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ThreeSixty

Minnesota Teens Report Stories & Issues That Matter

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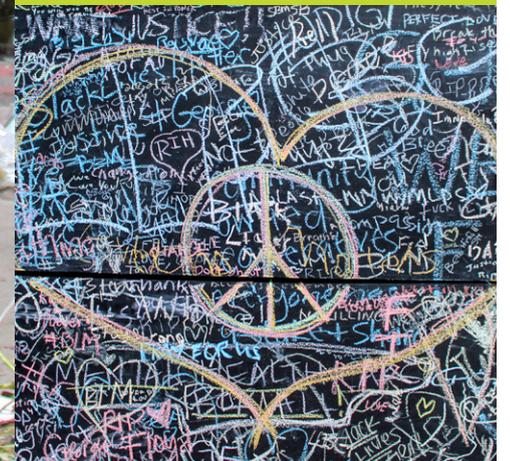
Building Community and Calls for Social Justice



Students put pandemic into perspective.

Exploring racism as a public health crisis

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ThreeSixty Journalism

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Email ThreeSixty@StThomas.edu with comments, letters and questions about participating in ThreeSixty Journalism.

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ON THE COVER

Photos by Emil Liden

Illustration by Jacqueline Martinez



ThreeSixty reporter Emil Liden takes pictures at the American Indian Center during Digital Media Arts Camp. His photo essay profiles chef Brian Yazzie, who is creating meals for elders during the COVID-19 pandemic.

THREESIXTY JOURNALISM/DYMANH CHHOUN

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THREESIXTY/DYMANH CHHOUN

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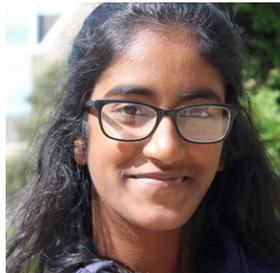
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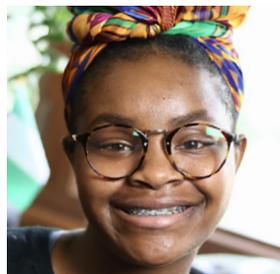
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Editor's Note



Theresa Malloy
Associate Director

WE NEED to hear your voices now. ThreeSixty Journalism exists because we believe in the power of youth voices, and we will continue to exist because the need to amplify under-represented voices remains critical. What has changed in the past few months is more people are ready and willing to listen. Perhaps that's how you came across our magazine. Regardless, thank you, reader, for opening these pages. We hope you read it, share it and live it.

When we chose the theme of creators we did not know a global pandemic would swiftly change everything. We did not foresee the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police officers. We could not imagine protests in our backyard propelling such a wide-reaching and long overdue social justice and racial equity overhaul. Thinking of creators in this context allowed us to highlight those who are innovating, reacting and adapting. They are using their

voices to give back to the community, and it is a privilege to share their stories with you. All these creators carry threads of hope for a better tomorrow, as do our students.

We are also proud to showcase more student voices in this issue. As ThreeSixty adapted and responded during the last few months, we focused on providing a space for young people to react and share stories they were not hearing elsewhere. You will find in these pages brave and bold personal stories from our #360YouthVoiceChallenge and College Essay Boot Camps, held in partnerships with Girls Inc. Eureka! and Cristo Rey Jesuit High School.

You will learn about what racism as a public health crisis means from advanced reporters who attended Digital Media Arts Camp, supported by our partners at the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and Padilla. The powerful digital collection of stories highlights the work of advocates, and I hope you click through to see those stories in action.

ThreeSixty will offer more opportunities to share your stories in the fall, including a new **EDITOR'S NOTE** continued on page 24



THREESIXTY JOURNALISM PHOTOS



Girls Inc. Eureka! student Zaraia Fabummi works with volunteer Gabriel Cortes of American Public Media on her story during College Essay Boot Camp.

ABOVE: Nine advanced students completed ThreeSixty's first Digital Media Arts Camp, held in partnership with the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross Blue Shield MN and Padilla in a virtual space. Due to the pandemic, ThreeSixty quickly pivoted to a virtual summer.

#360YouthVoiceChallenge

High school students,
amplify your voices and
showcase your creativity!

Next Deadline: Nov. 15, 2020

<https://link.stthomas.edu/youthvoice>

ThreeSixty Journalism
College of Arts and Sciences



ThreeSixty Scholar Updates

EACH YEAR, HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS who are graduates of ThreeSixty programming compete for the ThreeSixty Scholarship — a full-tuition, four-year scholarship to study Emerging Media at the University of St. Thomas. Currently, there are four ThreeSixty Scholars attending St. Thomas.



ThreeSixty 2020 Scholar Josie Morss

Dream Come True for 2020 ThreeSixty Scholar

THREESIXTY JOURNALISM STUDENT Josie Morss is the 2020 ThreeSixty Scholar! Morss receives a full-tuition, four-year scholarship to study Emerging Media at St. Thomas starting in the fall 2020 semester.

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

“This scholarship literally means everything to me. I’m given a rare chance to put a microscope over my greatest passion, to study at my dream school, without the stress of financials holding me back and weighing me down,” Morss said. “Being awarded this scholarship is essentially what my middle school daydreams were made of, and now it’s real.”

Morss, a Lakeville North High School graduate and former editor of the school’s newspaper, joined ThreeSixty in summer 2019 for News Reporter Academy journalism camp. She went on to participate in the program’s TV Broadcast and Radio Broadcast camps and continued to build her skills as a participant in ThreeSixty’s school-year News Team and Learning Labs. Morss’ ThreeSixty subjects included USA gymnast Sunisa Lee, Bap and Chicken owner John Gleason, Ananya Dance Theater and Juxtaposition Arts.

“In the beginning, ThreeSixty was just a camp. It was just something to do,” Morss said. “The second I stepped into the library’s classroom, that instantly changed. I knew this is where I needed to be.”

Danielle Wong, the 2016 ThreeSixty Scholar, was the

classroom leader for the TV Broadcast Camp that Morss participated in.

“Josie was always one of the first to step up to the challenge. She fearlessly leads by example and takes every chance she gets to empower and celebrate her peers,” Wong said. “Josie is inquisitive, brave, unwavering and empathetic — all qualities that make for a great journalist.”

Morss is eager to participate in student media and explore campus clubs at St. Thomas. She’s also reflective about ThreeSixty’s impact on her.

“ThreeSixty gave me a sense of purpose,” Morss said. “ThreeSixty established a home away from home while building up my confidence as a writer, as well as gaining confidence in me. ThreeSixty completely changed my life.”



Kai Sanchez Avila
2019 ThreeSixty Scholar

During the 2019 – 20 school year at St. Thomas, Scholar Kai Sanchez Avila hosted “Kai-POP,” a K-pop show, on KUST radio. She hopes to continue doing the show throughout her ongoing Emerging Media studies. Sanchez Avila also received the Mark and Mary Davis Horatio Alger Scholarship. For fall 2020, she is interning with TommieMedia, an award-winning web-based news organization serving the St. Thomas community.



Zekriah Chaudhry
2018 ThreeSixty Scholar

As a sophomore at St. Thomas, Chaudhry spent the fall semester studying abroad in Rome and traveling in Europe. Upon his return, Chaudhry spent four months interning as a staff writer for Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal, where he penned the weekly “Cool Offices” column and other business-related articles.



Samantha HoangLong
2017 ThreeSixty Scholar

In fall 2019, HoangLong led TommieMedia, the university’s award-winning web-based news organization, and interned with Under-Told Stories. In January 2020, HoangLong was awarded first- and second-place honors in the Minnesota Newspaper Association College Better Newspaper Contest for her coverage on race at St. Thomas. She also studied multicultural communication in Hawaii. For summer 2020, HoangLong interned again with KMSB-TV Fox 9 as an Emma Bowen Foundation fellow.

Alumna Helps NYC Nonprofits from Home in Minnesota During Pandemic

WHEN THE COVID-19 pandemic caused her internship to be canceled, freelance graphic designer and ThreeSixty Journalism alumna Victoria Turcios Laparra wasn't fazed. It was just another change.

"Change is the only constant there is," Turcios Laparra said.

A recent college graduate, Turcios Laparra, 25, immigrated from Guatemala to Minnesota in 2002. In 2020, her life was flipped upside down when she almost lost her father in a car accident. Last spring, she didn't get to walk during her college graduation. Despite this, she shows resilience in her everyday life regardless of the changes life throws at her.

This mindset is not used only in her personal life, but also in her career. As a freelancer, embracing



Carmen De Souza Bronshteyn
Wayzata High School

change has become second nature — and giving a voice to her clients whose stories may go unheard.

On her website, Turcios Laparra has a section dedicated to the work that she's done related to social impact. Because of her experience growing up as an immigrant, she has a special place for stories that make a change. Some of her projects include designing business cards for The Coven, a community working space for women, nonbinary and transgender people, as well as designing suicide prevention posters for the Indigenous Peoples

Task Force. These posters are now posted at bus shelters around the Twin Cities.

This summer, she had the opportunity to intern with the GROWTH Initiative Fellowship. Because of the current pandemic, she participated in the internship virtually. She and her fellow interns were placed into teams of about 15 people. These "mini agencies" worked with New York City-based nonprofits to help spread the word about the work they do. They even created a TV ad.

Her other work ranges from designing websites for startups to creating posters to inform the public about the impact of wildfires on our ecosystems. As a freelancer, she is able to select her clients.

"I really like to create relationships with my clients so that I can

get to know them better," Turcios Laparra said. "They can share their stories with me; that requires a lot of trust for it to come out and look visually well and be well executed."

Her career thrives on change. When a new trend emerges, everything changes.

"I constantly need to be pivoting and reinventing the wheel of my work," Turcios Laparra said.

"Change is always going to be a constant for me," Turcios Laparra said. "It's not necessarily like, 'Oh man, I'm doomed. Life is doomed, everything is going to go down the drain at some point.' I think that it's more about being OK with not being OK and being comfortable with the uncomfortable."

Next for Turcios Laparra is a new job with Target. She will be taking



COURTESY VICTORIA TURCIOS LAPARRA

Victoria Turcios Laparra

on a digital designer contractor position, designing content for its website in categories like women's clothing and accessories. This is a great fit for her, since she writes a style blog and has done styling for fashion weeks and photo shoots.

As for what the future holds, Turcios Laparra is uncertain. But while others might fear not knowing, Turcios Laparra thrives on it. She continues to learn, grow and change in response to her environment, all while sharing it with the world through her art.

Pulitzer Center Journalists Visit Virtually

THREESIXTY WRAPPED UP its four-week spring Virtual News Team with a visit from visual journalist Pat Nabong in partnership with the Pulitzer Center.

In 2017, Nabong earned a fellowship with the Pulitzer Center, which allowed her to return home to the Philippines and produce a variety of stories covering politics, environmental justice and human rights.

Nabong shared powerful photos from when she covered the psychological trauma and impact of President Rodrigo Duterte's drug war. She also answered ThreeSixty students' questions about life as a journalist during a pandemic.

She shared a personal story and photo essay she produced about life as an immigrant while sheltering in place, which was published on Medium.

"It's important for me to share my experiences with the next generation of storytellers because I want to empower more people



Chicago-based visual journalist Pat Nabong shares photos of her 2017 Pulitzer Center reporting project in the Philippines.

to tell stories," Nabong said. "The more storytellers we have from diverse backgrounds and different

experiences, the more holistic and representative our perception of the world will be."

ThreeSixty Associate Director Theresa Malloy said, "Working with the Pulitzer Center to facilitate this

visit adds another layer of learning and engagement in a virtual space. Meeting a top-notch journalist like Pat Nabong is highly impactful. She empowered students to share their own stories during a crisis because they offer unique perspectives we are not hearing enough."

Nabong hopes to pave the path for the next generation as her mentors did for her. She encouraged the students to share their stories and ask themselves critical questions: What perspective is missing in the media narrative? What perspective do you offer? What makes it unique and necessary to share?

News Reporter Academy students were also joined by a Pulitzer Center photojournalist.

Melissa Bunni Elian talked about her project, "The Globalization of AFROPUNK," and answered student questions.

Elian told students she works to capture under-told stories, especially relating to race, culture and social justice.

Alumni Spotlight: ThreeSixty Prepares Scholar for Global Storytelling Career

A DECADE AGO, Simeon Lancaster was an unassuming 14-year-old beginning his exploration of journalism at ThreeSixty. Ten years later, he is an associate producer of the nationally televised Under-Told Stories.

About his early days at ThreeSixty, Lancaster said, “I was sort of a timid kid on the dark streets of downtown, but I did it. I only remember one of the guys I talked to (on that first assignment). But it was a big lightbulb moment for me. It was this super nondescript guy at a bus station. I was looking for anyone, and he looked friendly enough. He was a migrant laborer working up here who was sending money back to his family.”

Four years at ThreeSixty sparked Lancaster’s passion for journalism.

“ThreeSixty took me seriously when I was 14, they let me start doing very serious stuff,” Lancaster said.

“Before I even knew about underdog stories, I wanted to do this kind of work, I wanted to do international stuff, and I wanted to keep chasing that,” he added. “My passion started with realizing that no one is boring.”

By the time he graduated from high school, Lancaster had won the 2013 ThreeSixty scholarship to study communication and journalism at the University of St. Thomas College of Arts and Sciences.

During his years at St. Thomas, he learned video production skills, spent a semester in Morocco paired with a local reporter and eventually became the director of TommieMedia, the student-run media organization.

Arriving back on campus after his semester in Morocco, Lancaster said, “I saw the Under-Told Stories nameplate by an office in the hallway, and I was like, ‘What the heck? That sounds like something right up my alley.’ I went in – they’d been on campus a couple of months – and I just asked them if they had any internships, student work or



Adam Gips
St. Louis Park
High School

anything.”

They didn’t.

“Not at the time,” Lancaster said, “but the next semester they made an internship and gave it to me because I kept bugging them. I loved the work from the first second ... and I learned a lot of things on the fly.”

As his senior year of college drew to a close, Lancaster asked his boss, Fred de Sam Lazaro, whether there was any chance of continuing to work at Under-Told Stories after graduation. It turned out to be good timing because a new production assistant job was posted, and he beat out several other candidates.

The internship led to a full-time position with Under-Told Stories — a partnership of the “PBS NewsHour” and St. Thomas — and eventually a promotion to full-time production assistant, then associate producer.

Lancaster’s work has taken him as far afield as India for stories on environmental issues and Cambodia for stories on orphanage reform, landmine disposal and sand mining in the Mekong River. Those stories and many others have been nationally televised on the award-winning “PBS NewsHour,” seen locally on TPT, Channel 2.

During the recent unrest in the Twin Cities following the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police, de Sam Lazaro and Lancaster were on the street for days (and nights) on end, with their reporting a regular feature of “PBS NewsHour.”

“It was a surreal assignment,” Lancaster said, “and not just because my hometown was the epicenter for a global movement. This assignment put me on the same streets where my journalism journey began more than a decade ago.”

Through his work at Under-Told Stories, 2013 ThreeSixty Scholar Simeon Lancaster shares stories otherwise untold.

ARMANDO TECPILE WORKS a hard labor job at a dairy farm near Cochrane, Wisconsin; but that’s a significant issue for his wife, his children and his life in general because it is 1,800 miles from home.

