North Minneapolis FOR MAYOR

Local leaders Raymond Dehn and Nekima Levy-Pounds discuss their aspirations for the highest office in the city.

Page 16
This need is so critical that former President Barack Obama and former First Lady Michelle Obama have vowed to devote their own time and money to cultivating a next generation of journalists (and organizers and politicians) post-presidency. They’re making it a priority, and so should we.

Dollars need to flow to media outlets that have proven themselves to be as fair, fearless, and objective as is humanly possible. We need to ensure that our press has the resources it needs to speak truth to power. This issue, we want to thank a special group of local businesses and organizations who are doing just that for North News. Our new “local supporters” section (Pages 11 and 12) highlights the folks who have committed to a year of advertising with us at a discounted rate. Thank you to all who have chosen to take part.

A smaller but still impactful way to support us is by purchasing a subscription to the paper. For a mere $30 per year ($50 if you want a North News t-shirt included), you can help fund grassroots journalism in your neighborhood, and you can help us inspire and educate a next generation of diverse journalists, at a time when diversity in media voices is absolutely essential.

Our North High student reporters deserve your support as they continue to dive into the heart of happenings citywide. For this edition, junior Navii Grimes interviewed Nekima Levy-Pounds for our North Neighbor’s piece on her and Raymond Dehn (Page 16). Junior Ashley Powell attended one of the city’s minimum wage listening sessions at the Northside Economic Opportunity Network (NEON) and ended up chatting with Mayor Betsy Hodges afterward. You may notice that our youth content is a bit lighter than usual this month. That’s because second semester began in February at North High, and we have several new students. Prepare for full-fledged stories from all of them in our next issue.

This edition of the paper is heavy with development-related stories. Investments are being made in and near North Minneapolis, and we want to keep you abreast of them. The city is offering buyers of any income level $20,000 to purchase and build a home on a vacant city-owned residential lot on the Northside. Ward 5 Council Member Blong Yang, who has been an advocate of using vacant city lots for urban gardening, was instrumental in getting this program off the ground. Read the full story on Page 4. In transportation news, a nearly $50 million dollar preservation project on I-94 begins in March. On Page 8, read all about the extensive disruptions to daily commuting that will take place. More inspirationally, a streetcar may be on the horizon for West Broadway Ave. Read all about it on Page 7. Wondering what’s going on with Wirth Co-op? Sanctuary Church’s building on Broadway? Turn to Page 5 for Mark Peterson’s update on several big developmental projects in North Minneapolis.

If you’re ready to dive in to the fray of this November’s local elections, flip to page 9 for an introduction to the City Council candidates for Ward 4 and 5.

Thank you,
Kenzie O’Keefe
Editor/Publisher, North News
kenzieo@pillsburyunited.org
612.302.3424
City Survey reveals less positive relationship with some Northsiders

The City of Minneapolis recently released the results of its 2016 Resident Survey. 92 percent of Minneapolis residents rate the city as a very good or good place to live. However, African-American and African-born respondents and respondents from Camden (a North Minneapolis neighborhood) are much less likely to rate the city as a very good place to live. The survey was conducted by phone, paper mail, and online, and included surveys of 2,320 people over seven weeks ending in September 2016. All data is available on the city's website. By Lache Dietz | Senior

Community production of Shrek the Musical is underway

There will be a community theater production of Shrek the Musical this spring. The cast will include people of all ages in the North Minneapolis community. This production will be held in North Community High School from April 20-23. This is a chance for the community to get together and create something positive for the neighborhood. For more information contact: Northcommunitytheater@gmail.com. By Luulay Yusuf | Senior

Cora McCorvey retires after 40 years at Minneapolis Public Housing Authority

Cora McCorvey, Minneapolis Public Housing Authority’s (MPHA) Executive Director, retired from her job on February 10. Her service will be truly missed in Minneapolis. She worked for the MPHA for 40 years and served as the Executive Director for 25 years, helping low-income people get into affordable housing. On January 26, people gathered for the renaming of Heritage Park Health and Wellness Center in her honor. It will now be called the Cora McCorvey Health and Wellness Center. Governor Mark Dayton has also declared January 26 to be “Cora McCorvey Day” in the state of Minnesota, to celebrate all she’s done for the City of Minneapolis. By John Dickerson | Junior

Timeline extended for Northern Metal Recycling settlement

Negotiations to move Northern Metal Recycling (NMR) out of North Minneapolis will take until the end of February versus January as was initially planned, reports the Star Tribune. Becker, Minneapolis hopes NMR will move there after its anticipated relocation in three years.

Corner Stone Cafe co-owners split

Wendy Puckett and Eddie Hutchins dissolved their partnership at Corner Stone Cafe on Glenwood Ave. at the end of January. Wendy’s House Of Soul hopes to relocate to a new location on West Broadway Ave. soon and plans are in the works for a potential food truck as well. Puckett’s SOULROLL’s are still available through her catering company. In a Facebook post from the Cafe’s page in early February, they said Hutchins will continue running Corner Stone Cafe, but it is currently unknown what he will do regarding future endeavors. Follow along with both of their future plans on Facebook. By Tayven Smith | Sophomore

North Market set to break ground at 44th and Humboldt next month

North Market, the new full-service, nonprofit grocery store set to break ground in March at 4414 Humboldt Ave. N, held an information session at Webber Community Center on February 9. Over 50 community members attended, including City Council President Barb Johnson who applauded efforts to open the store in North Minneapolis and said her first job as a young person growing up on the Northside was at National Tea, a previously run grocery store on the site.

Read more about North Market and other development updates on Page 5

Senator Bobby Joe Champion brings state budget conversation to UROC

In a town hall meeting at the University of Minnesota’s Urban Research and Outreach Engagement Center (UROC), Senator Bobby Joe Champion (DFL-59), along with Sen. Tony Lourey (DFL-11), Sen. Chuck Wiger (DFL-43), and Eric Nauman, fiscal analyst for the Minnesota Senate, gave an overview of the Governor’s 2018-2019 proposed budget. Specifically, the senators covered education and healthcare, emphasizing the danger of an ACA repeal. “Our budget should reflect our values,” said Champion. By Kenzie O’Keefe | Editor

North Minneapolis

February news in briefs

A project of this magnitude is pretty rare, not something you see every one or even five years.

Marceil Walker, MnDOT

Read the full story on Page 9

People say the streetcar is expensive, but this area is overdue for a significant investment.

Gary Cunningham, Metropolitan Council

Read the full story on Page 7

Read the full story on Page 9

It’s not too early to think about summer employment! The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the nationally rated #1 park system, is now accepting applications for spring and summer job openings.

Check out our seasonal spring and summer jobs, and also our full-time and part-time career opportunities at www.minneapolisparks.org/jobs. Don’t see what you’re looking for? Subscribe to email updates to be the first to know about future job openings.

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February 23, 2017 • North News • 3
City seeks to turn vacant lots into accessible home-ownership

By Kenzie O'Keefe | Editor

The City of Minneapolis owns 459 vacant residential lots. 398 of them are on the Northside, where the 2008 foreclosure crisis and the 2011 tornado hit residents and the housing stock particularly hard. The city now hopes to spur a rebuilding effort on this underused land by offering incentives to developers and prospective home owners who want to build on them.

On February 10, the City Council voted to approve a pilot program that aims to get the lots off the City’s back (they cost around $3,600 each per year to maintain) and into the hands of residents, particularly low income community members of color. Ward 5 City Council Member Blong Yang, whose ward is home to the highest number of these lots, was instrumental in getting the project off the ground. “We want to encourage people to build new houses on the Northside. We know that there is some market failure here, so we want to incentivize and urge people to do it,” he said.

Individuals of any income level who want to build a new house on one of the lots in North Minneapolis are eligible for up to $20,000 for construction. Minneapolis police officers, firefighters, or public school teachers can receive up to $25,000. In both cases, homeowners must live in the house they build for at least five years.

