wrote in a letter to a friend that was made public after his death. "Becoming famous was

probably not my life. They tell me that's why I'm having a hard time... Why did I choose that? It's funny that I'm able to endure this much."

In an Instagram message posted after Jong-hyun's death, close friend and K-pop idol Kim Tae-yeon wrote about their shared feelings of loneliness.

"I remember you telling me about how you wrote 'Lonely' with me in your thoughts," Tae-yeon wrote, referring to a song they co-wrote and sang together. "We are very similar and alike. We know those feelings."

According to the Korea Herald, South Koreans tend to view mental illness as a taboo subject. Government statistics noted that one in four South Koreans suffered from a mental health disorder but only one in 10 pursue professional help, according to the 2017 article.

The suicide rate in Korea was

the highest among countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), according to 2015 data, and had more than doubled since 2000. According to reports, suicide was the number one cause of death among teenagers in South Korea, where mental health services lag behind those in other countries.

Jong-hyun's record label, SM Entertainment, released his solo album, "Poet/Artist," in January 2018. The company announced that profits would go to his mother as well as a "foundation for the establishment of an organization to help those who are living in difficult circumstances."

Kim Ki-bum of SHINee, also known as "Key," publicly addressed the future of the group after Jong-hyun's death.

"There have also been many people worried about us [SHINee], and we have decided to continue the Japan concert as planned," he wrote in an Instagram post. "Jong-hyun would want us to do something like this, and I believe that it is of SHINee['s character] to continue and keep our promise to fans to showcase a good stage."

After the death of Jong-hyun, there were reported cases of fans attempting suicide. One failed attempt reportedly occurred in Indonesia. The fan had posted on Twitter: "Should I give up my life for now since I lost both of my parents and my idol? It's stressing me out." She followed that tweet with: "I can't endure it anymore. Mom, dad, Jong-hyun oppa, we'll meet really soon."

For this K-pop fan, my only hope is for everyone to know that there's support available to you. Fans also should realize that these idols are just as human as you and I.

If you or a person you know is suffering through depression or mental illness, visit the National Alliance on Mental Health's website at nami.org for more information and resources.



Jong-hyun, a K-pop star, died last year in what authorities have called an apparent suicide.

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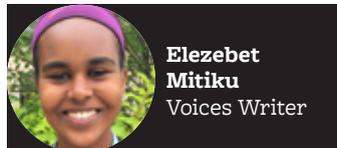
Mental illness and my community

My experiences with mental health in Ethiopia, my parents' homeland

WHEN I WENT to Ethiopia in 2015 to celebrate my uncle graduating from college, I remember watching a story about a woman and her child on the government-run state news.

They both suffered from an unnamed mental illness and they were missing. There was a reward for finding the two.

However, it wasn't the story itself that intrigued me, but rather the words the news anchors used to refer to the missing people. They were called "insane" and "crazy" rather than "mentally ill," "disabled" or any other formal



Elezebet Mitiku
Voices Writer

diagnosis.

I was born in St. Paul and raised by Ethiopian parents, a dad from Addis Ababa and a mom from Jijiga, the biggest city in the Ogaden desert. At 14, I took my third trip back to Ethiopia. I was definitely expecting blue vans, three-wheeled Bajaj motorcycles and the constant smell of cooking by fire. What I

didn't expect was the way people talked about mental illness.

On that same trip, my family went to a special Orthodox Christian church. It was this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see a famous priest.

We got in one of the mini-buses, heading to this outdoor church near the border of Addis Ababa, the capital city. People were selling necklaces that had black string with a small wooden cross dangling. My grandmother bought us one each, and we found an open space where we could do our normal prayer.

I started to notice a difference between our church back home and this one when I saw a small section of people in the front being segregated from the rest of the people. They were "possessed." They were crying, screaming, fainting, getting sick and yelling at the deacons. The deacons hit them with this big necklace of beads. Then the priest started bringing the possessed people on stage one by one.

One person had stolen his family

and friends' money. Another person was a local actor suffering from drug abuse. Their stories made them sound like characters in movies. It was very foreign to me. My siblings and I were puzzled, but everybody else just sat in silence. Shaking their heads. Tearing up. Praying for the demonic spirits to leave the victims' bodies and to better themselves as people.

From the far left of the church, I wondered if they were getting help from a doctor or a therapist like I normally would see in the U.S.

An estimated 15 percent of Ethiopian people are affected by major mental illnesses or substance abuse disorders, according to a 2016 article by the World Health Organization. Yet suffering from

mental illness in the country has been stigmatized.

These experiences have shown me that different cultures have additional barriers in coming forward with their struggles with mental illness. In all cultures, people struggle with mental illnesses and the stigma of dealing with them or talking about them. And in some cultures, people have extra barriers, whether it's going to church to go through an exorcism, using cultural remedies or resorting to witchcraft.

We need to raise awareness about treating mental illness in these communities that might have these additional barriers and understand how we can learn from the ways each culture treats mental illness.