Born and raised in Vera Cruz, Mexico, Tecpile sometimes works 60 hours a week and sends \$300 to \$500 home every other week to ensure his dream of building a house for his family comes true.

However, his wife, Lourdes Ramos, told Tecpile, “I’m not asking you for anything. I’m not asking you for money. We don’t need such a big house if it’s just two of us and the boys.”

“I miss my papa. I love him a lot,” said Aaron Tecpile, Armando Tecpile’s son.

Armando Tecpile’s story is just one of the many stories of Mexican immigrant workers who have sacrificed their home, their family



Anjali Thomas
Shakopee
High School

and their culture to seek better opportunities. According to Under-Told Stories’ reporting, half of the U.S. dairy workers are immigrants from Latin America, and Armando Tecpile’s employer says he couldn’t hire enough locals to do the job.

Armando Tecpile’s story is summarized here based on the one told by the Under-Told Stories project, an international journalism outlet reporting stories not often featured in mainstream media outlets. It focuses on the consequences of poverty and addresses the work of ordinary and extraordinary people.

Under-Told Stories was created by “PBS NewsHour” correspondent Fred de Sam Lazaro in 2006. This unique, three-staff project

partners with the University of St. Thomas and “PBS NewsHour.”

Simeon Lancaster, Under-Told Stories associate producer, editor and 2013 ThreeSixty Scholar, said, “These stories give (students) a more global perspective and an empathetic view of the rest of the world in their early days of education.”

When Americans think about news reports regarding the rest of the world, they often think of stories regarding suffering and death. Frequently, the bigger the number of deaths, the bigger the headline.

However, at Under-Told Stories, the team travels to less developed countries, such as India, Morocco, and the Latin America region, to seek attention-grabbing narratives of ordinary and extraordinary people to humanize critical global issues.

“Climate change, that’s a big topic, and it’s most likely going to go over people’s heads, and go in one ear and out the other,” Lancaster said. “But if you tell a story about a farmer in India whose crops have failed, whose neighbors have committed suicide because the rains aren’t coming because the summers are a lot longer, that all of a sudden is a lot more relatable for people.”

The project seeks to touch the lives of many through the power of words. At Under-Told Stories, every connection is developed through personal narratives.

Not only do they bring awareness to relevant global issues, Lancaster said, they also generate solution-oriented narratives that restore “empathy to a world that despite being so connected, is still divided, and it also offers a path forward instead of just dwelling on the bad.”

If you are interested in reading more stories like Armando Tecpile’s, go to the [Under-Told Stories website](#).



The Under-Told Stories Project team stands in a minefield near Siem Reap, Cambodia, that is being cleared by Giant African Pouched Rats.

UNDER-TOLD STORIES PROJECT



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“Art is a tool to help a community heal and foster a sense of belonging at uncertain times.”

The iconic mural honoring George Floyd is a memorial where community members can grieve.



DIYANH CHHOUNG/THREESIXTY ALUMINUS

Artists Create Place to Reflect After the Killing of George Floyd

EVER SINCE CADEX Herrera picked up a pencil, he has been creating art: from doodling to creating murals to bring awareness to social justice issues in his community.

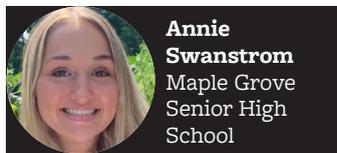
Herrera is one of the lead artists who created the George Floyd Mural at the George Floyd Memorial, located on East 38th Street and Chicago Avenue in Minneapolis, created on May 28. This mural has gained immense popularity globally and is arguably one of the most recognized images recently relating to the Black Lives Matter movement.

Herrera was one of three artists who painted the mural. The other artists are Minneapolis-based Greta McLain and Xena Goldman.

Before painting the mural, Herrera had been speaking up for Black Lives Matter and protesting.

He had been attending protests for two days when Goldman contacted him and asked if he wanted to paint a mural with her; he accepted. “She asked me to design it, as she already had an idea for the portrait. I came up with the concept,” Herrera said.

A huge amount of thought went into each detail in this mural, and



Annie Swanstrom
Maple Grove Senior High School

Herrera said his focus was the mural’s symbolism. He chose to use bright colors to bring a hopeful and positive light to the lives taken by law enforcement officers.

Floyd is surrounded by a sunflower, which Herrera said stands for longevity and loyalty. The names in the sunflower represent the seeds that weren’t able to grow. He included them so the community would also remember the other victims of police brutality around America.

Herrera created the mural to create a community. Art is a tool to help a community heal and foster a sense of belonging at uncertain times, he said.

Herrera uses art to overcome hard times throughout his life and wants the mural to also be a focal point for healing.

“This mural gave the community a place to reflect, a place to stop and a

place to think,” he said.

Not only did the finished mural help build a community, it was literally painted by community members.

“People were walking on the street saying, ‘What can I do to help?’ And we said, ‘Join in. Grab a brush and go ahead and put your mark on there so we’re all involved,’” Herrera said.

Herrera said he was “shocked at how fast it became part of the symbol of the movement.”

To Herrera, this was an “act of rebellion,” which allows one to express anger and grief. For him, art is a visual language more powerful and more immediate than words.

The goal of the George Floyd mural is to give the community a safe space to heal and be together. Herrera’s specialty of creating art around social justice and bringing an awareness to the injustices we see today has impacted people globally.

“When talking about social statements and political statements, especially in murals and art, the job of that piece is to move the viewer to have them emotionally react to it,” Herrera said. “And then also through that reaction, create change.”

Painting the Truth of Police Brutality in America

AS BLACK LIVES Matter protests spread throughout the world, a 45-year-old Belizean artist hopes his art will inspire people to consider the big and complicated picture of racial injustice.

Cadex Herrera recently worked on a mural near Cup Foods in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the location where George Floyd took his final breath.

Herrera, along with two other artists, created a mural spanning 20 feet wide and nearly 7 feet tall to honor Floyd at the site of the killing.

Herrera’s work quickly turned into a central meeting place for people to show their respect to Floyd and express their outrage about police brutality. It became the backdrop of press conferences and memorials.

Herrera wanted to create a place where people could stop, reflect, think and come together.

“Murals are supposed to do that in a way. ... It gives you a sense of place, a sense of community, a sense of belonging,” Herrera said.



Ryan Stoltz
Eden Prairie High School

“The job of that piece is to move the viewer to have them emotionally react to it and through that reaction create change,” Herrera added.

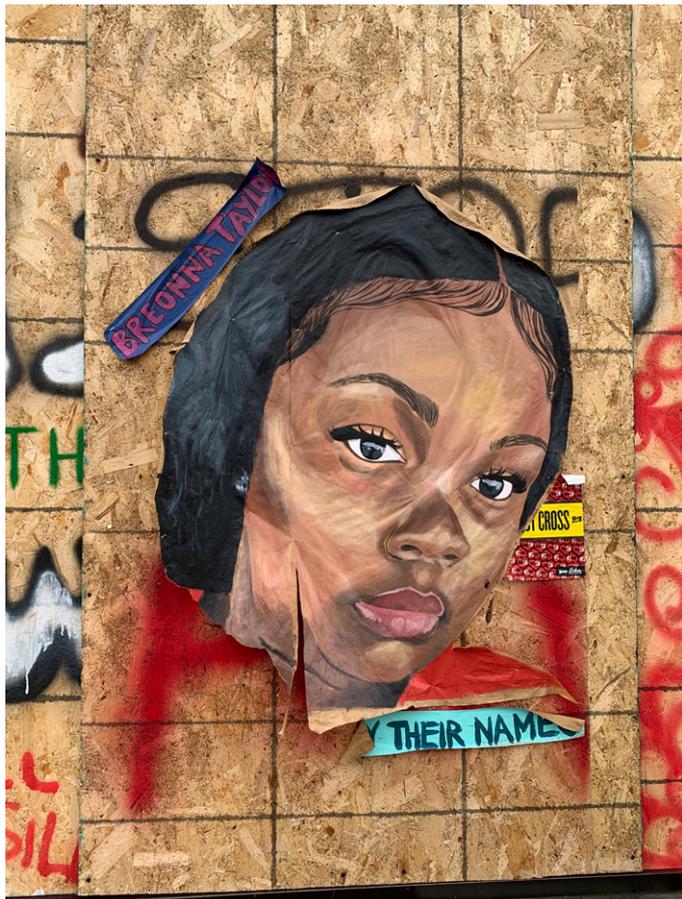
The mural has become a fundamental symbol of the Black Lives Matter movement, something Herrera did not expect.

Herrera incorporated several symbols in the mural. Floyd’s image is showcased in the center of “a sunflower to represent loyalty and life,” said Herrera. The black center of the sunflower contains names of Black Americans killed during altercations with police in recent years.

“They’re sort of representing the people who never got to be flowers ... those seeds never got to grow,” Herrera said. “Part of the movement is to remember the names of people of color who

MURAL continued on page 16

St. Thomas Professors Preserve Urban Art



COURTESY HEATHER SHIREY

A tribute to Breonna Taylor by Face Me Por Favor near 38th and Chicago.

UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS associate professor Heather Shirey is aware most of her students walk into her art history class thinking it's all about ancient Roman sculptures and Michelangelo; but through the Urban Art Mapping Research Project, she wants her students "to see that art is all around us, and it's a form of communication we're all participating in."

Since 2018, Shirey, associate professor Todd Lawrence (English) and associate professor Paul Lorah (history and geography) have worked alongside a team of St. Thomas students to create online databases of street and protest art.

Originally, they were only documenting the murals in St. Paul's Midway neighborhood. But in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic and George Floyd's murder, they have expanded their efforts.

Their largest and fastest-growing database is the one dedicated to George Floyd and anti-racist street art. Most of the images that make up this database are contributed by the public.

"Not everybody who's submitting art thinks about art in the

Ava Barnett
Central
High School

same way that we do," Lawrence said. "Sometimes the images they take are not the way we would have taken them."

The impermanence of street art is one of the reasons it is so important to document.

"What is true of low street art is that it's ephemeral; it's not going to last forever," Lawrence said.

It evolves quickly; there can be several different pieces of art in the same location at different times, he said.

Shirey added, "You can look at an address like 301 Hennepin, and you can see that there was some graffiti that went up early on. And then you can see it later on some other panels painted in that location."

Through the database, these changes are recorded.

The members of the Urban Art Mapping Research team have high hopes for what the database will be used for in the future. They want it

to be used as both a research and an educational tool.

Lawrence said he wants researchers to "look back and really have a more comprehensive understanding of what happened in terms of artistic expression that's connected to the uprising in the movement."

While these databases have great potential to teach future generations about the reactions communities had to Floyd's murder and the following uprising, it also has the power to connect them to that history. Through the Urban Art Mapping Research Project, they have the ability to see how the artists' reactions evolved, see the changes in the art as they happened. It will give them the opportunity to think about the events that have happened in a deeper fashion than just a single picture of a mural would.

Lawrence said even today, as these events are still playing out, he is "thinking about George Floyd every day. I'm thinking about the uprising every day. I'm thinking about people's pain and anger and everything that goes along with that every day."

Documenting urban art important in new social justice movements.

THE ICONIC GEORGE FLOYD mural resides on the intersection of 38th and Chicago in Minneapolis. Floyd is engulfed in hues of blue, orange and yellow with reddish undertones. Behind him, in white lettering, are the names of people wrongfully murdered by law enforcement officers.

The mural was photographed and archived by the Urban Art Mapping Research Project. The project was founded by St. Thomas professors Todd Lawrence, Heather Shirey and Paul Lorah. It is part of an initiative started by the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of St. Thomas.

Two years ago, Lawrence, Shirey

Kennedy Rance
Patrick Henry
High School

and Lorah, alongside St. Thomas students and in partnership with The Midway Murals Project, began documenting street art around Midway, a residential neighborhood in St. Paul.

Shirey, an art history professor, has been involved with street art for years.

"I felt like street art expresses something that we don't see in our museums," she said. "It expresses the

voice and experiences of people who are often marginalized from institutionalized presentations of art."

Floyd's murder sparked a movement of street art in the Twin Cities and around the world. In response to the eruption of street art and racial injustice, the Urban Art Mapping Research Project created the George Floyd and Anti-Racist Street Art Database. It allows people to upload and access art that illustrates the racial disparities within their communities.

The Urban Art Mapping Project captures art addressing Floyd's murder and the ongoing movement of demanding social justice and equality.

"The work we're doing with the art is not just because it's a research project," Shirey said. "It feels like it can be active in some way and play a part in helping solve some of the

problems."

In the past months, people have expressed themselves through protests, food drives and prayer circles. Documenting protest art has become Lawrence's form of expression.

"Through these photos and through talking about it, I'm thinking about George Floyd every day. I'm thinking about the uprising and people's pain and anger and everything that goes along with that every day," he said.

More than 1,000 images of art have been uploaded to the database, the majority of which were submitted by the public ([George Floyd Street Art](#)). The Urban Mapping Project is staffed with three professors and five students, as well as a handful of volunteers who help with data entry. However, Minnesota locals have begun to

document street art themselves.

Through the process of documenting street art, Lawrence, Shirey and Lorah have illustrated the importance of preserving history and hardship we face as a society. Street art is untethered, belonging to anyone who views it. Due to George Floyd and the Anti-Racist Street Art Database, fresh paint, bleach or spray paint will not diminish the significance behind the art itself.



COURTESY HEATHER SHIREY

Equity in Video Games: Jules Porter Paves the Way

JULES PORTER'S GRANDPARENTS have been two of her biggest influences. Her grandfather always told her, "Anything man can conceive, you can achieve."

Maybe she hasn't done everything man can conceive, but she's getting there.

After earning degrees in aeronautics and theology, she joined the Marine Corps. She became a sergeant in two years, an accomplishment that usually takes four to five years. She earned her J.D./MBA from the University of St. Thomas before starting her own video game developing studio.

Before earning her advanced degrees, Porter watched a TED Talks lecture by Dr. Artika Tyner, who is now a clinical professor and director at the Center on Race, Leadership and Social Justice at the University of St. Thomas School of Law. Tyner said the law is the language of power. That stuck with Porter, so she went to St. Thomas to learn that language. That wasn't her



Faaya Adem
The FAIR School,
Downtown Campus

only reason. Since she was a kid, her grandmother wanted her to become a lawyer. The death of Trayvon Martin, who was killed in Sanford, Florida, in 2012, and her grandmother within a year pushed her to take that step. Porter felt she wasn't doing enough for her community where people were losing family members and not getting justice.

"My brother was a Yale graduate who liked to wear hoodies, but people aren't going to ask him, 'Hey, sir, are you a Yale graduate? Are you Republican or Democrat?' before they act on their racist inclinations or before a police officer assumes something and kills him," she said.

Growing up, Porter was also always interested in coding. She first learned HTML to customize her MySpace and Black Planet

profile. Later in the Marine Corps, she started to learn C++ to partition off a part of her personal computer and gain a small amount of privacy.

"Every part of what I learned was because I was just curious. I wanted to do something better," she said. "I wanted to learn how to do it myself, and I don't want to pay anybody to do it."

Porter soon realized her coding skills could be turned into something bigger.

That's when she decided to create [Seraph 7 Studio](#), the first console video game development company in the world owned by a Black woman.