Citywide, “long term affordability homebuyer financing” will be offered. Up to $25,000 will be offered to buyers whose income is 80% or lower than the area median income (AMI). Developers can receive up to $75,000 in incentives per dwelling throughout the city as long as they’re “high quality, new construction homes for low and moderate income buyers,” i.e. they are affordable for 80% AMI buyers.

Yang says he hopes to see 25-50 homes built this year during the pilot program. “If we get to 50, I will be ecstatic. If we get anywhere from 25-50, I think it will be a success and an argument to continue the program.” He says buying and building could begin in the next few months, and that, “It’s going to be quick.”

Two public meetings – one for prospective buyers and one for builders – were held during the week of February 6. The sessions were well attended – “standing room only,” said Yang – but he added that there were very few buyers in attendance and that outreach will need to be done to get people interested.

Some community members have expressed concern that the program will lead to gentrification, and that people from outside North Minneapolis will use the program, displacing current residents.

The office of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) is trying to get the word out to local residents. On March 6 from 6-7:30pm at the University of Minnesota Urban Research and Outreach Engagement Center (UROC), North Minneapolis residents are invited to preview possibilities for the sites. RSVP at: www.mplshomespreview.eventbrite.com.

Vacant lots like this one at 2733 Penn Ave. N could become home to owner-occupied houses in the near future through the city’s new housing infill program. Photo by Kenzie O’Keefe. Map below, left courtesy of CPED.

![Minneapolis Infill Lots Map](image)

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Diverse development projects reach many milestones

By Mark Peterson | Contributor

Sanctuary Covenant Church
728 West Broadway
The renovation of an existing structure will provide 20,000 sq. ft. of space for the church. General contractor Watson-Forsberg’s Nate Robitschek said an Xcel Energy installation delay has pushed back the original completion date from late September to the end of October. The church is now co-owner of a two-story building next to nearby Merwin Liquors, with which it will share parking spaces.

Photo by Mark Peterson; rendering courtesy of Station 19 Architects

800 Broadway Building
800 West Broadway Ave.
The year-long transformation of the former car-dealership building at the corner of Bryant Ave. N and West Broadway Ave. is complete, and more than 90 percent of the space is occupied. Its major tenant is the MinnesotaWorkforce Center. Rob Kost of Sherman Associates, the owner and developer, said only the street-level retail space remains to be leased.

Photo by Mark Peterson; rendering courtesy of Blumentals/Architecture, Inc.

Capri Theater Expansion
2027 West Broadway Ave.
Communications Director Janet Zahn said the theater is nearly halfway ($4.5 million) to reaching its $9.5 capital campaign goal and expects construction to begin April 2018. Theater director James Scott estimates the 20,000 sq. ft. addition, which includes additional tech and rehearsal space, will open Spring 2019.

Rendering courtesy of Baker Associates, Inc., Architects

Wirth Co-op Grocery
1835 Penn Ave. North
Wirth Co-op Grocery Board member Kristel Porter said that Winston Bell has been hired as the grocery’s new general manager. General contractor Watson-Forsberg is scheduled to begin build-out of the 4500 sq. ft. retail space, located in the ground floor of the Commons on Penn. Estimated completion and store opening is mid-June 2017.

Photo by Mark Peterson

Great Northern Greenway
26th Ave. N
A proposal for a pedestrian/bike-friendly corridor across North and Northeast Minneapolis is gaining momentum. On the Northside, the project would incorporate paths already installed along 26th Ave. N, and the route would extend from Theodore Wirth Park to the Mississippi River. The plan would include a river crossing at the BNSF railroad bridge.

Photo by Mark Peterson

Minneapolis CPED Penn/Lowry properties
Minneapolis CPED issued a Request for Proposals (RFPs) for development of six contiguous properties on the NE quadrant of this intersection. Senior project coordinator Casey Dzieweczynski said a proposal was received from CPM and the Michaels Development Co., for a mixed-income housing complex that would include some retail space. The proposal is now being reviewed by CPED staff.

Photo by Mark Peterson

North Market
4414 Humboldt Ave. N
Pillsbury United Communities’ Adair Mosley said that construction at the former Kowalski’s market in the Webber Park-Camden neighborhood will begin next month. The 15,000 sq. ft. of existing space will get an additional 5,000 sq. ft. for health services. The store hopes to open in late August. Outdoor plaques will recognize small contributors from the community.

Rendering courtesy of LSE Architects
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I definitely had my share of stress, but everyone here was so understanding. MCTC is community-based, and I graduated because of all the support I received. My experience here was simply amazing.

—Vickie Smith
Business Management Alum

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WELLINGTON
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COMMUNITY THE PROJECT
Plans for a streetcar on West Broadway inch forward

By Kenzie O’Keefe | Editor

A streetcar stretching from downtown to North Memorial Hospital along a significant stretch of West Broadway Ave. is on a path to becoming a reality. The West Broadway Transit Study study concluded on February 2, with its Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) voting 6-5 in favor of recommending a streetcar to the Metropolitan Council as a future transportation goal for the corridor.

The two year study, led by Metro Transit in partnership with Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis, aimed to identify and evaluate potential transit improvements for West Broadway Ave. and Washington Ave. N. The PAC was composed of elected officials from the potentially impacted areas – including downtown, North Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, and Golden Valley. The West Broadway Business and Area Coalition (WBC) was also given a PAC vote.

Gary Cunningham, PAC Chair and North Minneapolis representative for the Metropolitan Council, voted in favor of the streetcar option. Cunningham grew up on the Northside and says people have been trying to revitalize the area since he was a kid. “This could be the gamechanger that does that,” he said.

Community member Alexis Pennie agreed, echoing Cunningham’s words, calling the streetcar a “game-changing idea for the corridor and Minneapolis residents.” Pennie was chair of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) formed to advise the PAC and took part in the final PAC vote. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was also formed for the project.

State Representative Raymond Dehn, also voted in favor of the streetcar. “If we’re going to reinvigorate West Broadway to be the commercial corridor for the north side of the city, we need this type of investment,” he said. Not all North Minneapolis leaders feel favorably towards the streetcar. The WBC voted against the streetcar, as did Ward 5 City Council Member Blong Yang. Both Yang and WBC Executive Director Rob Hanson preferred the other transit option explored in the study – a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line that would stretch from downtown Minneapolis to Downtown Robbinsdale. The proposed BRT line was longer and projected to be significantly less expensive – 40 million dollars for the BRT versus roughly 229 million dollars for the streetcar.

““You could probably do five BRT lines for the price of just one streetcar line. Does that make any sense?” said Yang. Hanson said that community engagement work showed that people want better, faster transit options and better connections, and he says BRT was the obvious choice to meet those needs. “BRT is longer and would have connected to the blue line in Robbinsdale at a fraction of the cost. It seemed like a more realistic, practical option that could be in place,” he said.

Cunningham believes the corridor needs more than a practical solution to change the status quo of disinvestment in North Minneapolis. “People say the streetcar is expensive, but this area is overdue for a significant investment,” he said. He sees the streetcar as the truly transformative path forward toward multi-modal transit options in the city.

Peter Wagenius, policy director for the mayor, says that because no funding currently exists for either project, it makes sense to push for the better option – the streetcar. “Right now there is no reason not to aim high,” he said. Charles Carleson, Senior Manager of BRT/Small Starts Projects at Metro Transit, said that the streetcar’s potential to spur economic development inspired support for it. “The streetcar is projected over 25 years to attract 2,600 permanent new jobs within the study area and upwards of 500 million of incremental real estate value, over and above baseline growth without a streetcar,” he said.

Yang is skeptical of how those projections will play out in North Minneapolis. He believes the streetcar is more likely to create economic opportunity in the North Loop than on West Broadway. “Isn’t the point of this whole thing to benefit West Broadway?” he said. Cunningham says the streetcar will undoubtedly spur development on Broadway.