COUNSELOR from page 14

graduation rate for the St. Paul district was nearly 76 percent in 2015-2016 and nearly 77 percent in 2016-2017. In 2017, nearly 83 percent of all Minnesota students graduated on time, a record, according to the Minnesota Department of Education.

Social media plays a major role in the lives of high school students. Eight out of 10 high school students own a smartphone, and the percentage of these students bringing their smartphone out in class has increased from 44 percent to 53 percent, according to a 2015 article from TheJournal.com. According to a 2017 International Business Times article, people spent an average of about five hours per day on their phones.

Sullivan wanted to understand the mental and emotional growth of students who use technologies such as smartphones and social media such as Facebook, Snapchat and YouTube, she said.

To gather up the data, she gave senior students a survey. The survey has a list of statements that center on Internet addiction.

For each statement, students rank 1-5 how it applies to them.

The Internet addiction survey was created by Dr. David Walsh, an award-winning psychologist and author. Sullivan modified the survey for students.

Sullivan surveyed 93 senior students in three different classes: English 12, Recovery English, and College in the Schools Algebra. Her hypothesis was that the higher a student scored on the Internet addiction survey, the more absences and the lower that student's GPA and class rank would be.

But she found out that wasn't always the case. There was no clear correlation between Internet addiction and a student's absences, GPA and class rank, she said. Some students had low scores on the survey and also had low GPAs and attendance, while some students had high scores on the survey as well as high GPAs and attendance.

Other factors affecting students' academic success could be jobs outside of school and responsibilities at home, according to Sullivan.

"What I want to do is to find a way to help students stay on track to graduate and to get them motivated."

—Marianna Sullivan, St. Paul Harding counselor

"I was surprised that students didn't see [the impact of social media and technology] as more of an issue," she said. "I was not surprised when they all said they have jobs, and they have these other responsibilities, because I think that's very hard to manage."

Craig Jones, a senior at Harding, owns a phone. And just like other students, he uses it to go on social media. It's a big part of his life, he said, and it helps him stay informed.

"[Technology] does not distract me from learning," Jones said. "I know when to put my phone down. I feel like if anything it helps me, because I can stay connected."

He added: "I've got nothing to stop me from graduating. I do have [problems], but I don't let it affect me. I feel like you need to

get school done first."

Pachia Lor, another Harding student, also uses technology to access social media and online resources for her education, she said.

"I think technology has pretty much helped us move forward in life, but also sets us back," Lor said, "because so many of us are so focused on our screens [more] than what's going on around the world, so I think that's also an issue."

Sullivan's project is ongoing as of March. She plans to find new methods to gather data that can give her insights to help students graduate.

"What I want to do," she said, "is to find a way to help students stay on track to graduate and to get them motivated."

INNOCENCE from page 11

Olson during the 2007 trial.

In what Schultz called the “smoking gun” that could get Olson out of prison, Todd allowed IPMN access to documentation of a private conversation he had with a mental health professional in 2007. According to Schultz, the conversation encompassed Todd explaining he had wrongfully accused Olson and the prosecution had instructed him to do so.

“We got this document, and it was in the possession of law enforcement and it was clearly exculpatory,” Schultz said. “It was different from any other statement that was made, given

the circumstances in which it was made. And the prosecution had never turned it over [to the defense]. And that is a violation of the Constitution.”

Olson could either continue to fight his case or he could walk out of prison on the condition that he would not sue the county for damages related to the withholding of evidence, according to Schultz. The latter option, however, would not result in Olson’s exoneration.

“When I called Terry to tell him this, you might think it was the best day of Terry’s life. I think it was probably the second-worst day of his life,” Schultz said. “He was in tears. He was like, ‘What am I

supposed to do? What do I do? I’ve been fighting this for 11 years. Are you telling me that I can get out but I’m not exonerated?’”

After weeks of consideration, Olson decided to take the deal. He said that seeing his elderly mother again was the biggest factor. After walking out of prison, he got that wish, along with the freedom he had sought for more than a decade.

In a September 2016 Star Tribune report, Wright County Attorney Tom Kelly said he continues to believe Olson was guilty of killing Hammill. Kelly said his office agreed to release Olson because he had already served more time than he would have faced under 1980

sentencing guidelines.

AFTER HIS RELEASE

Olson’s release was not without consequence.

“I came home to nothing,” Olson said. “Everything I had was gone. Right down to my dog.”

He added: “I’m 59. I’m trying to get it all back.”

Olson said he’s been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and struggles at times to move forward with his life. His path to a normal life was aided by his old employer, who gave him back the job he had before he was sentenced in 2007.

Schultz is now a U.S. magistrate

judge. He was presented with IPMN’s “Never Forgotten” award in 2016.

Since Olson’s release, he and Schultz have stayed in contact, and both vividly remember their first encounter.

IPMN, described by Jonas as “a desperate person’s last hope,” turned thousands of hours of volunteer legal work into a new life for Olson.