When she was younger, Porter didn't have many Black female superheroes to look up to. Instead, she had to look to real-life superheroes like Maya Angelou, Alice Walker and Bessie Coleman.

The goal of Porter's company is to create positive images so girls and kids of color can see themselves as heroes in their games. With her



COURTESY JULES PORTER

Seraph 7 Studios founder Jules Porter

playable demo coming out at the end of the month, Porter hopes to provide a gameplay experience where everyone can see a character who looks like them.

"What I'm hoping is that my video game company will be powerful," Porter said. "I think media is a powerful force in order to develop that message and build empathy."

In an industry dominated by white men, only 3% of video game developers are Black. And only 1% of programmers and coders are Black. On top of that, roughly 25% of people in the industry are women.

In Minnesota, she wants to educate and provide opportunities **VIDEO GAMES** *continued on page 29*

Jules Porter hopes to undo unconscious bias and put out positive images of Black people through her video games.

Using video games as her medium, Minnesota entrepreneur Jules Porter is continuing her mission to transform the video game industry from within. Porter is currently working on the game *Ultimate Elder Battle Royale*, a quirky game that envisions a world in which superheroes grow old and have to fight bad guys with canes and walkers. In this game most of the characters are Black, Indigenous and people of color.

By creating video games that center on BIPOC, Porter is hoping to empower young Black people, as well as cultivate empathy in those who don't experience racism.

In 2019 Porter founded Seraph 7 Studios and became the first and only Black woman in the world to own a console video game development company.



Indigo Davitt-Liu
The FAIR School,
Downtown Campus

"The goal is to put out positive images of Black people," Porter said.

Porter, who has played video games for most of her life, understands the simplistic depictions of Black people in video games well, either as a drug dealer or a criminal.

Assassins Creed is a video game that places players into different historical places in each rendition. It was praised for its diversity in 2013 when *Assassins Creed: Liberation* was released and featured a Black female protagonist. The game takes place in colonial New

Orleans sometime after the French and Indian War, and the protagonist is the daughter of an enslaved woman and her captor. At certain points of the game, players have to dress up as people who are enslaved to complete missions.

"I don't want to dress up as a slave in my fantasy," she said.

That's just one example of the simplistic — and negative — tropes that plague representation of Black people in video games, Porter said: portrayals that fail to acknowledge the full humanity of Black people and perpetuate the view that they are dangerous — a view that has real-world implications, especially in terms of policing.

Porter hopes to undo the unconscious biases many hold through telling diverse stories in video games. In her view, "racism is within people's hearts and to change hearts you need to use media."

Using positive representations of Black characters, Porter also wants to empower Black video game players, an audience that is unacknowledged. She is also drawn to reshaping the Black experience in Minnesota, characterized by the economic disparities that

exist between white and Black residents.

Based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the median income for a white family of four in Minnesota is \$83,000, compared to \$31,000 – \$33,000 for a Black family of four and \$27,000 for a Native American family. Minnesota has one of the worst economic disparities between white and Black people in the country.

To reshape the Black experience, Porter is creating a curriculum to empower and drive students of color, especially those from low-income backgrounds, in video game development. Through this curriculum youth will have the opportunity to become video game developers.

Porter hopes her program will expose students to — and eventually get them a job in — video game development. By marketing this curriculum to low-income and Black students, Porter strives to create upward mobility and cultivate economic power within Minnesota's Black population.

Ultimate Elder Battle Royale, the first game produced by Seraph 7 Studios, is set to release sometime in 2021. Follow @Seraph7Studios on Facebook and Twitter to stay updated.



COURTESY LISA WALDNER

George Floyd Stencil next to an anti-police message on the corner of University and Hamline Avenue in the St. Paul Midway neighborhood.

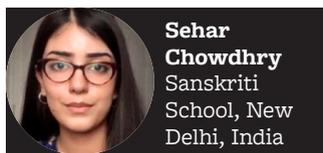
Delinquency and Diatribes: Graffiti Art in Turbulent Times

Dr. Lisa Waldner studies graffiti art and says it is more than vandalism — it is an important tool in the fight for social justice.

THE CLAMOROUS CLANKS of a spray-paint canister at late hours in the night may sound like vandalism; but to artists and protesters, they sound like change.

According to Lisa Waldner, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of St. Thomas, graffiti art is often used as a form of protest and resistance, often aimed toward the dominant culture. As a result, it has often been viewed as a crime rather than an act of political mobilization. Waldner, an award-winning sociologist and researcher, said she was enthralled by the sentiments hidden behind this art form.

She said although graffiti in her neighborhood is a newly discovered outlet for the supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement, the art has been an avenue for



Sehar Chowdhry
Sanskriti
School, New
Delhi, India

political dissent since it rose to prominence in the United States during the Chicano movement in the 1960s.

Despite being an act of vandalism, some street art is aimed at bringing attention to the plight of certain social groups or to raise awareness of pressing political and social concerns.

For many years, graffiti has been the scandalous and politically aggressive product of mysterious artists veiled by the looming shadows of multihued murals. Sociologists have tended to focus on more socially acceptable political expression; protests haven't

been as tolerable and have been viewed as acting outside of the accepted public discourse. Graffiti as an extension of the protest message has been equated with crime and gang violence, which has negative connotations that undermine the art's political implication.

"People can choose to channel their anger into destructive riots, which can be pretty legitimate, but artists use their sentiments to educate — that's what makes graffiti so special," Waldner said.

Graffiti accentuates turmoil; it's often a cry for attention, and the creators will intrepidly claim public property with their creations just to receive it, she said.

In popular movements, there is a lack of order in which opinions are voiced — that is the whole point. Graffiti is the art of the people and often reflects the movement's lack of linear progression. Graffiti can either be seen as a last-ditch effort, or it can be the highlight of the protesters' agitation.

"In the whole aftermath of George Floyd's lamentable passing, graffiti murals are being preserved in their original locations to

GRAFFITI ART continued on page 29

Filmmaker Focuses on Narrative Healing

AS HUMANS, WE tend to dwell on painful experiences. In fact, we often remember experiences in which we were hurt longer than we remember good things that happened. But, all pain needs healing, and Xiaolu Wang has found a way to do that.

Wang is a Minneapolis-based filmmaker and narrative healer, someone who helps others recover from a painful past through storytelling. She immigrated to the United States from China when she was in high school; however, she does not consider herself a Chinese American. Instead, she uses the term "Chinese transplant" because she was uprooted from all of the things she knew and moved to a strange, new culture.

Wang has found that narrative healing helped in her journey with identity and wants to share that with others. She used the idea in her 2019 film, "Dumpling," where she explores her feelings about moving to a new country and reuniting with her mother. It is based on her experience of moving from China to a white, rural American town when she was 14. The name of the film comes from the dumplings that the main character brings to school for lunch, which help her connect with her identity in a time when she feels "othered and isolated in her public school cafeteria." According to Wang, "'Dumpling' blends traditional narrative with magical realism to reflect on the struggle to belong."

Narrative healing is taking your story and expressing it in a way that helps you. Wang considers narrative healing "a process of reclaiming one's life experience and using storytelling as a way to expand the



Kaiya Jones
Long Reach
High School,
Columbia,
Maryland

possibilities for being seen." Not all narrative healing is writing. It is telling your story through whatever outlet you feel is best, whether it is through painting, writing, songwriting or something else. Wang used her passion for film to tell her personal story of moving to America in her short film "Dumpling."

Wang explained narrative healing by saying, "It's accessible to everyone, as long as you are open and willing to heal because healing is hard work. It's difficult, and it doesn't always feel good."

Wang talked about how we have different perspectives on healing. "For example, I think me and my mother have a very different understanding of healing. For her it was always barriers."

These barriers, like the generational difference between Wang and her mother, or holding onto the way things have always been, shut off the pain from her mother's life. This just goes to show how healing is not always something we want to do.

"So, this is also why 'Dumpling' was healing because it was a story that I wanted to dedicate to my mother," she said. "We always had a very, very contentious and really struggling relationship."

What do you need healing from? Trauma? Abuse? Betrayal? Loss of a loved one? The state of the world? Injustice? Take a moment to look inward and think of how you can heal in your story.

Wang considers narrative healing "a process of reclaiming one's life experience and using storytelling as a way to expand the possibilities for being seen."

Underfilled: How a TikTok Creator Uses Her Platform for Comedy, Social Change



COURTESY KAT CURTIS

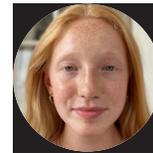
You can find Kat Curtis and her cat, Uno, on TikTok.

KAT CURTIS' 1.5 million TikTok followers (as of July 2020) are certainly familiar with her weird food combos (most recently Ramen and Sour Patch Kids), her one-eared cat, Uno, and her often repeated phrase, "It's underfilled!"

What started out as a made-up word used to describe the lack of product in chip bags soon became Curtis' catchphrase, and she began to apply the word to more serious issues, such as the treatment of people with disabilities.

"The way people treat disabled people is underfilled," Curtis said in a TikTok conversation with her friend Toby, who has cerebral palsy. The two discussed the unfair stigmas faced by people with disabilities and Toby's feelings regarding the issue.

For Curtis, making people laugh has always been a passion. She



Siri Pattison
St. Paul
Academy

started her career in journalism, then quickly shifted into digital media. When TikTok first appeared on her radar, she saw an opportunity to further pursue comedy.

TikTok's main demographic is Gen Z — defined as people born between 1995 and 2010. According to Statista, 37% of the app's United States users are between ages 10 and 19. Curtis' most responsive audience skews even younger.

"The ones that are literally trying to call me on Snapchat right now are like 9 to 12," Curtis remarked.

Recently, Curtis has been creating more serious TikTok videos about the circumstances impacting

her audience. For example, she documented herself getting tested for COVID-19 (twice!). She wanted to destigmatize the process.

"I didn't want people to be scared," she said.

Curtis also attended Black Lives Matter protests in her Los Angeles neighborhood.

"It's the right thing to do. It's documenting history," she said about posting footage from the protests in the wake of George Floyd's murder. She also posted a video with a piece of paper taped to her wall that said, "The way we treat Black people is underfilled," the same text that is currently in her TikTok bio.

Curtis said she finds content creation fulfilling, but she also feels the weight of responsibility that accompanies such a large platform.

TIKTOK continued on page 24

TikTok Creator Follows Her Dreams

A YOUNG BLONDE woman with red dyed tips leans over the escalator in a busy mall, grabs a handful of fries from a man traveling the opposite way and thanks him. He watches her with a glare, eyes never once blinking. The camera zooms in on the man's face as he continues to stare at her as she makes her way to the top floor.

This is the beginning scene of one of Kat Curtis' TikTok videos, captioned "How to get free food at the mall." It was posted on Feb. 11, and by July, it had amassed more than 10 million views on the social platform.

Between her two accounts, the influencer has 3 million total followers — most of them between the ages of 9 and 17, female and from the United States.

She uses her platform to entertain, while still managing an approachable and exciting tone. She radiates exuberant energy, allowing her to approach serious issues in a light-hearted and exciting way. She portrays



Ariana Yasmin
Spring Lake Park
High School

herself as whimsical and humorous, yet educated.

Curtis started her journalism career in Minnesota as a St. Catherine's University graduate who studied communication and journalism at the University of St. Thomas. She moved to Los Angeles to pursue an opportunity at BuzzFeed. She always loved comedy and desired a future chasing her dreams. But she realized no one was going to provide her a stage to manifest her talent, so she created her own.

"You don't have to have the nicest clothes to get this following," Curtis said. "You just have to be smart and funny, and you have to really believe in yourself."

Curtis took the path of social media to express herself, posting entertaining videos on YouTube, Facebook and Instagram; but she didn't receive a great deal of engagement.

The pieces finally clicked when she posted a video on TikTok that immediately went viral.

For the first time in her career, she noticed steady progress. Her most watched video was the introduction of the word "underfilled," which she made up when opening a bag of chips that was, much to her dismay, less than half full.

Now, she links the term to more serious issues, such as President Donald Trump's evident lack of leadership during the pandemic or speaking about the mistreatment of people with disabilities. This word is now her trademark.

"Social media is a tool to do a lot of good," Curtis said. "Unfortunately, it can also be used for a lot of evil, and I think it just

depends on how we choose to use it."

All fun aside, being a social media influencer is difficult.

Curtis said she always found balancing work and life hard. She makes money off of TikTok now but it's not enough to quit her job, so she works full time at "Funny or Die," a comedy company. Her tight schedule forces her to be "super organized and insanely professional," but she said it's not an easy thing to do when she's watching her friends hit other milestones in life, such as marriage, while she is not hitting them.

"A lot of the times I just want to quit; I just want to be a normal person," she said.

Nevertheless, Curtis understands some paths were simply not made for her. She has a fondness for making content and the dual life she's living; she doesn't want to give it up.

"If I'm not experiencing life truly, I can't make content that's reflective of that," she said.

A New Beginning for Native American Nonprofit MIGIZI

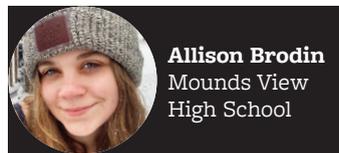
Even though its building was destroyed in the recent unrest in Minneapolis, MIGIZI continues to provide resources and education to Native American youth.

AS PROTESTS SWEEP through a south Minneapolis neighborhood, flames and destruction found their way to the home of Native American nonprofit MIGIZI. The organization's 2-year-old building was reduced to rubble.

The fire was a setback, but not a roadblock for the organization.

Binesikwe Means, lead media instructor at MIGIZI, said the community came together for a healing event after the fire.

She said, "We did everything to be able to find a place of healing for our community and then we went back into moving mode. We have to continue. MIGIZI is so much more than a building. Although



Allison Brodin
Mounds View
High School

our building went down, it doesn't mean as an organization that we were going to stop serving our youth, so we came together."

The nonprofit was founded in 1974 and incorporated in 1977. It started as a journalism program to teach Native American people how to tell their own stories in the media. At the time of its founding, mainstream media was overwhelmingly made up of white men. Since then, MIGIZI has branched out to

cover more topics than journalism. It has also shifted its focus to empowering Native American youth in its community.

MIGIZI uses programs such as Green Jobs Pathway, where students learn about solar power and other sources of green energy. This program teaches students through hands-on experience in the form of projects that eventually work to better the community.

Some examples of these projects are the creation of small free libraries and food pantries outfitted with solar panels, which community members can use to charge their phones. Projects like this are designed to better the community.

Another program MIGIZI provides is First Person Productions, which gives a voice to underrepresented stories and people. Like Green Jobs Pathway, this program also teaches students skills through real-life projects and community help.

Students need to learn these skills because "a lot of times the



COURTESY JACOB WANG

Native American nonprofit MIGIZI was able to continue summer programming, despite the pandemic and the loss of their building.

communities that are underrepresented are not necessarily always the place people go to when they want to hear a voice, so we really look at empowering our youth and giving them the opportunity to tell their own stories from their own perspective," Means said.

In 2019 MIGIZI bought and remodeled a building to house its programming. According to Means, the building was remodeled by a Native American architect, and the students had a big say in the design. The students chose a lot of the colors of the walls and the types of floors. They also described what types of studios and spaces they'd like to see for specific programs.

Unfortunately, during the recent

riots and protests in Minneapolis, the new building was burnt down. Despite people coming to the building to protect it from the outside, fire spread from neighboring buildings.