Critics of the streetcar say it will take longer than the BRT to build. Once a funding path is in place, the BRT is estimated to take four years to plan, engineer, and construct. The streetcar is estimated to take closer to seven years to implement after funding is secured, and because streetcars are not included in the Metropolitan Council’s list of supported modes of transportation, it could not get dollars from them without a change to that policy. Cunningham says the policy change is a technicality that will be easily resolved.

Moving forward, the streetcar recommendation will be integrated into the Metropolitan Council’s 2040 Transportation plan. No further action can be taken until funding sources are identified. John Schadl from Metropolitan Council communications says Metro Transit will continue to be the lead agency on the project, working with the city and county to identify funding that will move the project forward. Wagenius says that funding for the current transportation system, as well as funding for future projects, is uncertain. “We’re very concerned about transit funding getting cut at the legislature,” he said.
Northside life celebrated through classical, gospel mashup

By Kenzie O’Keefe | Editor

Three years ago, Dennis Spears blurted out a big idea. The artistic director of the Capri Theater’s Legends series was having lunch with North Minneapolis residents and representatives from the Capri and The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra (SPCO).

This group had gathered together to think about ways for the Capri and SPCO to further serve the Northside community through music, and take their 5-year partnership to the next level. In the midst of this conversation, Spears suddenly had an epiphany: a collaborative musical project that would celebrate Northside life through a combination of classical and gospel music – an unusual mashup of genres.

Spears, who enjoys snacking on salted apples and described his home decor as a “mixture of colors and textures that most people might not think go together” is not one to shy away from unconventional combinations. He and the SPCO quickly got to work, and now, his fledgling idea for a show will become a full-form reality in mid-March. “I think beauty comes when we are able to mix some unknowns together,” he said.

In two 4pm performances on March 18 and 19, Spears’ Northside Celebration will be brought to life on a big stage in North High School’s auditorium, 1300 James Avenue N. Tickets are free but must be reserved online or over the phone in advance.

For 90 minutes, the audience will be treated to “an amazing melting pot of culture, art and people and music,” said Spears. They will hear the world premiere of “True North,” a choir and chamber orchestra piece commissioned by the SPCO for the Northside Celebration. The piece was composed by long-time North Minneapolis resident Timothy C. Takach and its lyrics are by spoken word and hip hop artist Desdamona, inspired by writing from youth in the community.

The Northside Celebration Choir, made up of singers from local churches and organizations, will be directed by Sanford Moore. Narration and storytelling by Northside artists will be woven throughout the show. Renowned storyteller Nothando Zulu, a lifetime North Minneapolis resident, is a performer Spears is especially excited for. The show is the brainchild of Dennis Spears. Photo courtesy of the Capri Theater

Sanford Moore will direct the Northside Celebration Choir. Photo by Tom Wallace

Spears, who enjoys snacking on salted apples is a performer Spears is especially excited for. The show will close with an opportunity for the audience to join in on the production – a “rejoicing” that Spears says will signify that, “This love that we want here in North Minneapolis, this joy, this peace, is done.”

Bringing joy and peace to North Minneapolis amidst its challenges is important to Spears. He bought his home here three years ago, and he says he’s inspired by the rhythm of the Northside and how “real” the people are. “Within a matter of blocks here, I can see all different vibes. All of them are good. I am hopeful for all of them,” he said.

He sees Northside Celebration as a creation specifically for those who are, like himself, “most invested here in the Northside.” It’s inclusive to everyone, but his target audience is the people who make up the “many cultures and mindsets” of North Minneapolis. “There’s a lot going on in the world. There has been a lot going on in North Minneapolis. The one thing that I think people need most of all right now is a moment of breathing. A moment to come together and seek peace with each other and within our own hearts. It’s a time for us to go back to that whole idea of we are family and embrace each other,” he said.

Tickets can be reserved in advance at www.thespco.org/northside or by calling 651-291-1144.

City of Minneapolis attempts to explore minimum wage with African Americans

By Ashley Powell | Junior

On February 15, the City of Minneapolis held a listening session for the African American community regarding increasing the minimum wage to $12-$15 per hour at the Northside Economic Opportunity Network (NEON) on West Broadway. The mayor was in attendance. 10 events are being held on this subject throughout the city to gather feedback on a potential minimum wage policy for employers.

Though the session at NEON was held to get feedback from the African American community, very few African Americans showed up. According to a recent Minneapolis City Council study, 27% of African Americans would benefit from an increase of $12 per hour and 41% would benefit from an increase of $15 per hour. Generally speaking, immigrants, workers of color, and low wage earners are most likely to benefit from a minimum wage increase. The most affected industries would be retail, restaurants, food service, healthcare, and social assistance.

Most people in the audience seemed to feel positively about the idea of a minimum wage increase. One person from the audience who represented the Minnesota Nurse Association (MNA) recommended the increase in wage because she said it would benefit a lot of patients who can’t afford their needed medical services.

One thing that also came up at this session is that 30 other cities have increased their minimum wage. In most cases, these cities do not seem to have been negatively affected by the increase.

The city representative who led the meeting brought up questions about a minimum wage increase that they do not yet have the answers to, such as how minimum wage would impact businesses, whether the community would support a generalized minimum wage regardless of employer size or industry, and considering how to manage employers who are tipped or not tipped, hourly or contracted. Lastly, if this is enacted, what is the minimum wage our community can support? $12 per hour, $15 per hour, or something else?

It’s not too late to give feedback. The city is hosting one more session on March 3rd from 11am-noon at Harrison Recreation Center, 503 Irving Ave N or visit https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MplsMinWage.
Hectic highway: extensive construction is coming to I-94 this year

By Kenzie O’Keefe | Editor

A massive maintenance and preservation project will cause major trip delays on I-94 for a significant portion of this year and next.

The project, which begins this March and is anticipated to stretch until July of 2018, will affect I-94 from Nicollet Avenue to Shingle Creek Parkway. Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) project manager Marcell Walker says that the majority of the impact will be felt between March and November of 2017. During each August weekend this year, one side of 94 will be closed.

Nine miles of highway and ramps will be resurfaced. 50 bridges will be repaired. The Lowry Hill Tunnel will get new lighting. Guardrail and lighting will be added, and an anti-icing system will be installed in the westbound lanes in a small section near Brooklyn Center. To accomplish this, ramps will be periodically closed, and lanes will be restricted and closed intermittently. “A project of this magnitude is pretty rare, not something you see every one or even five years,” said Walker.

Despite designated detours that will be in place, Walker says that anyone who uses I-94 should anticipate a longer commute. “Especially in the first couple weeks, it’ll be a new environment for folks. Take time to buffer your trip,” he said. Closures and restrictions will change regularly; Walker recommends staying in touch with MnDOT online to be aware of the ways construction may impact your route.

Though construction will cause significant inconvenience for all types of travelers, Walker says that doing this work immediately is vital. “There’s leaking in the Lowry Tunnel. You can see rusting on the bridges. I’m not trying to alarm anyone, but there’s a need for this work.”

**OUTREACH AND CONSTRUCTION**

PCI Roads from St. Michael Minnesota is the “apparent” (soon to be officially awarded) primary contractor for the 46.3-million-dollar project. They were the only company to submit a bid. State standards require the primary contractor to perform at least 30% of the project work; the additional 70% can be contracted out if desired. MnDOT officials declined to estimate the number of jobs that will be created by the project.

Federal standards encourage the pool of potential project subcontractors be at least 10.3% minority or women-owned businesses. If that percentage is not achieved, the primary contractor must demonstrate a good faith effort to having tried to meet it.

Ashanti Payne, small business contracting manager at MnDOT, has been working hard to ensure that minority, women, and veteran-owned businesses get a fair shot at potential subcontracting opportunities.

He has organized two networking events at UROC, and works behind the scenes to ensure that small businesses have the awareness and technical support they need to be viable contenders for this work.