Since his release, Olson has been taking exams with the goal of becoming a certified paralegal. He said he plans to use those skills to assist IPMN in the future.

“I still have a little bit of a life to lead,” he said.

CARLSON from page 19

up after her book, “Be Fierce: Stop Harassment and Take Your Power Back,” was published in 2017.

“I heard from tons of people after my book ‘Be Fierce’ came out, and I hope that they all will get justice—the woman who is being harassed at McDonald’s to the teacher or a member of the military or a lawyer,” Carlson said.

Like many others, Carlson can’t share the details of her sexual harassment story because she signed an arbitration agreement as part of her Fox contract, which took away her right to go to court. Filing a claim under arbitration often results in a firing or demotion, Carlson said.

“It is another way to keep women quiet,” she said. “Often times what happens is the perpetrator gets to keep working because no one ever knows that cases have come up about that person.”

That’s why Carlson has taken her fight to Capitol Hill.

In December, Carlson helped convince lawmakers to introduce a bipartisan bill in both the U.S. House and the Senate that would remove forced arbitration clauses in employee agreements.

“I think what was so important to me was that it was bipartisan, because this issue is apolitical,” Carlson said. “When someone decides to harass you they don’t ask, ‘What political party are you in?’”

CARLSON’S CAREER

Gretchen Carlson worked for Fox News for more than a decade, most recently hosting “The Real Story with Gretchen Carlson” on Fox News for three years. Prior to that, she co-hosted the No. 1-rated cable morning news show “Fox and Friends” for more than seven years.

Carlson started her television career in Richmond, Virginia, as a political reporter, and later served as an anchor and reporter in Cincinnati, Cleveland and Dallas. She moved to the national scene as the co-host of the Saturday edition of “The Early Show” on CBS.

Some companies, such as Microsoft, have stopped using forced arbitration clauses in sexual harassment cases. Carlson hopes other companies will follow in its footsteps.

Carlson also started the Gift of Courage Fund, which helps girls and young women recognize their potential, and created a partnership with the All in Together campaign to create the Gretchen Carlson Leadership Initiative.

“The All in Together campaign helps women have a voice in their lives and my job is to work with Gretchen to support these women,” said Simone Leiro, director of programming and partnerships for All in Together. “I love seeing women inspired to tell their stories and

see the differences the campaign is making in so many people’s lives.”

The leadership initiative is a nine-city tour that brings civic leadership and advocacy training to underserved women across the country. It’s focused on empowering women who have experienced gender-based violence, discrimination or harassment. The workshops are free because Carlson wanted to help women who didn’t have the resources she had.

“I thought it was really important because how do you help the single mom who is working two jobs and also being sexually harassed?” Carlson said. “This was a tough question for me because I really didn’t have an answer.”

One of her biggest surprises was the number of men who thanked her for coming forward, she said. She realized men also want safe work environments for their female colleagues.

“As long as we have men mainly running Fortune 500 companies, then we need men to help us,” Carlson said. “We need men to hire more of us, and support us and stop enabling this kind of behavior in the workplace and stop being bystanders.”

“I really feel that the final part of the equation is men saying, ‘Enough is enough,’ and I really feel like that will bring us together cohesively and make a change.”



Carlson speaks to women during the Gretchen Carlson Leadership Initiative, a nationwide tour in partnership with the All in Together Campaign that brings civic leadership and advocacy training to underserved women across the country.

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FREY from page 24

department. It's a few things.

First, we need additional accountability measures, and there is a pretty significant distrust in the police department, especially among communities of color. So that shift comes in the form of your policies. I believe that officers should have to exhaust reasonable alternatives before resorting to deadly force. I believe that just having a body camera or body camera policy doesn't do any good unless the body cameras are turned on, or those policies need to be shifted and we need a culture shift on the department.

I'm also a firm believer that we should be expecting a whole lot from our officers, but if we're expecting a lot from our officers, we also need to be giving them the tools to succeed and do their job. Right now a lot of them are just running from 911 call to 911 call, so they never have the opportunity to build out the positive relationships with the community. We're going to be doing some work to narrow the gap between officers and the community. Putting them on consistent times and schedules so you know who your officer is and you know him or her by name. Things need to be moving in that direction.

Q: The Super Bowl is in a few days. How will you be enjoying the experience?

A: We're actually still working that out. I won't be at the game. I won't be in the stadium anyway. I was planning on swinging by beforehand to shake a few hands and tell people to invest in the city, but then leaving before kickoff is the plan as of right now. I actually have to talk to my staff about watching the game on Nicollet Mall or in some bar in the area with the rest of the community.

Q: When you're not busy with work, what's your favorite thing to do in Minneapolis?

A: Honestly, I just like going out to dinner with my wife, or I like going for a run with a bunch of friends and then going out to dinner with my wife. We usually eat out because neither one of us are good cooks.

This interview has been edited for length and content.



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