MIGIZI is now operating out of the American Indian OIC and the American Indian Center, both located in Minneapolis, until this summer's programming is over. In the fall, the nonprofit will be moving into a temporary space. It will rely on donations to help rebuild. The best way to donate and support MIGIZI is through its website or the "Save MIGIZI" GoFundMe campaign. (www.gofundme.com/f/save-migizi).

Continuing the Story

MIGIZI continues the tradition of storytelling by providing Native American voices an outlet.

THERE'S A SCENE from the classic TV show "Little House on The Prairie" where Pa Ingalls describes Indigenous people scouring the land "like wild animals." It's no surprise that throughout history, Native Americans have been scrutinized and vilified in the media.

This was only further exacerbated during the 1970s recession, when more than half of Native news outlets went under, further removing Native American voices from the media and making them bystanders to their own stories.

MIGIZI, a Native American-led nonprofit, opened its doors in Minneapolis in July 2019, providing an outlet for Native American



Dedeepya Guthikonda
Edina High School

voices to be heard in the media. "Migizi" means "bald eagle" in the Ojibwe language, signifying communication, reporting and ethics.

"One of the greatest things as Indigenous people is we've always been storytellers," said Binesikwe Means, lead media instructor at MIGIZI.

While history has sought to erase Native

American voices from the narrative, MIGIZI is fighting to bring them back in.

MIGIZI's First Person Productions program trains youth in 21st century media skills, such as social media marketing, but the training doesn't end in the classroom. Participants partner with small businesses and produce marketing content through social media to help the businesses grow.

"We as an organization are always trying to find ways to partner with our community and come together to create solutions for problems that exist," Means said.

While the organization was founded to give Native American voices a role in media, its programs have since expanded. MIGIZI now helps at-risk youth pursue their interests and share their voices in various fields.

For example, it runs the Green Jobs Pathway program, which focuses on renewable energy and prepares youth to graduate from high school to secure a career in the green economy.

Although MIGIZI works with youth from diverse backgrounds, Native American values

are at the core of everything they do.

"We call ourselves the stewards of this land. It's a big part of our belief system that you never take from the earth without giving something back, and these kinds of ideals really tie into the whole green energy and green movement," Means said.

This summer, students have been picking sage and learning how to make traditional medicines. They have also gone into schools that have a large Native American student population to work with those students on cultural teaching and knowledge. One particular lesson they taught was called wigwam-a-tree, combining geometry with the ancestral knowledge of the wigwam.

Through all its programs, MIGIZI aims to help youth realize the power of their voice. Students are given credit for attending protests and writing about how that experience affected them. Many of them are also on the forefront of organizing youth-led protests, especially in the wake of recent events in Minneapolis.

MIGIZI continued on page 30

Youth Voice Challenge

THREESIXTY OPENED A call for youth to weigh in on recent events in the community. The #360YouthVoiceChallenge asked the following: Since Memorial Day, the world has witnessed the police murder of George Floyd, plus the local and global protests of Floyd's killing, police brutality against African Americans and racism. Share your thoughts on one of these specific prompts:

- **Self-care:** What methods of self-care help you navigate these traumatic times?
- **Storytelling:** Share a story surrounding these events that you feel is absent in most media coverage.
- **Community building:** Describe two or three ways your peers can be involved to create a more just and equal future.
- **Reflection:** Write a letter to someone (friend, relative, group, your future self, etc.) describing the recent events' impact on you.

See a collection of stories we received and engage with more on our website.

The next #360YouthVoiceChallenge deadline is November 15. Learn more at threesixty.stthomas.edu.

A Letter to My Past Self

Olivia Sorenson
Concordia Academy

Dear past self,

Racial injustice has been a problem around the world for decades, but in 2020 the death of an unarmed black man will change everything. On May 25, 2020, George Floyd will be the victim of homicide due to the carelessness of a Minneapolis police officer. Floyd will be suspected of using a counterfeit \$20 bill, and when officers arrive the situation will quickly escalate. Officers will pin Floyd to the ground, and one officer, Derek Chauvin, will kneel on

Floyd's neck for eight minutes and 15 seconds, causing him to go into cardiopulmonary arrest due to lack of oxygen and blood flow, which will result in Floyd's death. The video taken by bystanders will quickly go viral and just a few days later protests will begin.

Over the next several days protest and riots will continue. It will eventually get to the point where people are so outraged they refuse to stop until they are heard and changes are made. The National Guard will be called in and only then will things begin to calm down. At first, it might be scary—a video of the National Guard shooting rubber bullets at people sitting on their front porch will go viral, and you will begin to realize how serious

the situation is.

Parts of Minneapolis will be burned down, businesses will be closed, your mom will be sent home early from work because protests are getting close to her; and when you drive down the street, businesses will be boarded up and filled with art in remembrance of Floyd. Your city will also be placed under a mandatory curfew; and if you are out after that time, there will be consequences. This may be a little unsettling to see, but you will need to understand that people are upset, they have reached their breaking point; far too many African Americans have been murdered by police and it's time for a change.

At first, it may seem like this doesn't directly affect you, but you need to take time to reflect. Understand your privilege, understand you will never need to worry

about being looked at differently for the color of your skin. You will need to educate yourself, listen to your friends of color and do anything you can to help. Going to protests will possibly be dangerous, so if you do not feel safe that is OK, but that doesn't mean you get to just do nothing. This is your fight, too; you are an ally, and you stand with them. Sign petitions, repost images and talk about it. Spread awareness and never stop fighting for what you know is right. This may get overwhelming, but remember African Americans have been fighting this fight for decades and it's time something changes. Your voice will be heard. You may have friends who remain silent — encourage them to speak up because every voice matters. This fight is not over yet, so keep fighting for the African Americans in your life.

MURAL from page 10

have been killed by police officers. I wanted to make that a visual element of part of the mural and wanted to show that, you know, that there's support in the community."

Herrera described why his mural features many people with raised fists.

"The people ... don't have any sort of color or features so I wanted to make a statement," he said. "It's all of us, right? It's people, every

sort of denomination, every race."

Ever since Herrera was able to hold a pencil, art has empowered him to express his feelings in ways words could not.

"(Artwork) really allows you to ... get involved within yourself and also allows you to process information differently," Herrera said.

"I hope people use their creative talents and skills to bring awareness to whatever

they're passionate about. I think that you can truly use art as an amplifier," he said. "You can use any skill to amplify what you feel passionate about is right and that's what I think that social justice is all about."

Herrera frequently shares his most recent work about spreading awareness of social injustice, immigration and the environment on social media. His Instagram account is @cadexherrera.

Herrera hopes artists of all kinds will deliver their unique messages.

"It's more important than ever that you get the word out there because the more people start talking about the things that they're seeing happening, the more we can consolidate that information and amplify it," he said. "This is what's happening; we need change."

Thanks, Mom, for Joining Me

Indigo Davitt-Liu
Fair Downtown School

Dear Ma,

I just wanted to say thank you for taking me out to Lake Street and Hiawatha after the uprising. It was there where we saw the raw human emotion that occurs after tragedies—we saw the graffiti, we saw the trash, we saw the burning buildings, and we saw the conversation. It is where I saw the destruction and resilience of the community. We eventually ended up at the memorial site, leaving flowers and prayers, along with many others who left in grief and had already started to heal the land.

I've been out to the memorial many times, just as you have. You said, "My experience is different every time I visit." I understand the sentiment. The second time I came to the memorial, I saw volunteers cooking, artists creating and poets speaking. It reminded me of the community festivals that filled my childhood summers in North Minneapolis. Seeing art, people and community generated

around the memorial was all evidence that the memorial, and therefore the movement, would be a permanent fixture of Minnesota. I haven't been out recently, though. I'm scared of seeing the memorial diminishing, scared that the uprising we thought was happening was a release of pent-up anger and all the "successes" were just lip service. I suppose this may just be the disappointment due to the naive optimism of youth. And of course, our community is resilient and deeper than a single event.

Ma, you once said that "becoming anti-racist is a series of awakenings." I hope this provided the beginning of awakenings for generations of white people. I hope the words shared during protests stick in the memories of our generation.

Finally, Ma, I hope this history is recorded. I hope the slight disorganizations (i.e. the times the mic cut out) are documented next to the beauty of everyone involved. I hope in the future we'll be able to look into archives and find the stories people shouted into bullhorns, the stories shared atop a quickly put together stage and the words we chanted together with our fists in the air.

Collage: My Expression of Self-Care

Allison Brodin
Mounds View High School

THIS IMAGE DISPLAYS my version of self-care, in a sense. I am not able to attend any protests or work to make change in person, as I am not able to risk contracting COVID-19. This is because I see my grandparents often and wish to keep them safe. I take action from home through petitions, fundraisers, informing others and making this collage. These times as a whole cause me a lot of stress, and when I am stressed, I like to piece together images from magazines, college brochures that I receive and various other images I receive in the mail. I find it calming to cut out the images, place them and piece them together. In the wake of the

protests and Black Lives Matter movement going on right now, I have started to put this calming method to good use. I began piecing together collages with beauty, uplifting words and a diverse array of people in the images. I wanted to try to show that people of color have a place in pieces of art, especially due to the underrepresentation of Black, Indigenous and people of color in art. As of right now, I am slowly piecing together this collage on top of paper (so that the collages can be moved) that I have put on a wall in my room. Eventually, I will move these images somewhere that others will be able to see them. Until then I will keep the images on my wall as I continue to add to it.

Click [here](#) to see Allison's collage!

A Journal of Being Black in America

Qwame (beau) Martin
Cristo Rey Jesuit High School

A 12-YEAR-OLD SAID, "I just want to live, God protect me." I can relate to this, especially nowadays when I've had to realize I actually have to coexist with white supremacists, racists, and people who feed into the ignorance of stereotypes and stigmas. It's sad to say, but this is a never-ending battle. This exact "war" happened 66 years ago, but we don't learn about it and talk about it as much as we should. But most of all, I'm not a spokesperson for Black/African American/mixed people nationally. In fact, that's no

one's job. I just want to be able to go in the store without being followed around. I don't want to fight for MY history to be taught in schools or be asked what my opinion is when the next innocent Black guy gets killed and people pretend to value my opinion for the 2.5 seconds until the #PoliceBrutality or #BlackLivesMatter trend is over. I'm Black, it's not a trend, nor is it a struggle. Don't get me wrong, being Black in America is a struggle, but being Black isn't a struggle. So, next time an innocent Black person is killed by the police, don't repeatedly ask me how I feel, because my answer will be, "That could've been me!" And it's a constant reminder that I am being hunted like a prey in this country.

Reflecting on the Latino Perspective

Evan Odegard
Nova Classical Academy

SINCE THE MURDER of George Floyd in May, communities across the country and world have come together to protest racism and police brutality in unprecedented numbers. As one of the United States' largest and most diverse minority groups, the Latino community has overwhelmingly shown its support for the Black Lives Matter movement. As a Latino, I have seen several examples of our community stepping up for equality in the past months. Even though many Latinos have stood in solidarity with anti-racism, several problems still exist within our community that need to be addressed. The most obvious of these issues to anyone outside the Latino community are related to racism against Latinos, such as mass deportations and human rights abuses at ICE detention centers. Even though these issues are important and deserve recognition, it is equally important to recognize the rampant anti-Black attitudes within the Latino community. Because racism against Latinos receives much more attention and media coverage than issues within our community, it is necessary that Latinos act to educate each other on racism and eradicate anti-Black attitudes.

Latin America's history with racism looks different than that of the U.S. Since the European discovery of the Americas, more enslaved Africans were brought to Latin America and the Caribbean than to the United States. As slavery was banned

throughout the 1800s, many of these societies mixed and integrated, leaving a heavy African influence on many countries.

However, the legacy of racism also endured, leaving people of Afro-Latino heritage disadvantaged. Along with racism against Black Latinos came a culture of colorism, where lighter-skinned people continue to be favored for advertising, modeling and other opportunities. Even though at this point the majority of Latinos are multiracial, racism and colorism are still widely accepted across Latin America.

With these attitudes so prevalent in Latin American society, many immigrants bring anti-Blackness with them to the United States. It is common to find many Latinos using the N-word and other racist language, especially in younger generations. Even this summer when the Black Lives Matter movement began to gain more awareness, many Latinos complained that the same attention wasn't being given to our issues. But police brutality and racism ARE our issues. Supporting Black Lives Matter doesn't take away from our efforts, but actually supports our struggle for equality for all. Many people within our community don't understand the simple fact that oppression is not a competition. Trying to prove that one group has it worse than the other is not an effective way to eliminate systems of oppression and gain equality. What's needed right now is solidarity in the face of challenges to the rights of our communities. The only way to end oppression and racism is to do it together.

Food Is a Human Right

IN THE MIDDLE of a pandemic and economic downturn, food scarcity is growing in the Twin Cities. More people are hungry, and charitable food distribution is at an all-time high, according to Emily Eddy White, director of development and marketing at The Food Group.

“Food is a human right,” said Eddy White. This mantra fuels the activity of the nonprofit organization, which has been fighting hunger throughout 30 counties in Minnesota and Wisconsin since 1976. But the need right now is greater than ever, she said.

Eddy White, who has been with [The Food Group](#) since 2006, said she has seen a heightened state of need this year. Since April, the



Bobby Verhey
St. Paul
Academy

organization has been providing double the amount of food as normal. Recent events have led to new partnerships with organizations like Second Harvest Heartland, the City of Minneapolis and Twin Cities Food Justice to distribute food in neighborhoods such as Powderhorn Park, the site of a growing camp for the homeless, and near the place of George Floyd’s murder. The killing of Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer, which occurred on May 25, sparked protests and violence that



Volunteers from City Church pack 1,300 lbs of harina de maiz (yellow corn flour) for partners at Community Emergency Service. Harina de maiz is a staple for making many culturally connected foods like tamales, pupusas, arepas, and tortillas.

damaged local grocery stores.

Access to nutritious foods and fresh produce is becoming a challenge for many, Eddy White said, because of “grocery stores having

to close, restaurants, places that people in those neighborhoods really depended on for food.”

The Food Group has also responded to demand created by

the pandemic.

Normally, the organization relies on groups of up to 50 volunteers to sort and pack food in the warehouse **FOOD GROUP** *continued on page 30*

The Food Group is rising to the challenge of meeting people’s needs during the pandemic.

FOOD IS A source of energy we need in order to get through our day. People have been more in need of food since the pandemic started compared to the past few years.

“Food connects us all. It can help bring people together as a community,” said Emily Eddy White, the development and marketing director for The Food Group.

“There’s a really huge need for food, and for quality of food, and community support is really making that happen,” she said. “So people are giving their time and support. And people being aware, too, and wanting to do something about it.”

The Food Group is a nonprofit focused on providing nutritious and culturally specific foods for those experiencing food insecurity. One way this food is gathered is by being rescued and harvested from farmers markets and farms. The Food Group also partners with food shelves and



Gwynnevere Vang
Tartan Senior
High School

meal programs to provide healthy and nutritious items to people in need.

“And it’s healthy food, too. It’s not just any food, it’s the foods that people are familiar with, it’s the foods that they need and that’s going to help their bodies grow as well, because there’s a huge intersection between health and hunger,” White said.