Payne’s commitment on the project extends beyond the professional realm; he grew up in North Minneapolis, in the Willard-Hay neighborhood. “Growing up on the Northside and still having family here on the Northside, I know the importance of this corridor as a means of travel and getting people where they need to go,” he said. He stressed the importance of getting the word out about the project’s potential for huge impact, particularly on the Northside, where “a lot of times the people in this community don’t realize or are not aware especially from a transportation standpoint, what’s going to impact.”

Dave Aeikens, communications and engagement coordinator at MnDOT, and Walker agree. They have been engaged in an aggressive community engagement campaign for the past year. They say they have held over 45 meetings with neighborhood organizations, businesses, and other community leading groups along the corridor to get the word out about the project and its disruptions. “We are eager to talk to anyone who is willing to listen to us about this project. We don’t want it to be a secret. …It’s going to be a difficult 9-10 months – short term pain for long term gain,” said Aeikens.

**THE FUTURE OF I-94**

Though this project is restricted to maintaining and preserving existing infrastructure, MnDOT’s concurrently running “Rethinking I-94” project aims to envision a future for the corridor. It will study user experiences of I-94 in Minneapolis and Saint Paul over the course of two years, culminating in an implantation schedule that will guide future development and construction efforts.

As part of this project, MnDOT is exploring an idea to create freeway lids at locations on this particular stretch of the highway – literally covering the highway in a way that might allow for usable land, possibly for parks, to exist on top.

**STAY INFORMED**

Follow MnDOT on Facebook & Twitter

Download 511 app for in the moment information

Visit the project website: www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/i94brooklynncntr

Attend the public project open house on February 23, 4-7pm at the Minneapolis Park Board Headquarters

Northside native Ashanti Payne is responsible for ensuring that minority, women, and veteran subcontractors get a fair shot at available job opportunities for this project. Photo by PeggySue Imihy
Innovative housing option proposed for Harrison Neighborhood

By Mark Peterson | Contributor

An industrial area near Glenwood Avenue may be the site of a new community design, both inward-looking and modern.

Long-time North Minneapolis housing activists Becca Brackett and Fred Olson have been examining the concept of “cohousing” for years and believe they are closer than ever to establishing such a community in Minneapolis. The website of the Cohousing Association of the United States (CAUS) defines cohousing as “an intentional community of private homes clustered around a shared space.”

The retired couple have been Homewood neighborhood residents for nearly 40 years and early on tried “retrofit cohousing” on their own block. Olson said, “We have a great block club. We wanted to help people change the way they relate to where they live.” While a few neighbors were interested, an inherent problem with cohousing in existing neighborhoods is defining the physical community in an area where houses are all in rows. Olson noted that an ideal size for a cohousing unit would be around 30 to 40 households (about 100 adults).

The CAUS website further explains, “Each attached or single family home has traditional amenities, including a private kitchen. Shared spaces typically feature a common house, which may include a large kitchen and dining area, laundry, and recreational spaces. Shared outdoor space may include parking, walkways, open space, and gardens. Neighbors also share resources like tools and lawnmowers.”

A “common house” provides spaces (nurseries, guest bedrooms, activity rooms) that allow for construction of smaller homes. Cohousing advocates see members as having independent lives as homeowners but planning and managing shared spaces and activities collaboratively. This would include association meetings and meals, as well as carpooling, childcare and other group activities.

Brackett and Olson said they attended a presentation about cohousing in the late 90s and read Charles Durett’s 1998 book, Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves. Durett, an architect, developed some of his ideas after looking at similar projects in Denmark and is credited with coining the term “cohousing.” Durrett and his wife, Kathryn McCamant, designed Muir Commons in Davis, California, the first cohousing community in North America.

There are now more than 160 cohousing communities in the U.S. In Minnesota, established groups include Wiscoy Valley Community Land Cooperative (Winona), Zephyr Valley Community Cooperative (Rushford), Dreamland Co-living (Minneapolis), and Monterey Cohousing (St. Louis Park). Monterey Cohousing’s current director, Ken Fox, said the group bought a former Christian Scientist school on Monterey Ave. in St. Louis Park in 1992. The eight private residences in the building were followed by the construction of seven townhomes in 1996.

Brackett and Olson have been looking at what they call a “promising” site near Glenwood Ave. and the Van White Memorial Bridge. It’s located in the southern Harrison neighborhood, in an area called Bassett Creek Valley, and was the subject of a city master plan in 2006. The plan referred to the 230-acre site as an “outmoded industrial landscape” and envisioned redevelop-ment with 3000 housing units, 2.5 million sq. ft. of commercial space, and the restoration of the creek.

Among the reasons cited for a lack of development since the master plan was published were the difficulty of access to I-394, uncertainty about light rail plans, and the costs associated with environmental clean-up. But the Bassett Creek Valley Redevelopment Oversight Committee (ROC) has had one specific property they felt hampered the area’s growth: the city’s impound lot.

New hope for development can be drawn from the increased likelihood of the Southwest Light Rail Transit (the Green Line Extension) becoming a reality. The route includes a Bassett Creek Valley station at Van White Blvd. In addition, the Met Council is planning the Bottineau Transitway, a 13-mile, $1.5-billion extension of Blue Line light rail from Minneapolis to Brooklyn Park that includes stations at Penn Avenue and Van White Blvd.

Olson said there is an interested developer, but no formal agreement has been reached. He hopes the city of Minneapolis will treat the cohousing idea as a useful innovation in urban housing, although grants and funding are not typically available. He added, “These are hard projects to pull off; they need individuals to push them, because the felt need for cohousing is less here than in other communities. But it could be a useful opportunity for many prospective homebuyers.”
NORTH NEWS

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Feb. 9-Apr. 13, 2017

Winter Art Exhibit!

Paintings, collage, drawings and new mixed-media works by young contemporary artists.

2007 Emerson Ave N. Mpls. 55411
612-588-1488 | juxtaposition.org

Gallery hours: 10a-4:30, M-Th

“Untitled” by Ysabella Johnson

Coming to 4414 Humboldt Ave N in Fall 2017

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New Location! 3120 Washburn Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55411

Contact us!
facebook.com/neighborhoodhub or
(612) 522 - 0942

The Neighborhood Hub partners with others to serve the needs of neighbors and contribute to the health and well-being of the African American community.

Resource Navigators are available for resume help, job searching, housing searches, community resources, faxes, online applications, email services, notary services.

Community Health Workers available for Healthy Home Assessments and Healthy Home Resources.
Martial Arts Classes, Personal Training, & More!
Adults – Youth – Children
3115 PENN AVE. N. (612) 521-5836

Want to be a champion? We train junior Olympic and Paralympic athletes (like Benjamin Goodrich, pictured here), and a Pan-American champion in Judo & Jujitsu.

ATTENTION: Artists, Musicians, Youth Groups
STUDIO SPACES ARE AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNITY RENTAL
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Come One, Come All!

Northside Celebration
A collaborative concert experience celebrating the North Minneapolis community through music - with performances by the Northside Celebration Choir and The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.
4 pm March 18 and March 19
Tickets are FREE!
Concert updates, free ticket reservations and more:
www.thespco.org/northside

You don’t have to leave your neighborhood to find good art.

Homewood Studios
2400 Plymouth Avenue
homewoodstudios.com
612-587-0230

March Shows
Gregory McDaniels, Nancy McDaniels, Steven Clark – painting & photography
March 3-15
Kenny Caldwell – painting
March 17 – April 1

Mention this ad and be entered in a drawing for a free art piece by one of the Homewood Studios resident artists.

Your cocktail game is about to BLO up.
Be your own bartender with our newly expanded cocktail section.
blue cheese-stuffed olives  pickle-stuffed olives

Northside Chiropractic Clinic
Chiropractic is about more than re-aligning the spine and neck. Talk to us about work injuries, car accidents, headaches, tingling in limbs, and range-of-motion limitations - we can help. Loosen up and enjoy your spring!
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3107 PENN AVE NORTH (Across from ALDI)

WANT TO BE A CHAMPION?
We train junior Olympic and Paralympic athletes (like Benjamin Goodrich, pictured here), and a Pan-American champion in Judo & Jujitsu.

ATTENTION: ARTISTS, MUSICIANS, YOUTH GROUPS
STUDIO SPACES ARE AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNITY RENTAL
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(612)-522-0440
3107 PENN AVE NORTH (Across from ALDI)
**FOURTH WARD**

**MARCUS HARCUS**

“I am tired of fighting to just survive. We deserve to live.”

$15 minimum wage and fair scheduling: Supports. Super Bowl: States we must protect low wage workers.

**PHILIP MURPHY**

“I am tired of North Minneapolis being discounted by our base of misleadership at City Council. The only way I think I can actually affect change is to sit on the City Council.”

$15 minimum wage and fair scheduling: Believes a minimum wage increase will “take away jobs in the long run.” Says “we can’t force a wage on people.”

**BARB JOHNSON Incumbent**

“I am running because I [feel] that I have accomplished a lot during my time in office. …I provide excellent constituent services.”

$15 minimum wage and fair scheduling: Supports an increase in the minimum wage but did not give a specific number. Concerned about wage increase conflicting with public benefits like SNAP – “When income goes up, eligibility goes down.”

**PHILIPPE CUNNINGHAM**

“We need to get serious about permanently disrupting the intergenerational poverty we see in our community.”

$15 minimum wage and fair scheduling: Supports both – believes more is needed – like a basic income program. If wage increases, he says we need to take “careful consideration of the very small, struggling businesses here on the Northside.”

**FIFTH WARD**

**RAEISHA WILLIAMS**

“I am going to be the city council member ready to open the door [at city hall] when you come banging.”

$15 minimum wage and fair scheduling: Supports both – believes employers should give 1-2 weeks notice for scheduling. Super Bowl: Says Super Bowl job fairs should be held on the Northside and NFL teams should be encouraged to come here and do projects with Northside schools.

**BLONG YANG Incumbent**

Incumbent fifth ward council member Blong Yang did not attend the forum due to a prior commitment at the same time. He is planning to run for re-election.

**JEREMIAH ELLISON**

“If we’re not dreaming, how else are we going to imagine this future?”

$15 minimum wage and fair scheduling: Supports both – believes employers should give 1-2 weeks notice for scheduling. Says we need higher wages across the board.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Says it revealed the way that city hall isolates itself from people in times of crisis. The fourth ward needs “stronger leadership in investing in community safety.”

Says there’s no amount of money that could be made by Northsiders at the Super Bowl that would make up for the money taken to build the stadium. Says he’ll fight against future decisions like this. Fourth precinct occupation: Says it revealed the way that city hall isolates itself from people in times of crisis. The fourth ward needs “stronger leadership in investing in community safety.”

**Youth violence:** Supports youth violence prevention through youth development.

**Youth violence:** Says we need to address the root causes of it, especially parents who have to work so much.

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March is National Kidney Month and the National Kidney Foundation is urging all Americans to assess their risk for kidney disease. If you have diabetes, high blood pressure, a family history of kidney failure, or are over the age of 60, you are at risk and should have your kidneys checked. The NKF is offering a free kidney screening through its KEEP Healthy Program on March 30th at Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church, 3355 N. 4th St., from 3:00-7:30pm.

Do you live in Near North or Willard-Hay? Then your block could be eligible for a mini block club grant through the Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, NRRC. Funds are available for a project or event you want to create. Call (612) 335-5924 or email contactus@nrcc.org.

Interested in upgrading your storefront? The West Broadway Business and Area Coalition has two matching grant programs that can provide up to $22,500 in matching grants per storefront. Any existing business (with property owner’s approval) and/or commercial building owner whose building are located on West Broadway between 26th Avenue to the west and the River to the east and the one block contiguous (East and West) to West Broadway are eligible to apply. More information: http://westbroadway.org/facade/ or email carla@westbroadway.org or call 612-353-5178.

The City of Minneapolis is offering free home visits from energy-saving experts to qualified households with an income less than $48,100 for one person, $54,950 for two people, $61,850 for three people, or up to $90,650 for eight people. If the Home Energy Squad recommends insulation or air sealing, income-qualified residents also have special access to zero percent financing to complete that work. Call 612-335-5874 or visit mncee.org/thes-mpls.

Hennepin County’s drop-off facilities in Brooklyn Park and Bloomington accept needles and sharps, at no charge to residential consumers. This program is available to residential customers only. Unused medicines contained in sharps, such as EpiPens, should not be brought to the county drop-off facilities. More information: call Hennepin County Environment and Energy department, 612-348-3777 or email environment@hennepin.us.

EVENTS + ENTERTAINMENT

2/23 – Laughing at the Library with Comedian Shed-G. Popular comedian, actor and KMOJ radio personality Shed-G will be sure to tickle your funny bone. Sumner Library, 611 Van White Memorial Blvd, 6:30-7:45pm.

2/27 – Chess Tournament, all levels wellcome, onlookers and cheerleaders too. Serendipity Spot, 3300 Lyndale Ave N. 5:00-8:00 pm. Call 612-564-3478 for more info or to sign up.

3/2 – The Film Society of Minneapolis St. Paul and the Capri Theater present Lamb, directed by Ethiopian filmmaker Yared Zeleke. Tickets to First Thursday Films @ the Capri are $5 and can be purchased in advance online at www.mspfilm.org or at the door the night of the show. Capri Theater, 2027 West Broadway Ave, 7pm.

3/5 – Lent Procession Service of Lessons and Hymns. Join Mount Olive Music and Fine Arts for a contemplative service of lessons and carols – for Lent! Typically associated with Advent and Christmas, this service is designed especially for those caught up in preparations for the coming Easter and spring seasons. It provides an opportunity to withdraw from the busy-ness of life to pray, sing, listen, smell — an opportunity to fully enter into the season of Lent, a time to renew our baptism and our lives. Mount Olive Lutheran Church, 3045 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, 4:00pm, Free.

3/16 – Across the Channel. World-class musicians from the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra (SPCO) will perform English, French and American gems of the chamber music repertoire. Thursday, March 16 at the Capri Theater. Thanks to SPCO’s generosity you can attend this concert, Across the Channel, for free. Simply register for your free tickets, available on a first-come, first-served basis, at www.thecapritheater.org. Capri Theater, 2027 West Broadway Ave, 7pm.

3/18, 3/19 – Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Capri present: Northside Celebration. Free tickets at www.thespco.org/northside or the SPCO box office, 651-291-1144. North High School, 1500 James Avenue North, 4pm.

Community Coffee & Conversation, every Thursday hang out with neighbors and on first Thursdays meet officers of the Fourth Precinct in a casual and friendly setting at Serendipity Spot 3300 Lyndale Ave N, from 11:00 - Noon.

Tai Chi classes. Every Saturday at Homewood Studios, 2400 Plymouth Ave N, 9-10:30 am.

Mondays – Mahjong game play at Serendipity Spot, 3300 Lyndale Ave N, 1:00-3:30 pm. Free and open to all levels, Mahjong uses tiles and is similar to rummy. Game hosts available to teach beginners.

Satudays – Family Storytime. Webber Park Library, 11am. For children of all ages and their parent or caregiver. Talk, sing, read, write and play together in a format appropriate for young children. Share books, stories, rhymes, music and movement.

Visual Art Literacy Training (VALT) is a FREE program for youth participants with priority given to young people who live, go to school, or are otherwise connected to North Minneapolis. Juxtaposition Arts, 2007 Emerson Ave. N on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Jan. 3-March 23, from 4:30-7:30pm.

EDUCATION

3/4 – Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) is committed to being a safe haven for everyone. The district knows that recent current events have raised questions for some immigrant and refugee families. To offer support, MPS is joining with community partners to host a meeting to answer questions and connect families with resources both in our schools and in the community. Davis Service Center, 1250 W. Broadway Ave, 2-4:30pm.