The core values of The Food Group are nutrition and equity, which is why organizers focus on providing culturally specific foods that are familiar and fit different cultural dietary needs. Imagine a traditional, ethnic meal your family makes: how it smells and tastes,



In response to COVID-19, The Food Group donated foods commonly found in East African dishes and distributed them in partnership with Youth and Family Circle. They reached 480 families throughout Ramsey County.

what it looks like, how it made you feel and why you enjoyed it. Without specific ingredients, that meal would not have been made. There is a wide variety of foods that cross cultural lines and are easily accessible for people to purchase.

“I think we still have a consistent response, but we’re in need of volunteers right now, so that’s definitely one of the things that we’re trying to focus on,” White said.

Because of the pandemic, it is especially hard to safely provide

food in a large community area. The Food Group has taken this situation seriously by working hard to continue distributing food to people in need. They’ve had volunteers come in groups of 10, instead of the usual 50, which brings the efficiency level down as the need for food goes up. Whether the food is delivered or distributed, The Food Group needs volunteers to give them a helping hand.

“We definitely have a whole plan for how you communicate to your supporters to keep them engaged,

and to let them know about the impact that they’re having as supporters and in the community, and (to tell them about) the work that’s happening,” White said.

Getting food to people is just as important as putting the food in safe packages. The Food Group uses its website, newsletters, news spots, events, social media, and its blog to communicate what it is and what it does to help those facing food inequality — like its Fare For All and Twin Cities Mobile Market programs, which make nutritious foods more affordable and accessible through food distribution in the community.

“It’s the foundation for people to be able to thrive and focus on other areas of life,” White said. “I think a lot about how is it that we have community members that don’t have the food that they need and how do we make sure that everyone has that.”

This pandemic presents many challenges, but The Food Group is committed to providing food through support in donations and volunteering so everyone gets the food they need. Check out volunteer opportunities at [The Food Group: Get Involved](#).

Food Forests: A Sustainable Approach to Hunger

AS A 19-YEAR-OLD environmental studies student, Kim Rockman was diagnosed with a disease called chronic fatigue syndrome. For two years, she had been thinking about sustainability and the impact she had on the planet. She saw a connection between her diagnosis and her passion.

“When I got sick, it kind of led me down the continued path of, ‘OK, something’s wrong with my body, but how does that connect with things that are going on in the environment?’” she said.

Rockman is now the executive director of Project Food Forest, an organization that works to “empower people through agro-forestry, design, and education,” according to the mission statement on its [website](#).

But what exactly is a food forest? How does it work? A food forest uses edible plants, fruits and vegetables that are planted in a way that mimics the ecosystem. It’s designed so that the food forest returns each year. Therefore, it becomes a diverse ecosystem that



Sara Gaines
Homeschool

not only helps the community but also different species of animals.

Rockman became involved with Project Food Forest in 2017 when she had the opportunity to create a public food forest where she grew up in Luverne, Minnesota, about 3 1/2 hours southwest of the Twin Cities. In February 2020, Rockman took over as executive director after managing the food forest, which is called Prairie Ally and located in Luverne.

During the pandemic, Project Food Forest has been affected by the loss of volunteers and group events that help maintain the food forest. But Rockman said they’ve also been experiencing lots of generosity. Project Food Forest partners with the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, the University of Minnesota,

FOOD FOREST *continued on page 30*



Prairie Ally Outdoor Center, a Project Food Forest host site in Luverne, MN.

COURTESY DIANA HENSLEY

By mimicking ecosystems, Project Food Forest takes a sustainable approach to fighting hunger.

KIMBERLY ROCKMAN ENCOURAGES everyone to participate in a food forestry initiative: “When (people) recognize that power within themselves, that they are changemakers, that they are capable of living intentionally and learning and failing and being forgiven, that’s it. That’s where it goes.”

Rockman, president and executive director of Project Food Forest, said food forestry takes an unconventional approach to cultivation. The organization was launched in 2016 in the southwestern Minnesota town of Luverne and serves neighboring communities throughout Minnesota, South Dakota and Iowa.

“We focus primarily on perennial plants, which just means they come back year after year,” Rockman said. According to Project Food Forest’s website, “a food forest ... is a



Abigail Hayes
Wake Early College of
Health and Sciences,
Raleigh, NC

diverse planting of edible plants that attempts to mimic the ecosystems and patterns found in nature.”

The cultivation done by the organization parallels the many layers of a rainforest, according to Rockman. This type of plant harvesting can meet the needs of the community in ways you “don’t normally see with agriculture,” according to Rockman.

Project Food Forest does much more than try to fulfill the nutritional needs of the community. Rockman said, “(It) offers a way to connect people ... across sectors, across ages,

and the environment, she knew Project Food Forest could turn her dreams into action — especially with the help of partnering organizations.

Rockman has had a passion for helping people since she was 17. When she was diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome in her college days, it made her question how much of what she was dealing with could be attributed to her environment. Both of these things led her to Project Food Forest.

“I really started to have an interest in sustainability and another recognition of my impact on the planet,” Rockman said. “(My illness) led me down the continued path of, ‘OK, something is wrong with my body, but how does that connect with things that are going on in the environment?’”

Not only did she find herself committed to exploring her environment, she later realized the people around her were not necessarily gifted with the opportunity to do the same.

Having grown up in a small town and moving into metro areas, she said she noticed a lot of people “didn’t necessarily have a connection to nature or know where their food came from.”

With her love for nature coupled with the resolve to bridge the gap between people

and the environment, she knew Project Food Forest could turn her dreams into action — especially with the help of partnering organizations.

A “beautiful opportunity” came into fruition with the help of the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. Its contribution allowed Project Food Forest to extend helping hands to other regions.

Partnering organizations, such as Prairie Ally and A Healthier Southwest, work alongside the community to encompass the core values Rockman adheres to within Project Food Forest.

“We’ve partnered with organizations that do a variety of things; it could be for social equity or health equity,” Rockman said. “They provide physical activity, nutrition from the food that’s grown there, mental health benefits of overall enhanced well-being.”

Through Project Food Forest, willing volunteers and community members, Rockman can watch a fruitful harvest yield both edible landscapes, and a haven for all to come together in unity with each other and with nature.

Digital Media Arts Camp Explores Racism as a Public Health Crisis

These stories were produced by high school students during ThreeSixty Journalism's 2020 Digital Media Arts Camp, in partnership with the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and Padilla. Health equity was the theme, with a focus on racism as a public health issue. The collection includes audio, video, social media, graphic design/illustrations and interactive storytelling pieces. Students were supported by volunteer mentors

Click links in headlines to view, engage and interact with our [digital media stories!](#)

from the University of St. Thomas, Star Tribune, Belmont Partners, City Pages, Report for America, Under-Told Stories, TPT and WCCO.

Interactive: Project Food Forest

Dedeepya Guthikonda
Edina High School

AS PART OF Digital Media Arts Camp, I covered a story on Project Food Forest, a nonprofit in Rock County, Minnesota.

Project Food Forest offers a community garden that educates people on healthy eating, where anyone can give or take as much as they need from the garden.

Rock County, Minnesota, is a food desert, with only one accessible grocery store, which makes the work that Project Food Forest does even more urgent. Food insecurity disproportionately affects people of color; Project Food Forest seeks to bring together people from all backgrounds and give them the resources they need, especially in communities like Rock County, where the majority of residents are white. This was my first time creating an interactive digital story, so figuring out the different ways that can look and balancing my writing with visuals was new and challenging. I also needed to find different statistics and information on Rock County for this project, and with my mentor's help, I have two new resources under

my belt that I know I will be using for years to come.

Project Food Forest is set in a rural area. I had never heard of Rock County before, and seeing the steps that smaller communities are taking to improve equity within their region made me realize the urgency of the issue within communities that often go unnoticed.

I was also able to learn more about how the pandemic has affected communities of color in the state, creating a more urgent need for food security. There has been a lot in the news lately, and working closely with a community with racial disparities and an organization that is working to improve health equality gave me a new perspective on racism as a public health issue. I was able to learn how health equity presents itself in different ways through my classmates' projects.

There was my story about food security, but health equity is present in so many different aspects of our lives, from the food we eat to the sports teams we cheer on and the schools we attend. Digital Media Academy introduced me to racism as a public health issue, and left me inspired by the work that is being done and more aware of all the work there still is left for us to do.

Video: Fighting for Justice

Aaliyah Demry
ThreeSixty Alumna

SITTING DOWN WITH Dr. Abdul Omari, who advises businesses on equity issues to create a better future for Minnesota's youth of color, our interview shifted to a conversation we all wish to never have about racism. But with everything going on in the world, including the murder of George Floyd, it was a conversation that was impossible to skip over, especially when talking with someone involved in the community like Omari.

We discussed how youth have stepped up and have been a huge voice within the uprising. Since protests grew across the nation, people have had clashes with law enforcement officers. Omari shared how this will not only affect youth physically, but also mentally.

Not only are we fighting against racism, but COVID-19, as well. Omari encourages people of color to take the virus seriously.

"You know, we're in the middle of a global pandemic that physically is impacting Black and brown people at significantly higher numbers than white people," Omari said.

We wrapped our conversation with how to create change and see positive outcomes. Everyone needs to be involved and be a partner.

Omari said, "I am excited, and I am energized by youth involvement." And, he's excited to see what comes next.

Reflecting on this camp, ThreeSixty Journalism looked very different from the past.

I was used to my "camp routine," from getting up in the morning, picking out my outfit and driving to the St. Thomas campus listening to my fire playlist. In 2020 that all changed. Everything went virtual.

Going into the day one I was nervous because I couldn't be face to face with my source and I feel you can bring the best out of a person when you are face to face. But with the support of my mentor and ThreeSixty staff, by the end of the day I felt more than well prepared.

Staff and my mentors checked up on me throughout the day and helped with questions I had. My mentor, Simeon Lancaster of the UnderTold Stories Project (see page 8), played a very big part in my project in terms of technology.

He taught me so much in just a week. He helped me edit my video over Zoom, which is extremely hard. He gave me helpful tips for the interview and how to make your source come out with really good quotes. He made me feel comfortable enough to ask any questions; I even felt he truly was as passionate about the story as I was.

Knowing that this camp was pretty different this year, my story came out great and gave me a lot of independent work time to see if I really enjoy journalism. Which I do!

I would do this virtual ThreeSixty camp all over again.

Video: The SEAD Project

Evan Odegard
Nova Classical Academy

THE SEAD PROJECT is an organization committed to uplifting and empowering Southeast Asian diaspora communities through storytelling.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, SEAD has done a tremendous amount of work to support Southeast Asian communities in the Twin Cities, from distributing face masks and hand sanitizer to creating colorfully illustrated health messages in several languages.

The SEAD Project's work also acknowledges the role of racism as a public health issue, which has been brought to light

recently by the pandemic. SEAD has helped serve as a resource for Southeast Asians during the recent spike in racism against Asian Americans and recently distributed translations of social justice terms during the Black Lives Matter protests.

While creating this story, I not only learned about the great work SEAD is doing, but also about the ability of one group to help a community in so many different ways.

SEAD's work is important because it highlights and uplifts a unique and powerful set of voices, telling the story of the Southeast Asian diaspora up to the present day.

I am thankful to have had the opportunity to get to know about SEAD, and I hope my story does a good job presenting what I learned.

Social Media: Main Street Project

Fran Aravena
Wayzata High School

FOR DIGITAL MEDIA Arts Camp 2020, I had the pleasure of learning about an organization called the Main Street Project, which is located in Northfield, Minnesota, and dedicated to helping better the environment and connect the community.

Health equity is defined as giving the opportunity to everyone to achieve their highest level of health, according to the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. Main Street Project encompasses this because of how extensive its work and dedication to the community in Northfield is.

Main Street Project primarily helps immigrants come together and assure they have access to a healthy source of food. Not only does it work with those who already have farming experience, Main Street rents land and holds training classes.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Main Street Project has been helping those who have been affected by food insecurity by donating food and redistributing resources. This helps create a sense of security and reassurance in the community.

Overall, when writing any article, challenges are bound to show up. The

biggest challenge I had for this story was getting interviews completed. However, it was a good learning experience for me. Another challenge was figuring out what program to use to make the overall video and making sure it wasn't overwhelming but still engaging.

The biggest takeaway I had was that patience and adaptability are necessary in journalism. Sources are not always available and you have to learn how to still make a story with what you get. Making videos takes a while, too, so more respect to news sources trying their hand at social media.

I want readers to know that a lot of effort goes into literally the smallest things, and often the small details that you miss might be what makes or breaks a story. And to readers who are thinking of doing something like a social media story, or really anything in journalism, be unique and bold.

Telling this story has definitely taught me to be more active in my community, as well as more conscious about issues like health disparities.

Northfield is only an hour drive from me, yet I never knew that it existed, much less that there was a large community of Hispanics who live in a food desert. Being more connected helps me stay close to my roots while also helping combat such major issues.

Graphic Design/Illustration: Dream of Wild Health

Kennedy Rance
Patrick Henry High School

"KILL THE INDIAN in him and save the man" was U.S. Army Capt. Richard Pratt's motto. Pratt believed in stripping Native Americans of their tradition to save them from being "savages."

Pratt's motto became a catalyst for The Trail of Tears, a series of forced migration spanning from 1831 to 1877 that relocated around 60,000 Native Americans.

Native American women, unable to carry anything, sewed their indigenous heirloom seeds into their clothing, preserving their cultural heritage.

A century later, Dream of Wild Health, an intertribal nonprofit organization serving the Native American communities of the Twin Cities, grows and harvests Indigenous heirloom seeds, gifted by Indigenous seed keepers and farmers.

Its mission is to restore health and well-being in the Native American community by recovering knowledge of and access to healthy Indigenous foods, medicines and lifestyles.

According to Pew Research Center, racism is a health crisis. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Native American communities in the Twin Cities lived in food deserts.

"There's always been a lack of Indigenous foods," said Neely Synder, Dream of Wild Health executive director. "We're working on restoring

an Indigenous relationship with the land."

Dream of Wild Health is combating racism by leading several workshops in its community to educate youth on agriculture, focusing on food sovereignty and the medicinal use of food.

Dream of Wild Health is decreasing health issues, promoting healthy lifestyles and cultivating essential relationships between the youth and the earth.

Dream of Wild Health recently tripled the acreage of its farm in Hugo, Minnesota, in order to provide more food access to its community.

On the farm, youth learn the importance of prayer and gratitude.

"We may not be a part of a church but we have our practices and traditions that we carry forward," Synder said.

Dream of Wild Health has also adapted to a virtual model, including a cooking workshop led by Brian Yazzie.

As an American of Ghanaian and Nigerian descent, I practice and take pride in my cultural traditions.

Yes, my culture has been exploited and disenfranchised; but we as a people have transformed beauty from tragedy.

I admire and respect Dream of Wild Health's mission to connect and maintain its traditions.

Not only is Dream of Wild Health an organization, it's a movement reclaiming cultural traditions, narratives, and furthering the legacy of Indigenous and Native American people for the next seven generations.

Photo Essay: Serving Our Elders

Emil Liden
Minnetonka High School

BRIAN YAZZIE is a chef at the Minneapolis American Indian Center and runs the Elder Meal Program, which feeds the Native American elderly community around the Twin Cities.

I had the honor of meeting Brian, along with chefs Vanessa Beshka Casillas (Ho-Chunk) and Ben Shendo (Cochiti/

Jemez), who started the Elder Meal Program back in March.

During my visit to the center, I was able to capture Brian and Vanessa in action as they prepared food. Brian's work with the Elder Meal Program is important for many reasons.

First, the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected the Native American community across the country and especially here in the Twin Cities.

Second, the elderly are at a higher risk of death from COVID-19 and are among the

most vulnerable when it comes to this deadly virus.

Lastly, the Native American tradition of caring for the elderly is something that Brian and those at the Minneapolis American Indian Center hold dear to their hearts.

Moreover, there is a community-oriented mindset when it comes to service that is so present at the center.

This is perhaps what was most moving during my time at the center. Not only did Brian and the other chefs hold great respect for their elders, they also felt a duty as young people to take care of those who cared for them. It is this sort of mindset that I feel is

most compelling when I tell this story; it is what I feel is most important for the viewer to take away.

I want to thank Brian and his team of chefs for welcoming me into their kitchen and allowing me to hear and photograph their story.

Through this photo essay, I want to recognize the incredible work that everyone at the Minneapolis American Indian Center is doing for their community. I encourage everyone to follow their example and take action to help those around you who are struggling during these difficult times.

For more stories from **DIGITAL MEDIA ARTS CAMP** go to page 29.

Photo Essay: Community Comes Together



EMIL LIDEN

Distanced prayer: COVID-19 has brought communities together, but in different ways than before the pandemic. St. Therese Catholic Church in Deephaven held an outdoor Mass in early May. ThreeSixty reporter Emil Liden captured the action for his photo essay. “It was incredible to see so many people come together during a difficult time,” he said.

Podcast: This is America. Speak English.



COURTESY DEDEEPPYA GUTHIKONDA

Dedeepya Guthikonda produced a podcast episode called “This is America. Speak English.” In the podcast, she shares her family’s experience with English as immigrants and talks to University of California San Diego linguist Ana Celia Zentella, who provides insight into the ever-growing and changing role of language in today’s society.

Video Diary: Big Family, Close Corridors

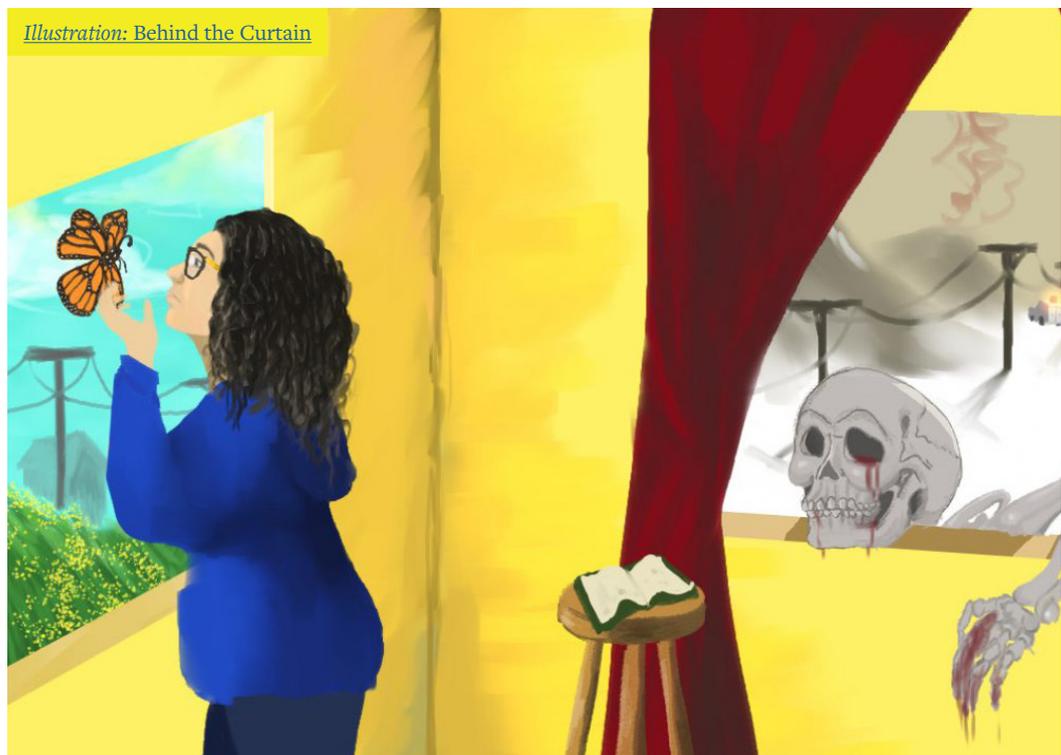


COURTESY NALANI VANG

Nalani Vang put together a video diary during the pandemic while she was spending the stay-at-home order with 24 people in her family. “Love, hatred, jealousy and guilt are everyday emotions that many of us carry. But, during this difficult time in quarantine, I have valued the simplicity of love in my family,” she said. “I will always remember to never take my family or anything for granted. I am gratified with joy and praise from my family every day.”

ThreeSixty students participated in a special **Virtual News Team** to creatively cover how they are impacted by the pandemic. Click to listen, watch and engage with the multimedia collection of [COVID-19 coverage](#).

Illustration: Behind the Curtain



JACQUELINE MARTINEZ

ThreeSixty reporter Jacqueline Martinez created “Behind the Curtain” to express her feelings during Minnesota’s COVID-19 stay-at-home order.

Photo Essay: Quiet Covid Nights



COURTESY EVAN ODEGARD

“My neighborhood in St. Paul has experienced the closure of businesses and public spaces that so many communities across the United States and the world have also gone through. I decided to photograph some of these changes in my community,” Evan Odegard said. “This story helped me learn more about how my community was dealing with an enormous problem it had not seen coming, leaving a deep personal impact. When this is over and my community returns to normal life, I look forward to finding these photographs and remembering how, in the face of a global crisis, my community found solidarity.”

ThreeSixty Launches Challenge During Pandemic

High school students were challenged to write a weekly reflection in April, and judges picked the top responses to publish.



Prompt No. 1:
Write a letter to your future self about what you learned during this time.

Emil Liden
Minnetonka High School

Dear me,

As a forewarning, I recommend reading this letter in a public place such as a coffee shop. Not because I like coffee shops, but because when I wrote this letter, they were all closed and I had to write it while I was stuck at home. So maybe, for both of our sakes, get out of the house while you can. Jokes aside, you and I have had some pretty exciting moments: our first time driving, that time we crossed the Brooklyn Bridge, and even the day we woke up at 2 a.m. and couldn't go back to bed so we watched YouTube the whole morning.

Those times were fun! But remember that time when life slowed down? And I mean REALLY slowed down. Remember being stuck at home because the world was on lockdown for the coronavirus? How school moved online, and we spent a lot of time washing the dishes because we just felt so bored? That time when those coffee shops were closed? Yeah, this is that time. Life changed so quickly. One day you were jumping from school to club meeting to soccer practice, and then it just stopped.

But while your life slowed down, someone else's stayed the same. Awita had a simple routine. You'd get her up in the morning and take her to the bathroom because she couldn't walk on her own. After breakfast came a seemingly endless day sitting in a chair all by herself in an empty house with

nothing to do but watch TV. She would wait all day for the half-hour we'd spend as a family praying the rosary together: the limited human contact she had all day. Then, you'd helped her back into bed. The next day would be the same old thing. And even though the world was on lockdown, she continued her life like nothing had changed. While the whole world's routines changed during quarantine, hers didn't. By some odd chance, we became like her. We stayed at home every day and distracted ourselves any way we could. Just like she would do, we would do.

I think for the first time in our life we learned a valuable and very powerful tool: empathy. By going through what she went through, we stepped in her shoes. We learned what it was like to be stuck at home with nothing to do just waiting for the day when we could go out again. It's easy to assume what other people are going through, but once you go through it, you will never think that way again. Whenever you have a situation in front of you where you have to step into someone else's shoes and look at things from where they are standing, I want you to remember your grandmother. I want you to remember the time that you felt her pain and her longing for something more than just sitting in front of the TV all day with nothing else to do. Put yourself in the other person's shoes. And if Awita is still around, give her a hug for me.

Sincerely,
You

Dedeepya Guthikonda
Edina High School

IF YOU'RE READING this, you are probably out and about, excited to see the everyday places you've missed and the people who have been relegated to faces on a phone screen for the past few months. If we're being honest, you're probably feeling like you've missed more than you gained. You've missed the little, the big, everything that makes your life what it is. School, which was once made up of long, exhausting days you dreaded, is now something you're looking forward to.

There's no doubt it's easier than harder to move on. Because now, everything has become something you're excited for. This is what I want you to know: hold onto this feeling. Remember what it feels like to be grateful for the little things. Hug the people you've missed and tell them what they mean to you. When your teachers teach—learn. When your parents lecture you—listen. Because now you know. You know how easily

your life can slip out of control. How easily you can lose the people you love, and how a seemingly far-away headline on the news can become the reality of your community. Value the everyday normal in your life and be just as excited to see people you've missed as you are right now, every day.

Always remember the good that came out of this. From the meals made for the homeless, the masks sewn for the doctors and nurses, to the car-parade birthday party thrown for your next-door neighbor: know that the darkest times are when we search for light. Light that came in the form of birthday cards sent to the elderly, the teacher who came to help through the window and toddlers crashing Zoom calls. Cherish everything silly, kind and good-hearted. Thank your teachers, your doctors and grocery store workers. Think about all the strangers helping strangers, and be more open to helping anyone and everyone in your own life.

Carry this spirit with you and remember to spread the good during good times, too.

“I think for the first time in our life we learned a valuable and very powerful tool: empathy.”

—Emil Liden



Prompt No. 2:
 What does self-care mean to you?
 How does social media influence it?

Tristan Xiong
 ThreeSixty Alumna

ON A SURFACE level, self-care is a way to take care of yourself, but it's more than that. Self-care is a personalized practice of caring for oneself. This takes form in many ways, such as working out at the gym, taking care of your hygiene or just sleeping in. Self-care also means taking care of your mind as well as your body. In my opinion, this is a part of self-care that can be forgotten and/or not done right. Sometimes, not done at all. There is no right way or wrong way to take care of yourself, it is up to the individual to make that decision. However, there may be better ways of taking care of yourself you might not be considering. This is what I've learned about myself and how my habits affected my self-care.

In the past, what I considered self-care included doing the things I enjoy most, which was watching anime and reading fan fiction. After all, the main purpose of anime, television and fan fiction is entertainment. I started doing these activities as a way to take a break from my homework. However, doing what you like is not self-care! It is a routine for a reason. Having your self-care activity in your schedule makes your actions

intentional. You do your self-care activity knowing that it will help you recalibrate and focus yourself or just take a break. It is the intention of doing these activities that differentiate taking a break and procrastination.

When I watched anime or read fan fiction, I was not doing these activities with that state of mind or with those intentions. They began to negatively affect me. Instead of doing them in order to take care of myself and take a break, I did them with a sense of procrastination and ignored my priorities. I got sucked into the internet, and I unintentionally started practicing bad habits. There is a line between taking a break from your work and doing something to procrastinate. What I thought of as self-care was not helping me.

To summarize, self-care is a personalized practice or a routine people do to take care of themselves, both mind and body. Your habits greatly affect how you go about doing your own self-care practice. No one knows for sure what the right way is or the wrong way is to take care of yourself. I've heard this from adults in my life, but this means more now that I've realized it myself. Only you can judge for yourself if what you are doing is helping you or harming you, and only you can decide what self-care means to yourself.

positivity in our virtual spaces and left hopeful about the next generation of storytellers, critical thinkers and leaders. Though many of us are in isolation working and learning from home, ThreeSixty does not feel alone in the work we do. Our strong community is our best asset, and this time is a big reminder of it. This magazine is truly a labor of love, and you will be able to see why as you continue to engage with our stories.

Enjoy reading the magazine and be sure to share with others!

Evan Odegard
 Nova Classical Academy

UNTIL RECENTLY, I'd been a bit confused by the idea of self-care. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, self-care wasn't much more to me than a phrase plastered across social media, written in colorful letters in reposted illustrations on my classmates' Instagram stories. It was a hashtag buried under perfect pictures of influencers enjoying healthy meals, expensive skin routines and an out-of-reach lifestyle full of smiles and pastel colors. My health teacher had mentioned it briefly, promising that our class would return to the topic after we came back from spring break. Of course, that never happened. I never sat at my desk and listened to my teacher give a lecture on the importance of caring for yourself properly. However, I did end up learning about self-care, implementing certain strategies and understanding how it can change lives.

My understanding of self-care didn't change on its own. On a regular Sunday afternoon this March, the way I lived my life took a quick turn. When I saw Gov. Tim Walz announce the closure of Minnesota schools for two weeks, I was happy at first. This break would take away quite a bit of stress,

allow me to procrastinate a few assignments even further and give me time to focus on other important parts of my life. I soon realized that this break was more than an escape from stress—it was an opportunity to change my life for the better. I started looking into self-care, something I had previously passed off as a meaningless trend. I began working out regularly, eating healthy and getting out into nature more often. With no other activities to worry about, I realized how large a role technology and social media played in my life, so I cut back on my screen time. I devoted more time to reading, organizing my room and spending valuable social time with my family. I was able to spend much more time improving my skills in tennis, learning how to cook with my siblings and finally getting back to regularly taking lessons in Indonesian. I figured out that self-care was able to improve my life, and I regretted not having made these changes earlier. I am certain that this new lifestyle is the direct result of being quarantined, and I am sure that this time will change my life for the better.

a gentler voice.”

Curtis' Instagram stories are filled with animated renditions of her created by fans. Archived videos show her enthusiastically meeting grinning supporters, shouting at the camera, “These people are not underfilled!”

It's clear she has a passion and knack for creating content that spreads positivity and joy to a younger generation.

Follow Curtis on TikTok and Instagram @thekatcurtis.

TIKTOK from page 14

“You feel like a viral junkie,” she said. “And I think you have to fight that and remember the reason you're there in the first place.”

Using humor and accessible language such as “underfilled,” Curtis has been able to present serious information in a way that is easily digestible to her young fans, as well as her usual funny and funky content.

“I know I provide something that doesn't scare 9-year-olds but can also be informative,” she said. “I have the flexibility to give

EDITOR'S NOTE from page 5

#360YouthVoiceChallenge and programming on editorial writing during a national election.

Lastly, I want to thank the incredible volunteers, supporters and partners who made it possible for ThreeSixty to continue telling stories. ThreeSixty shifted to virtual programming quickly this spring. It was something completely new, but it forced staff to think creatively. It also brought us students and volunteers we may not have met otherwise. Everyone shared constructive

WRITING CHALLENGE



Prompt No. 3: How do you know what makes you, you?

Nalani Vang
Math and Science Academy

THE NAME NALANI, which means “the heavens” in Hawaiian, sparked my father’s interest from the start.

On Jan. 1, two miracles happened: the beginning of a new year and a new life.

When I was in grade school, I used to hate my name, Nalani, because no one could pronounce it. It was always marked wrong; I wished I had a more common name like Emma or Olivia. But I learned in junior high that there

was no common name. Every name is an identification tag that makes a person who they are. A signature is unique to you. I am thankful I realized the importance of my name and who it makes me. Every time I mention my name to others, I am filled with clouds of interest, beauty and exclusiveness.