Rediscover the joys of reading by volunteering with PPL’s afterschool youth programs. We strive to empower students from low-income communities to achieve success in school and in life through academic support and hands-on enrichment opportunities. Volunteer Tutor-Mentors work with youth on literacy skills, relationship-building, and enrichment activities. One-on-one support makes all the difference in helping students achieve their goals! Tutoring takes place on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday from 5 – 7pm or 6 – 8pm at 4046 Lyndale Avenue N. For more information, contact Caitlin (caitlin.dougherty@ppl-inc.org or 612.455.5108).

Homework Help is held Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 3:30 pm – 7 pm at North Regional Library during the Minneapolis Public School Year. Homework Help is for all students, K-12, at no cost and with no advance sign-up needed. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old, have some experience with school age children and be available 2 hours a week for one semester. Training is provided; a criminal background check is required. Applications may be submitted online at hclib.org or contact Barb McKenzie at 612-543-8579 or at bmckenzie@hclib.org.

Asian Media Access is looking to collaborate with area Hmong American families to pilot the Bicultural Parenting Curriculum developed by Dr. Blong Xiong, along with the University of Minnesota Extension. Asian Media Access has produced 6 videos to accompany the Curriculum. Parents will serve as Consultants and will be compensated to provide feedback on each training session, and will take turns to be the lead trainer for broader audience. We welcome parents to contact AMA at 612-376-7715 or email Tie.Oei@amamedia.org

Teen Tech workshop is held every other Thursday, North Regional Library, 5-7 p.m. Get creative and make music, videos, animation and other projects using high- and low-tech tools, everything from iPads and 3D printers to synthesizers and sewing machines. Led by the library’s Teen Tech Squad. More information at http://www.hclib.org/about/locations/north-regional

BE AWARE

Bonded ice can be difficult to remove from sidewalks. The City of Minneapolis has several sites where Minneapolis residents can pick up free sand to sprinkle on icy residential sidewalks. This service is available to Minneapolis residents only, not commercial or other properties. Quantities are limited to up to about a 5-gallon bucket full, and residents need to bring their own bucket. The sand is meant as a stop-gap alternative to improve sidewalk conditions until such time as the ice can be cleared. Sand is available at the following locations, 24 hours a day: 1809 Washington St. NE, at 18th and Jefferson and 2710 Pacific St., outside the

RESOURCES

Anyone can support the paper by donating at www.puc-mn.org/donate. Funds support newspaper operation and youth training program.
main Public Works gate between 27th and 28th avenues north.

Carbon monoxide (CO) exposure incidents increase during the winter months. CO is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that when inhaled, enters the bloodstream preventing proper absorption of oxygen, leading to illness and even death. If you suspect CO exposure, leave the area immediately taking your pets with you and tell others to do the same. Once you are safely away from the area, call 911 to report the suspected CO incident. Make sure you take proper steps to avoid exposure to CO and for more information about natural gas safety, visit CenterPointEnergy.com/BeSafe or call 612-372-4727 or 1-800-245-2377.

CenterPoint Energy is reminding customers about certain rights and their responsibilities as it relates to the Cold Weather Rule (CWR), which protects residential customers experiencing difficulty paying their natural gas bill from having their natural gas service disconnected between Oct. 15 and April 15, 2017. While the CWR does not prevent customers from being disconnected for nonpayment, customers who anticipate having trouble paying their entire natural gas bill, have received a Notice of Proposed Disconnection, or need gas service reconnected are all urged to call CenterPoint Energy to establish a payment plan. Call CenterPoint Energy to set up a payment plan at 1-612-372-4680 or 1-800-729-6164. For additional information, please visit CenterPointEnergy.com/ReadyForWinter.

You can watch Minneapolis government meetings and other city programming in high definition. Comcast channels 14, 799, and 859, and CenturyLink channel 14.

Recognizing that organics recycling is the greatest opportunity to reduce our trash, the board adopted changes to the Hennepin County Residential Recycling Funding Policy to allocate more money to cities for organics recycling programs.

To support city recycling programs, Hennepin County distributes all of the funding that it receives from the state’s Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment (SCORE) fund to cities. The county distributed $3.5 million in 2016. Food is the most prevalent material in the trash by far. Steps you can take to reduce food waste include using up all of the food that you buy, practicing meal planning, understanding the date labels on food, and properly storing your food. Find resources at www.savethefood.com.

The City of Minneapolis is addressing discrimination in businesses through education, extensive investigation, and enforcement. All people have the right to receive service, free from discrimination, from any business that obtains or solicits customers from the general public. Minneapolis bans discrimination in public accommodations based on race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital status, and status regarding public assistance. Find out what Minneapolis is doing to investigate and stop discrimination at http://www.minneapolismn.gov/civilrights/

In a unanimous vote, the Minneapolis Board of Education declared Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) a safe place for all students and families, regardless of their immigration status, national origin or language. The resolution passed by the Board strengthens existing MPS policies and practices. It is not the role of the district as an educational organization to ask about the citizenship or immigration status of any of its students or families, or to enforce federal immigration laws. It has been the practice of the district to only provide information when required by law or a valid court order. MPS will continue to ensure all students have equitable access to educational and extracurricular opportunities, including rigorous courses, engaging activities, high-quality athletics and supportive services, regardless of immigration status.

**BUSINESS & DEVELOPMENT**

The City of Minneapolis launched a new program Jan. 1, 2017 expanding opportunities for small businesses to compete for City contracts. As part of the Target Market Program, qualified small businesses will have the ability to bid for City contracts up to $100,000 alongside other similarly situated small businesses instead of larger, more established companies. Key goals of the program include increasing competition for contracts, expanding opportunities for historically underutilized small business and stimulating the local economy. For more information about the Target Market Program, visit www.minneapolismn.gov/finance/procurement/TargetMarketProgram.

**ACTION**

The City of Minneapolis is seeking public comment on the proposed Minneapolis Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) Preservation Fund ("Minneapolis NOAH Fund"). The purpose of the Minneapolis NOAH Fund is to assist housing providers with a mission to provide affordable housing to purchase naturally occurring affordable rental housing in Minneapolis for the purpose of preserving the affordability of these housing units. The Minneapolis Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) Preservation Fund is established to assist eligible preservation buyers to acquire and preserve NOAH rental property in Minneapolis that is at risk of increased rents in order to protect low-income tenants occupying such housing that are at risk of involuntary displacement. Comments are due no later than February 13, 2017 and should be addressed to the attention of Cherie Shoquist: cherie.shoquist@minneapolismn.gov.

**To place your notice:**

Email kenzieo@pillsburyunited.org
or call 612.302.3424

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**RIVER OF LIFE LUTHERAN**

22nd & Fremont Ave. N.,
612-521-7655
We are an empowered multicultural people of God serving and sharing God’s love in the North community.
Worship 10 a.m. Sunday
Hospitality and Welcome to all.

**ST. OLAF LUTHERAN CHURCH**

2901 Emerson Ave. N.
612-529-7726
Sunday School/Adult Bible Study at 9am
Worship at 10:30am Sunday
After School Program Tuesday 4:30-6:30 pm.
Pastor Dale Hubne
www.stolaflutheran.org
and on Facebook
We are LGBT affirming.
Diversity thrives here!