Additionally, my middle name is of considerable significance to my life because I inherited it from my Hmong culture. My culture is a spiritual barrier around my life that protects and guides me through many impediments and achievements. Pakou Chi means “the

bright, golden flower.” Because my grandmother picked out this name, not only is it my destiny, but it is an exceptional value of mine that marks another uniqueness of my name. The mask of your name is the first thing that anybody will ever discover about you; it can characterize who you are and how you deem to be.

Moreover, my Hmong culture is also a significant factor in my identity. Growing up in a large family of 25 people and being the eldest niece in the family, I had to learn the family traditions, the past and what lies in the future. Hmong customs

prevail in various items of clothing, social organizations, festivals, language and marriage. The spiritual beings lie within yourself and, in the subconscious mind, lay a spiritual world that connects our strings. Education was also an essential event in a child’s life because our ancestors grew up in an impoverished society that didn’t allow for schooling. Therefore, the constant reminder of strict teachings and fast learning expanded on the idea of prospering in education to receive high-end jobs like doctors, lawyers, or engineers.

As a Hmong daughter, cleaning,

cooking and acquiring A’s in school were only a few examples of how proper a Hmong daughter should grow up to be. With the growing expansion of technology and the world we know today, the responsibilities are more flexible than they were in the past. The usual housewife act is shown on the faces and burden of our mothers before us. Until now, I have not recognized the love and care they have for us.

For this reason, we are here because of them. I am indebted to my family with all the support and wisdom they have contributed to me. My name is Nalani.



Prompt No. 4: How has your idea of community changed recently?

Evan Odegard
Nova Classical Academy

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC has changed every community it has touched. By shutting down businesses and isolating people in their homes, the outbreak has changed the way we interact and put life as we know it to an unexpected halt. These sudden changes have led me to appreciate what it means to be part of a community and have shaped my idea of what a community should be.

Before the coronavirus reached Minnesota, I was already seeing

images of communities around the world uniting in the face of an alarming crisis. Balconies in Italian cities were draped with banners reading “andrà tutto bene” — “everything will be alright.” Communities in Spain had come together around the song “Resistire,” a song from 1988 that has become the Spanish anthem of the coronavirus pandemic. Around the world, communities were making gestures of support for health care workers and others on the front line every day.

At first, I wasn’t seeing these large signs of community bonding in my neighborhood in St. Paul.

However, as time went by, I began to notice the small ways that members of my community were helping one another through the crisis. People started to find new ways to interact, from Zoom sessions to socially distanced walks. Walkers and bicyclists made room for each other on sidewalks and paths, opening up the ability to exercise outside without the risk of infection.

One moment that stood out to me was when a man took his saxophone to a street corner and performed music for the entire neighborhood. As I watched families gather 6 feet apart and listen to the free music, I realized

that it didn’t take a big moment like this to unite a community. We had been helping each other the entire time we’d been quarantined; and now that the entire community was together, standing on the same grass, listening to the same music, I realized how united we really were. I realized that no matter how long this crisis lasts, it cannot destroy the bond my community shares.

Because of the strength of this bond, I am sure that in the end, andrà tutto bene—everything will be alright.

Ahlani Thomas-Ceron
Cristo Rey Jesuit High School

I BELIEVE MY idea of community has changed recently, mainly because of the virus that has been going around. Before, I thought that our community wasn’t seen as one. I used to think that our community was a bit broken, and it still is.

But, after seeing how everyone had to come together to give thanks to doctors and nurses, while even helping each other through these hard times – it made me think that maybe our community was still helpful toward each other after all.

COLLEGE ESSAY BOOT CAMP

Kicking students' college essays into shape!

In College Essay Boot Camp, students use the fundamentals of writing to craft essays ready to submit to a college of their choice. ThreeSixty partnered with Cristo Rey Jesuit High School and Girls Inc. Eureka! for two sessions in the summer.

College Essay: Tackling Xenophobia

“DOG EATER!”

I turned around in my chair and met eyes with the blue-eyed boy who was now 3 inches away from my face. He slumped back into his chair with a grin, while a small audience of laughing boys surrounded him. Well if a reaction is what he's craving, then I'm not going to give him one. In that moment, I convinced myself that pride turned me away from that situation. But when I got home that day, I stared at myself in the bathroom mirror. I pulled back my eyes into slants with my fingers, which were now wet with tears. And now I knew



Chloe Chang
Girls Inc.
Eureka!

that in actuality, I had swallowed my pride. Fear of conflict and the sudden inability to stand up for myself weighed me down. At the end of that day in third grade, I felt like the loser in that situation and that somehow I let the blue-eyed boy win.

“How do Asian people name their kids? They throw a pot down the stairs!”

This time, four years later, I didn't need to turn around. This boy said it right in front of my face. The blond-haired boy was my friend. I laughed faintly, but I knew although I was not physically turning myself from the situation, that fear of conflict I had in elementary school was allowing me to turn a blind eye. But after a repetition of the same situation over the following weeks, my growing frustration finally sparked a new determination. I told myself, I am not going to be the loser this time. At the end of that day in seventh grade, I looked in the mirror at a face with no tears. Almost like a mantra, I rehearsed my lines of confrontation. The image of the determined girl in the mirror soon reflected reality. “How incredibly insensitive could you be to repeat these jokes?” I pieced together the blond-haired boy's words to craft an antagonizing identity for him. The audience surrounding us in the hallway arrived at the premature conclusion that he was racist.

Although a part of me felt that I left as the winner in that situation, I left it losing a friend, who was now vilified.

“Bat eater.”

I stared blankly at my phone screen. Under the video of an Asian influencer I came across a handful of the countless xenophobic comments, triggered by misconceptions of the cause of the COVID-19 pandemic. I could have easily turned away from the comments. All it took was 2 inches of scrolling. But the fear of conflict I had before was overcome by the headlines flashing in my mind.

I remembered the stories of the attempted murder of an Asian American family in Texas, the acid attack against a woman in Brooklyn, the accounts of verbal and physical harassment against people who look like me. Staying silent makes me a bystander to my own oppression. Yet, I knew my words needed to aim for unification and not condemnation. I did research, read articles

and anecdotes about the scapegoating of East Asians across the globe. I took the pivotal step and replied to as many comments as I could find. The successes of my initiative were statements of remorse and a new group of people who could spread the information I shared. In choosing to create discourse for understanding, to expand knowledge and sympathy, I became a voice for the Asian American experience.

Rather than building walls between conflicting perspectives, we must seek to crumble them. We often fail to engage in civil discourse, set off by our differences and courteous anxieties, either by avoiding it altogether or ostracizing each other. In the end, the civil project of a unified body doesn't call for winners or losers, heroes or villains. I continue to educate, not berate, and seek to start the conversations for those who feel voiceless, just as I did, and for the little girls who look like me.

College Essay: Introvert in COVID

THE PHONE RINGS. Should I pick it up? It's my friend Kylie. She probably wants to ask me to hang out. So, I give it a few rings, and I decide to answer. And what do you know? She wants to know what I'm doing and if I want to go shopping.

Most teens would jump at the idea, but the introvert in me was screaming.

Before March 2020, I wouldn't go on walks. I would spend my time in my “powerhouse,” my bedroom, where I daydream about how I should live my life. But this crazy pandemic has me in my powerhouse 24/7. As much as I love my thoughts, being surrounded by them is suffocating. Now it seems



Lauren Norful
Cooper High
School

my only option is to connect, even if it's spending a ridiculous amount of time on the phone, talking about whatever. Trust me, I love spending time with my family, but seeing them every day is a lot. Add to that my free-for-all homework situation, and you have a recipe for disaster. My parents are constantly hovering, making sure I'm doing my work. Then having time-consuming projects in almost all of my classes. I even had to learn new vocabulary

and sentence structure for Spanish. I had to do it all of that without the brilliant learning zone we call school.

Every year I play volleyball in the fall and run track in the spring. This gives me, the introvert, time outside of school to be with my friends. Until the coronavirus, when the only way to connect is through my phone. I actually answer calls from my friends now. I even go on walks with my mom.

A couple of weeks ago, my mom asked me to volunteer at church for a drive to help people affected by the protests and riots. A man named George Floyd was murdered by a Minneapolis cop, and the world blew up. It was amazing seeing so many people recognize the oppression and abuse my fellow African Americans and I face. I can really say I am grateful to all those who

were open-minded in accepting a group of people's experiences as a common reality, which shapes the way we see and behave in the world. Helping out at my church, I remember the hot, sweaty mask and how it fogged up my glasses as I helped people to their cars. Being around people I didn't know and having to help made my heart race. Would I make a mistake, drop the box or stutter? While everyone is scared of getting sick, I'm worried about doing something awkward. I guess that's the introvert in me, self-critical as always.

One lady who always comes to our church drives has three energetic kids. She speaks with an accent and wears a hijab. When I helped her to her car and put the box in her trunk, she said thank you, and her kids smiled. Under my face mask, I smiled and felt happy to give back.

When I think about getting out of my powerhouse (my comfort zone), I wonder what it'll be like to grow up. It makes me scared and worried. But when I force myself to connect with others and help out, it makes me want to be a better friend and a better role model to my younger sister.

Given the world today, maybe it's time I leave my comfort zone and show up. Yes, the world is full of uncertainties, but one thing I am certain of is that I will have to grow up. Helping people will always be something I enjoy. If I can help someone with their problems and struggles, then maybe I can assist their purpose being revealed to them, as my purpose is revealed to me.

COLLEGE ESSAY BOOT CAMP

Kicking students' college essays into shape!

College Essay: Thank You, Baby Zenaib

AS A 13-YEAR-OLD, I remember eagerly awaiting the birth of my sister, who would be my fourth sibling. Her short life would forever change me.

When my other siblings were born, they all had uneventful, natural births. A year prior to my baby sister's birth, my mother broke her pelvic bone in a car accident. As a result, she would need to have my sister through a caesarean delivery, or C-section. On top of that, my mom explained my little sister was diagnosed with trisomy 18, or Edwards syndrome, a condition that is caused by an error in cell division. When this happens, instead of the



Amina Jama,
Girls Inc.
Eureka!

normal pair, an extra chromosome 18 results in the developing baby. It also disrupts the normal pattern of development in significant ways that can be life-threatening.

I was amazed we knew the exact day and time my little sister would be born. After waiting all day, I finally got out of school and my uncle picked up the four of us. I just wanted to be rushed to the hospital to see my mother holding

a beautiful girl. By the time we arrived, my mom was asleep. My sister wasn't in the room with my mom as I envisioned. My dad explained the baby had been rushed to surgery right after she was pulled out of my mother's womb.

To see her, we were taken to a place called the NICU (neonatal intensive care unit). The rooms were all identical and between every two rooms was a nurse in charge of the infants. We arrived at a room, and I saw my sister. At first glance, I realized how different she was from my other siblings. I looked at her beautiful brown eyes and dimples – but also saw her enlarged head from water in her brain. I had tears in my eyes. We shared my light skin tone. She looked like me, but she was different at the same time.

Since I am the oldest girl, I

had a feeling I would have more responsibility during this time, but I didn't realize it. My dad was never home – sleeping at the hospital, then heading to work. My mom was always at the hospital while we were at school. I had to grow up, but in a good way. I became more of a leader in my home. The once negative girl was the most positive in my home. I woke up early, woke my siblings, started cooking pasta and rice even though I'd broken the microwave three times.

I saw how my baby sister was so delicate and needed way more than everyone. I saw the world in a different light, understanding my responsibility to others. I was growing up. That shaped who I am today. I feel as though all of my personality comes from the day I laid my eyes on her. Surgery after surgery, my

positivity did not change at all. My love for her was forever, even after April 26, 2018. The day she passed. I think about her every single day and how she changed my world. I am entirely grateful for her and the fact she changed how I see everything.

The life and death of my sister makes me want to be a pediatrician and help others through their own tough times and challenges. It captured my heart seeing how the doctors made sure my family was fine throughout our tough times. When she passed away, her nurses and doctors were sobbing with us like a second family. My sister made me realize what I want to do for the rest of my life. Thank you, baby Zenaib.

College Essay: Gift of Sight

THE CLOUDS IN my grandfather's eyes overtook me, drowning my heart. His gaze was soft and kind, filled with love. With a wide smile he called out to me, "baradu ko," my beautiful.

My trip to Ethiopia, my family's native land, allowed me to see the world through a new perspective. Yet my beloved grandfather was seeing me for the first time through the cataracts that plagued him.

This experience opened my eyes to the fact that not everyone everywhere has the same resources and standard of living I do. The first trip of my 11-year-old life affected who I am and who I could be.

It was one of the moments that



Jijee Ligdi
Girls Inc.
Eureka!

inspired my passion to pursue a career in service work, specifically in public health and medicine.

Naively, I assumed my grandfather would be quickly healed, but that assumption faded fast. Hopping on a bus we braced for the long commute in our quest to seek medical help. Yawning with complaint I wondered why we had to go so far just to see a doctor. Looking around, I saw many others with the same clouds in their eyes, waiting

to be helped just as we were. Yet there was only one doctor, only one resource; I was shocked. I had never experienced such limited access to health care, wishing I could help my grandfather in the way it seemed others couldn't.

Walking through the crowded streets of Addis Ababa, my eyes widened to the poor public health conditions I was witnessing. The big companies and the wealthy, however, seemed to have higher standards of living. For the first time in my life, I saw how money can drastically affect someone's access to health care. I became aware of my privilege when I saw people begging on the street who were desperately in need of access to medical assistance, while for me at home in Minnesota it would be a simple phone call.

As we were strolling to the shop

with my father, my footsteps began to drag and my lips curled down. My father placed money in my hand to give to a fragile old woman with a toothless smile and bruised face. She needed medical care, too, but how could she get it? I thought of my grandfather and his need for eye surgery.

It was another moment that fueled my passion for helping others through a career in health care.

On my trip, those around me called me "Hatta Fira," someone who loves to be with people, for the way I always sat with those older than me, learning from them and wanting to help as much as I could. Despite not having the best resources, people were always smiling and helping each other the best they could. Rather than being consumed by worry about wealth or resources, they valued what they

had and supported each other in ways that the government and their society had been failing to.

This instilled in me humility and some of the most important values I hold — further inspiring my passion to help those in need of assistance, humbly sympathizing with them. I was not only shown what it means to genuinely support others, but I was also shown what it means to embody important human characteristics, such as sympathy, humility, kindness and gratitude.

Although my grandfather passed away last year, I hope he would be happy with what he sees in me now. That memory of my experience in Ethiopia keeps my passion for helping others strong, and I will be someone who helps those like my beloved grandfather through a career in health care.

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College Essay: Battling Rare Diseases

“TAG, YOU’RE IT!” he yells, barely touching my back as I jump onto the gray concrete barrier that separates the playground sand from the rest of the schoolyard.

“No! I’m safe! Concrete is safe!” I scream.

He turns laughing as he sprints away, looking over his shoulder with a bright grin, taunting me to catch him. I shriek as I leap off the barrier after him, adrenaline filling my veins as I hurry to catch him.