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**ACADEMIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**GRADUATIONS**

Moses Dukuly - College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, BS, Nursing
Char Lo - College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, BS, Nursing
Brigid Sullivan - College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, MS, Teaching
Hassan Sullivan - Columbus State Community College
Olaniran Akinyele - Saint Cloud State University, Graduate Certificate, Medical Technology Quality
Kadidia Camara - Saint Cloud State University, Master of Business Administration, Business Administration
Rita Anang - Mercy College of Health Sciences, Bachelor of Science in Nursing

**DEAN’S LISTS**

Connecticut College - New London, CT
Sophia McLaughlin
Elizabeth Rudd
University of Saint Thomas - Saint Paul, MN
Za Yang
Saint Olaf - Northfield, MN
Miranda Edwardson
Sophia Mickman
Columbus State Community College - Columbus, OH
Hassan Ahmed
University of Wisconsin, Stout - Menomonie, WI
Mason Couillard
Augustine Metzdorf
Hannah Vogel
Kong Xiong
Tsua Yang
Gustavus Adolphus College - Saint Peter, MN
Yee Lor
Lude Yang
Bethel University - Saint Paul, MN
Rebekah Hamley
John Smith
Elina Wolinski
University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire - Eau Claire, WI
Elizabeth Bain
Mong Xiong
University of Minnesota, Duluth - Duluth, MN
Adesbi Ayai
Hunter S Basche
Lenza Hassan
Kasden K Watson
Caleb K Derossier
Ms Iva S Johnson
Cynthia G Sinchi
Bemidji State University - Bemidji, MN
Nathaniel Hale
Joseph Riley
Mercy College - Des Moines, IA
Rita Anang

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Please inquire for pricing if you’d like a different size than the ones listed.
Born in Jackson, Mississippi and raised in South Central, Los Angeles, Nekima Levy-Pounds is not Minnesota Nice – though she has called the Twin Cities home for nearly 14 years. She has stood on the front lines of a highway protests, and she announced her mayoral candidacy outside the fourth precinct on the first anniversary of the police shooting of Jamar Clark. If elected, she promises an end to the status quo of disparities in the city.

Why did you decide to run for mayor now? I never had any intentions or ambitions to run for political office. I’m a civil rights attorney by trade. In November of 2014 my life changed dramatically when I went to Ferguson, Missouri about two months after Mike Brown was killed as a legal observer through the National Lawyers Guild. I was tear-gassed during my first night there. I saw young people who had also been tear gassed get back up, dust themselves off, and keep right on protesting, demonstrating and chanting. That was an eye opening experience for me about the importance of resilience and perseverance in the face of adversity. When I got back to Minneapolis, I was approached by young people saying that they were going to start Black Lives Matter Minneapolis and would I work with them. A year later, Jamar Clarke was killed by the Minneapolis Police Department. By then I had become the president of the Minneapolis NAACP and stood on the front lines with the community, demanding justice. During that experience, I became very frustrated by the response from the current mayor and our government officials. I felt that they were not responsive to the African American community. They didn’t take their concerns as seriously, and I felt there was a big push to justify the actions of the police department. Something in me began to change. I felt like I couldn’t just continue to stay on the outside, challenging the injustices within the system. Perhaps I needed to go on the inside and begin to fight and advocate for the changes our community was crying out for.

By May of 2016 I made the decision to leave my tenured position at the University of St. Thomas School of Law to run for mayor.

How would you describe your leadership style? I am not a Minnesota Nice leader. I am a direct, outspoken, and confident female leader. I’m also a problem solver. An example of that was working with my students at St. Thomas to repeal lurking and spitting laws in Minneapolis. I am willing to keep fighting until I see changes take place. I’m also a person who speaks truth to power. When there is a matter of injustice, I don’t worry about if my statements are popular or if they’re going to make people uncomfortable. I worry about the impact that will happen if I remain silent or if I’m worried about protecting myself.

You speak truth to power and are uncompromising about what you say are the “right things to do.” How will your spirit as an agitator manifest in your potential role as mayor? People will see that I do not believe in business as usual and maintaining the status quo. I believe that is a major part of why we do not have equity in the City of Minneapolis. Right now I believe that equity is happening to a certain small degree, in a piecemeal fashion. We need to be serious about having an equity platform, an equity agenda, for the city, and actually strategically carrying it out. I will not shy away from issues of racial justice. For too many people, having access to equal opportunity is a matter of life and death.

Have you ever had anyone say to you, “if you become my mayor, I lose you as my advocate?” I’m sure that there are some people that may feel that way, but I think that most people who have watched me closely know that I’ll actually be able to play an even greater role from inside of the system. I will always be an advocate for what’s in the interest of justice. I may not always be able to be in the street or blocking the freeway, but I will stand in solidarity with those who are demanding justice, making sure their voices are being heard.

A lauded Civil Rights attorney and previous president of the Minneapolis NAACP, Nekima Levy-Pounds has made a name for herself by fiercely and unflinchingly fighting for racial, social, and economic justice in the city and across the nation.
Dehn vows to collaboratively build a strong city for all

Now in his third term as the District 59B state representative, Raymond Dehn has voted to raise the minimum wage; he has been a champion for the restoration of voting rights for felons, and he helped lead efforts to reconstruct Nicollet Mall downtown.

Raymond Dehn is a quiet but determined change-maker. If elected mayor, the trained architect promises to be an empathetic relationship builder inside City Hall and to create a Minneapolis where people of all identities can thrive.

What motivated you to run for Mayor now? Over the past couple years, I’ve looked at what’s going on in the city – how things are working and where they might be able to work differently. I always say that we’ve invested trillions and trillions of dollars in social programs to try and bend the needle on poverty, and it’s had very little impact.

I’m trained as an architect, and I think of the built environment and the potential there. I will bring a unique set of skills and necessary ways of seeing the city that I don’t see as much within the current administration at City Hall.

Your campaign slogan is #ONOURSIDE and you’ve said that the people of Minneapolis need a mayor who knows what it’s like to walk in their shoes. Explain that. The life I’ve led is not typical of most elected officials. I grew up very poor, just a few miles north of Minneapolis in Brooklyn Park. In junior high I started drinking and using drugs. By the time I graduated high school I had a pretty severe addiction. To feed that addiction I did things that were against the law. I was arrested for a burglary and served seven months. In 1982 I received a pardon from the state of Minnesota, so I was able to live my life as though I had never committed the crime. I was able to turn my life around and move forward. I went back to school, studied architecture, ultimately moved to the Northside in 2000. I’ve owned a small business. Here I am today representing the district in the State Legislature.

You announced your candidacy on Facebook versus a public event, and you’re known for having a quieter presence as a politician. Is that a fair assessment? How would you describe your leadership style? I’ve been a quiet leader. I operate from a position that I want to see things get done, and I don’t really care who gets the credit. I’ve never done anything by myself – being an architect, you’re coordinating and working with a wide variety of stakeholders to get things done. My style is more collaborative, trying to bring people along versus being on the top and saying, “Here’s what we’re doing.” But if things aren’t going well, I’m more than happy to jump in and bring vision and certainty to a project or to a policy.

What do you see as your greatest advantage in this race? My greatest advantage is that I’ve been out getting my hands dirty trying to improve things in the city for most of my career. Being a design thinker, a strategic thinker, and being trained in architecture gives me a huge advantage. So does my ability to connect with people on a personal level.

What’s your biggest weakness in the race? My biggest disadvantage right now is getting people to understand that though I haven’t been visibly talking about my accomplishments, I’ve had them. 21.5 million dollars for Nicolet Mall was no small accomplishment. I was able to vote for all day kindergarten. It’s incumbent upon me to discuss those types of things and get people to recognize them.

If you get elected, what will your first priorities be? The newly elected mayor will have to evaluate the things directly underneath them – the police department and chief as well as the fire department and chief. In addition to that, my first priority will be developing solid working relationships with the city council. Ultimately if the city council and the mayor aren’t working together, the people in the city end up suffering.

Racial disparities exist in almost every quality of life indicator in the City of Minneapolis. How will you ensure that those disparities are reduced during your time in office? I will target the parts of the city where there are blatant and visible indicators of how those disparities affect every day life. We can assign certain census tracts and address issues of high unemployment, affordable housing, and public safety.

You’ve said that the City has to stop racing from crisis to crisis. How will you take a more proactive

Story continues on Page 18
Levy-Pounds continued from Page 17

heard and respected.