Little did I know that three years later I would be standing over his casket in a room filled with photos of his short life. I remember standing on my tiptoes to stare at his seemingly sleeping 10-year-old body, knowing deep down that we



Ava Barnett
Girls Inc.
Eureka!

would never play tag again.

My childhood best friend died of a rare genetic brain disorder called adrenoleukodystrophy. This disease destroys the myelin, the protective sheath that surrounds the brain’s neurons, affecting the ability to think and control muscles. His behavior changed dramatically. But when his parents brought him to doctors to find out why, he was misdiagnosed as having ADHD. By the time they figured out he had a life-threatening genetic disorder, it

was too late.

His death has haunted me for years, affecting my mental health and my ability to make new friends for the fear of losing them. In more recent years, even though his death saddens me, I became angry because I realized he died because doctors did not check for genetic disorders. It could have been avoided. In fact, his younger brother, who has the same disorder, is alive today because doctors did genetic testing.

Looking back at his death, I began to think about others going through the same thing, losing someone close to them because genetic testing wasn’t done. These concerns led me to an organization established by parents who lost a daughter to a rare genetic disorder, similar to the one my friend had. That organization hosts an annual race to raise money for further

genetic research. When I was 13, I decided to participate in the kids’ race and even took first place. Through the race, I met and became close with the family that founded the organization. They helped me get involved with the large rare-disease community in Minnesota. I discovered the number of people affected by rare genetic disorders spans far past my imagination.

Through the connections I had made with that organization, I learned about Rare Disease Day, an inspiring event that attracts people from all over the state. I first attended when I was 16. I was interviewed on TV news story about my friend’s story, which made me feel more connected to the community by sharing what happened to him with a broader audience. The next year, even though my plate was full with school and sports, I wanted to get even more involved.

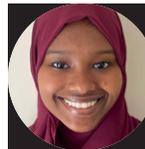
So I volunteered to send hundreds of emails to Minnesota-based rare-disease nonprofits to invite them to attend Rare Disease Day. Attendance was up that year, and some people told me my email was the reason they were there. I was encouraged that my actions were making a difference!

Even from a young age, I realized I could raise awareness of how many people are affected by rare genetic disorders. But now as I am approaching adulthood, I know I want to make a bigger impact by studying genetics and dedicating my future career to expanding this field. I want to help parents discover if there is a genetic explanation behind their child’s symptoms. I want to do whatever I can to make sure that other kids, like my childhood best friend, can play tag past the age of 10.

College Essay: Pledge for Better Care

IMAGINE WALKING DOWN the street and seeing people throw glances at you like you’re weird or different because of who you are. I am a female but also a Black Muslim. My parents always taught me to be proud of who I am. I want to be a midwife so I can have a unique point of view of female health.

I want to be a midwife because I want to make sure Black women are taken care of and not neglected. For example, my pregnant neighbor was experiencing excruciating pain, so we decided to bring her to the hospital. The hospital told her she



Ayaan Shire
Girls Inc.
Eureka!

was fine and just sent her home.

My neighbor came back home, and she looked pale.

“Siham, you have to go to the hospital,” my mother insisted.

“No, the doctor said I was fine, so we’d be wasting your time,” Siham replied.

“Nonsense!” my father exclaimed.

Seconds later, Siham yelled in pain.

I walked up with a washcloth and placed it on Siham’s forehead. Before I got up, I leaned in and whispered to Siham, “You don’t look fine. Please go to the hospital.”

After many minutes of convincing, she finally agreed to go to the hospital. My parents brought her to the hospital, and it turned out the baby was not OK. He was not getting enough oxygen for a while. At that moment, I knew this is what I need and want to do. I was going to become a midwife so Black women will have someone to fight for them. Siham was rushed into an emergency C-section, and the baby ended up being alright.

This experience has transformed

my entire life. I didn’t know what I wanted to be or do until that moment in time. It made me understand how people of color need someone who understands what they are going through. Since then, I have read and researched pregnant Black women’s experiences. In the future, I would like to volunteer at a clinic or hospital. What I discovered was horrendous. In this country, Black women are not experiencing health equity. Black women are up to four times more likely to die of pregnancy-related complications than white women depending on where they live.

My expectations are not that high. They are not so complicated they cannot be achieved. I want to make sure all Black women

are taken care of in hospitals and are not dying because of medical personnel who don’t treat people the same. I want this world to be a better place for future generations, and we can do it if we give everyone the same treatment no matter who they are. At your college, I would be a voice of someone who understands firsthand the problem of health care equity and advocate for the voices that are not heard. I am responsible for becoming a student who thrives in any environment or situation. I understand that I cannot change the system by myself but studying to become a midwife is a start.

Audio: IllumiNative on Mascots

Allison Brodin
Mounds View High School

I INTERVIEWED LEAH Salgado, who is the deputy director of IllumiNative.

IllumiNative is a racial and social justice organization.

It uses narrative change to amplify Native American voices, combat negative narratives about Native American people and build visibility for Native Americans.

A large focus of the organization is eliminating mascots that depict Native Americans.

From high school to the pro level, there is still a ridiculous amount of offensive team mascots and names against Native Americans.

During the creation of this project, I came across many technical issues, including all my work and programs crashing multiple times. It was incredibly frustrating. Eventually, I ended up editing most of my project from my phone. All of the technical difficulties were one of the hardest parts of

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this project for me.

I also learned the important lesson to record on more than one device, as my computer's recording of the interview was not as high quality as I would have liked. It also picked up a lot of background noise I needed to edit out of the recording.

I'd like my listeners to take away a new passion for eliminating these mascots. I want them to now be informed on how these caricatures and names go far beyond just being a mascot, and how they negatively effect Native American people.

My biggest takeaway from this project is that although I knew offensive mascots had a negative effect on the Native American community, it is even deeper than I previously thought.

Native American youth are seeing their identities and culture mocked, appropriated and diminished in their own country.

This has a large impact on their cultural identity and lives as a whole. These mascots also dehumanize Native Americans and diminish them to just a mascot or a thing of the past. Native Americans and their culture are not a thing of the past, they are very much still here and very much alive. Their culture and their humanity should be respected.

Audio: All About CAAL

Nalani Vang
Math and Science Academy

NICK KOR is an organizer and movement builder at the Coalition of Asian American Leaders. The organization serves as an advocate to make sure that Asian American voices are being heard and supported. This ties back to health equity, specifically racism, because Asians are being targeted as the source of COVID-19.

However, this information can be very misleading, and many Asians who are attacked feel responsible and heartbroken. With the help of CAAL, Asian Americans and Asians can report any incidents in which they feel discriminated against or physically attacked.

Health equity suggests everyone should have the same opportunity to a healthy life. For years, Asian Americans have been invisible to the real world because of their belief or cultural myths that prevent Asian Americans from speaking their voices.

Many in the Asian American community are in desperate need of access to doctors, housing, jobs, clean water and education.

In my audio story, I highlight CAAL's role

in supporting Asian Americans around the nation.

The most challenging part of writing an audio story is editing and adding effects to my audio as a beginner using Audacity and Otter. However, using audio as a medium brings a strong effect that enhances the speaker's voice into hearing that they are really inspired and impacted by this topic.

A person's voice is one of the most powerful assets that can influence and start a movement. In my audio story, I hope you can understand why Asian American stories are being told and how we as a society can help lift the narratives of Asian Americans.

As a female Hmong American, I have been told to responsibly uphold my duties of the household and become a doctor.

Part of me understands why this tradition is important to our ancestors and family, but the other part of me wants to break out of the traditional shell and speak out on behalf of who I am.

Working on this audio story changed my perspective of how thankful I am to be where I am now and the unconditional support I get from people around me.

Interactive: Asian Americans in MN

Jacqueline Martinez
Harding High School

NICK KOR is the organizer and movement builder at the Coalition of Asian American Leaders, an organization that brings together Asian Americans to build strong leaders within the community.

I helped create an interactive digital story

about Asian Americans in Minnesota and resources that are available to them during the coronavirus pandemic amidst growing xenophobia aimed toward Asians. This is an important aspect to point out because racism affects how safe individuals feel.

I interviewed Kor about these issues, about what Asian American leadership looks like and the changes local advocates can make in the community. He also spoke about how

stereotypes like the model minority affect how others interpret the appropriate amount of assistance for Asian American communities. I learned more about the government's involvement in encouraging individuals to report discrimination, and how organizations like CAAL have been educating people through webinars and their advocacy.

The challenges of doing a project like this are planning what was necessary to tell a story that encompasses generations of diverse Asian Americans in Minnesota, as well as being informative to the present. My biggest

takeaway from this project was the graphic skills I needed to make this project engaging and interesting, which I hope readers will like! I want readers to consider how these issues aren't far from home.

This story allowed me to research about the Asian American community in Minnesota and learn about their history here. It makes a difference to understand the layers of identity here in Minnesota and how we all live our individual realities, so I hope others will learn something new.

VIDEO GAMES from page 12

for people of color and Indigenous people who are interested in working in the video game industry. By educating one generation, it creates a cycle where each generation has an established video game community with mentors to learn from, according to Porter.

"An entry-level video game programmer makes anywhere between \$72,000 and \$80,000 a year," Porter said. "So, by teaching kids the skills to make video games, and some of the multiple disciplines that go into that, sets them up for an entry-level job that dramatically changes their economic outlook and their ability to engage in the global economy."

GRAFFITI ART from page 13

commemorate artists' contributions to the movement. Art in itself may not bring about tangible change, but it is a monumental component of every movement and should be regarded with the respect that is owed to it," Waldner said. "Nothing in itself can bring about change except the collective need and subsequent mobilization for it."

However, preservation of street art is often associated with mounting

it on museum walls, which Waldner said is inherently incorrect. Removing graffiti from the streets and buildings to preserve it in museums negates the art's meaning. Graffiti in museums is available only for privileged people; street art that was originally accessible to the masses is now being capitalized rather than politicized. This simple action is detrimental to the graffiti artist community as a whole.

"I agree with artists who are

angered by exploitation of their work by museums," said Waldner. "The Berlin Wall is one of the immensely acknowledged murals made by angered East Germans who weren't allowed access to the rest of the country, from whom the art has been purloined and shipped globally, causing it to lose meaning. Taking art out of context can be damaging, especially when the art is profiting the robber rather than the artist."

FOOD GROUP from page 18

located in New Hope, Minnesota.

“We had to figure out how to do it safely with the pandemic,” Eddy White said. “Just how do you have people come together to pack and sort food but also keep a safe distance? So, we have had groups of under 10 coming together and packing food every day at our warehouse.”

Not only has packing been altered, but distribution of the food has as well, with the organization creating a drive-thru pickup in order to socially distance.

“We’ve had to adapt a lot of our programs,” she said.

So far, The Food Group has played a vital role in feeding the community in a time of great uncertainty. However, Eddy White expects the demand to only increase in the fall as unemployment benefits diminish. She said, “I think we had a good initial response (to the pandemic) and I think we still have a consistent response, but we’re in need of volunteers right now, so that’s definitely one of the things that we’re trying to focus on.”

What keeps Eddy White up at night?

“How do we most effectively meet the need? What are those gaps in the community that we need

to be identifying and making sure that we as an organization are most effectively fulfilling our mission and our purpose?”

“Food is a basic need and basic right, and when you don’t have your basic needs met, it’s really hard to focus on anything else,” she said. “I think a lot about that.”

While Eddy White lies awake thinking about how these problems will be solved, someone, somewhere in Minneapolis falls asleep with a belly full of food thanks to The Food Group.

“That’s why we exist,” she said.



COURTESY ERIC WILSON

The Food Group has a micro-farm right on site to grow plants, herbs and fresh produce that are often hard to find at food shelves.



COURTESY ERIC WILSON

The Food Group is not only a food bank. It also offers low-cost groceries through its retail programs. It purchases foods in bulk, like the beans pictured here, and repacks them in serving sizes that you would typically find at any grocery store. This allows it to offer these items to its customers with more affordable prices.



PHOTOS COURTESY DIANA HENSLEY

Prairie Ally Outdoor Center, a Project Food Forest host site, in Luverne, MN.

FOOD FOREST from page 19

A Healthier Southwest and others.

“Growing food is a good thing—mind, body, spirit—and to approach it from a place of nurturing, and providing yourself and others with nutrient-dense food,” Rockman said.

During the pandemic, Project Food Forest has been helping people by connecting them with the food forests, which eases concerns about food security.

Rockman said one of the first steps you can take to begin food foresting for the greater good is turning your yard into a garden and then selling the food it produces at your local farmers market. She also suggests sharing the food with friends or family and preserving the food to consume during the winter.

One of the ways that Project Food Forest began was by seeing the potential of an empty lawn or lot, then turning it into a

community food forest, Rockman said.

Rockman hopes to influence and encourage young people to take care of the environment through food foresting.

“When all of the youth recognize that power in themselves, that they are changemakers, that they are capable of living intentionally and learning, failing and being forgiven. That’s where it goes,” she said.

MIGIZI from page 15

“We try to give them all the tools they need as well as we can, allowing them to go out in the community and find out what creating real change looks like,” Means said. “One of the biggest things that we never have any issues or problems with is when we ask them to do something social justice related or tell us something that’s on your mind ... people are always joining in the conversation.”

During the recent Minneapolis protests, MIGIZI served as a safe space for protesters to receive

snacks and supplies. Through it all, it focused on the community. However, after flames from nearby buildings spread rapidly, its building was among those that burned down. Afterward, it didn’t take long for the strength of MIGIZI’s community to arise.

“We had a healing event the day after our building burned; we all just kind of came together as a community. We cried and laughed. We did everything to be able to find a place of healing,” Means said.

MIGIZI has since moved to a different space and is now

continuing with its summer programming.

“MIGIZI is more than a building,” Means said.

“A lot of times in the communities that are underrepresented, they are not necessarily always the place people go to when they want to hear a voice,” Means said. “We really look at empowering our youth and giving them the opportunity to tell their stories from their own perspective.”

If you would like to donate to help rebuild MIGIZI’s building, please visit [MIGZI: Support Us](#).



VIRTUAL YOUTH VOICE WORKSHOP

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ThreeSixty Journalism

PROGRAM YEAR REPORT

June 1, 2019-May 31, 2020

Student Demographics

African.....6%	Hispanic.....11%
African-American.....40%	Caucasian.....13%
American Indian.....2%	Middle Eastern.....2%
Asian American.....18%	Multiracial.....8%

Young Alumni Job and Internship Highlights

- Pioneer Press
- MPR News
- FOX 9
- The Current
- MPR News
- Bellmont Partners
- Gopher Sports
- University of St. Thomas
- ThreeSixty Journalism
- American Public Media Group
- Center for Prevention at Blue Cross Blue Shield MN
- Mpls. St. Paul Business Journal
- Undertold-Stories Project
- Mpls. Youth Coordinating Board
- Minnesota Timberwolves/Lynx

"I will never forget the way the Three-Sixty Journalism program helped me find and refine my voice as a young Black woman and a developing writer." - ThreeSixty alumna Ayo Olagbaju, Howard University Cathy Hughes School of Communications

Program Mission

ThreeSixty Journalism, a nonprofit program of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of St. Thomas since 2001, uses the principles of strong writing and reporting to help diverse Minnesota youth tell the stories of their lives and communities.

Program Description

Through inclusive multimedia and college success programming, ThreeSixty Journalism develops the next generation of critical thinkers, leaders and storytellers.