What makes you a better leader for Minneapolis than the others currently in the race? Who do you think is your biggest competitor? My biggest weakness is the spirit of complacency. I don’t think that it is an actual individual. Three of the other people in the race are currently politicians. I am operating from the perspective of someone who believes that the establishment is part of the problem. People who have unfortunately yielded to the status quo and businesas as usual. I am standing in opposition to that mentality that the status quo is okay and that the spirit of complacency is okay. We have to do more; we have to shift the paradigm in the city.

Even though the mayor is not officially in charge of Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS), how do you see yourself helping impact change at MPS? I am a fierce advocate for equity in education and making sure that every child has access to not just a basic education but a high quality education. So often an inadequate education can lead to the criminal justice system or lead someone to not be able to contribute meaningfully to society because they don’t know their worth or they can’t read well or they don’t have a solid career path or pathway to college. While the mayor does not have any direct responsibility or oversight of the school board, the mayor does have a voice, a bully pulpit, and influence with the local community in encouraging people to show up at school board meetings and to demand the changes that they want to see.

What do you see as your biggest weakness and greatest strength in this race? My biggest weakness is being a political newcomer. Many of the people who are running for the position of mayor have served in some type of leadership position inside of government. However, my biggest weakness is also my greatest strength. The fact that I’m not a political insider means that I’m going to bring fresh ideas to the table. I’m not stuck in the way the establishment currently does things. I’m not afraid to bring in some new ways of doing things and to challenge the status quo.

Some have said you’re a polarizing candidate due to your association with Black Lives Matter. How will you convince people that you will be mayor for all of Minneapolis? It’s interesting that as a black female candidate for mayor I get asked the question: will I represent the whole city? Number one, I believe that that question has racial undertones. Number two, white candidates are never asked the question, despite the fact that the racial disparities in this city in every key indicator of quality of life shows that in fact they have done a terrible job of representing the entire city yet they’re not questioned about it and they’re not held accountable for it. So as a black female candidate, I take issue when people ask me that question. That being said, of course I will represent the whole city. I care about all of humanity and the needs of all of the residents of our city.

Who inspires you? I’m inspired by many of the elders in the African American community. They have been in the fight for racial justice for decades and they have worked hard to hold the community together despite the oppression that we sometimes experience. Also, Shirley Chisholm, a national political leader and a black woman, inspires me. She ran under the platform “unbought and unbossed.” I admire those taglines, and I feel that my leadership style exemplifies that particular mantra. Fannie Lou Hamer is another person I greatly admire. Her mantra was “I’m sick and tired of being sick and tired.” I admire women of great strength and courage and who rise up against adversity when the system attempts to silence them. I have dealt with that personally.

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Dehn continued from Page 17

approach to governing our City? We’ve got some serious issues in the city – public safety, affordable housing, general conditions in some of our neighborhoods. We need to dig in and start working ahead of time. It has been a difficult past year in the city on a lot of fronts. Public safety in particular needs to be addressed. A real civilian review board for police conduct is critical. We need to actually incentivize the police department to do things differently as part of their contract. I believe we need to define community policing. We need to understand that different parts of the city need different types of policing, which ultimately means they might need different kinds of police officers. Ultimately how the police act with individuals does more for public safety than response to 911 calls. Albeit response to 911 calls are critical as well.

How do you think your own criminal background and having been given a second chance will impact how you see public safety as mayor? That’s a really tough thing for me. My predilection is to give people many chances, but I recognize that there are some individuals that we do need to be hard on because they do create a real public safety risk out in the community. We need to make sure we can identify what those differences are. For youth, there’s so much opportunity to set them on a different course in their lives. Once someone has done their sentence, paid their penalty, we need to have real opportunities for them. People are going to do what it takes to survive given their circumstances. Let’s make sure that those circumstances are in a situation where they can do what’s right not only for themselves but for the people around them.

What makes you a better leader for Minneapolis than the others currently in the race? My ability to work with people – collaboratively and up and down. I work at the state. I work with Democrats and Republicans. I work with the Governor’s office. I work with people in different departments. Those relationships are really critical, especially at a time where everybody is freaking out about what Donald Trump is going to do. There is a little part of me that freaks out about what might happen in St. Paul at the capitol with some of the Republican leadership and their agenda. Understanding that environment, understanding ways of connecting with those individuals, and having developed a reputation as someone who can work with folks at the capitol, is really unique from all the other candidates. I also think that having been a professional in the architecture profession and having been a small business owner give me a unique perspective.

Who inspires you? Dr. Josie Johnson – a leader in the civil rights movement. She has continued to speak about issues of injustice within the City of Minneapolis and the State of Minnesota. She does it with such grace and dignity. I hope that when I speak on those issues that I carry that as well.

How do you see yourself serving North Minneapolis as mayor? Where would you invest resources to, as you’ve said, “transform” neighborhoods like the ones in North? Especially given how many mayors have made and not kept this promise before. Far too many mayors have promised transformation in North Minneapolis. Although there has been some effort, it hasn’t really happened yet to the extent that I think people in North Minneapolis think it should. I look at projects like Midtown Exchange and what that did for Lake Street. It had a huge, huge impact, and it wasn’t the City alone. The county was involved at the same time. So making sure we align not just City efforts, but County efforts, State efforts, and even federal efforts to make sure that the resources are there to do something that’s not just about sustaining what’s existing but actually having a huge impact and being transformative. North Minneapolis won’t be just my focus but it will be something that we do need to move forward.

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Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) received $175,862 from the Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation and Affiliates to fund Career Ready Internships for low-income students attending the College.

“The Great Lakes Career Ready Internship Grant is an opportunity to provide paid internships for students, as well as build sustainable employer partnerships for the College,” said Julie Poyzer, senior strategist, MCTC Career Services. “The internship opportunities will provide students the chance to apply knowledge, gain or enhance work-related skills, and secure professional references in preparation of a job search after graduation. Additionally, our employer partners will be able to provide new job opportunities that will improve the local economy and help close the skills gap within the workforce.”

106 internships, resume help available
During the course of the grant, MCTC Career Services will provide 17 spring/summer 2017 internships, 48 fall 2017 internships and 51 spring 2018 internships with a pay rate of $12 per hour. “Interested students will have an opportunity to meet with a Career Services staff member to update their resume and cover letter so they can successfully apply for an internship,” said Poyzer.

The internships at MCTC will align with the following schools at MCTC: Art and Design, Science and Mathematics, Business and Economics, Information Technology, Liberal Arts and Cultural, and Nursing, Health and Public Services. Grant funds cover internship wages and other expenses as the grantees partner with employers in their communities. Once an intern is hired, students will be registered for an internship orientation and StrengthsFinder coaching to provide them the tools to increase their opportunity for success.

Increasing student success
“We are confident the internships will increase student success, as participants will have a chance to implement academic learning within their industry of study,” said Poyzer, who is also confident graduation rates will improve for students who have gained valuable employment experience.

The funding received by MCTC was part of a greater initiative that awarded $2.1 million to 16 community and technical colleges across Arkansas, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio and Wisconsin. During the spring 2017, fall 2017 and spring 2018 terms, the colleges will work to create more than 1,000 paid internships.

98% of interns continue school or graduate
The Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates first started funding the creation of paid internships for low-income students at four-year institutions in 2013. The organization has seen firsthand the benefits of paid internships, grantees reporting 98 percent of the participating students either graduated or continued in their academic programs the following semester. The organization is now seeking best practices for establishing and administering paid internships at two-year colleges like MCTC.

About Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation
Knowing that education has the power to change lives for the better, Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates was established in 1967 as a nonprofit group focused on a single objective: helping students nationwide prepare for an succeed in post-secondary education and student loan repayment. Since 2006, Great Lakes has committed more than $172 million in grant funding to promote higher education access and completion for students of color, low-income students and first-generation students.

For additional information, visit home.mygreatlakes.org
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