

NORTH NEWS

February 26, 2021

Serving the neighborhoods of North Minneapolis

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Kira Drescher thinks through a homework problem with tutor, Martha Hoeppner, ready to assist.
Photo by David Pierini

Accepting the Challenge

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A Northsider comes home to run the Fourth Precinct **Page 9**

COVID survivors tell harrowing tales of trauma, lasting symptoms **Page 17**

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Letter from the Editor Harry Colbert, Jr.

Breathe.

Take a good, deep breath. Close your eyes and revel in the calm.

Sadly, our relative calm will most likely be interrupted come March 8. Hopefully not the level of interruption we experienced this past summer, but prepare for an interruption nonetheless.

March 8 begins the jury selection in the murder case against Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis police officer who killed unarmed and handcuffed George Floyd. The May 25 killing of Floyd sparked a worldwide movement in the fight for human rights; in particular the rights of Black people. And while the movement was needed, many of the activities we could do without.

With some buildings in North Minneapolis vacant shells – constant reminders of the terror we endured – others have reemerged providing needed and even greater services than previously offered. Cub Foods on West Broadway – vandalized and looted during the uprising – is now offering community resources beyond the bread, eggs and milk of a typical grocery store. Much like North Market (a product of North News’ parent organization, Pillsbury United Communi-

ties), now Cub will offer “wrap-around” services for the store’s community, elevating the relationship from transactional to holistic.

So, there was some good that came from the unrest of this past summer, but the price was far, far too high. We can’t afford to dip into our mental savings account again. The rainy day fund is nearly depleted.

Last time around we were caught off guard. This time we know the signs and we know what to look for. Vigilant neighbors will be able to identify outside actors. Community leaders and city officials are working together to ensure peace.

Though the trial begins March 8, it’s expected to last well into April ... or longer. Opening arguments are scheduled for March 29 and North News plans to share the live feed on our Facebook page. We will also post any breaking details regarding the trial and/or community safety.

So again, breathe. Breathe for yourself. Breathe for your family, Breathe for your community. Breathe for George Floyd, who had the air in his lungs forced from his body.

Breathe.

NORTH NEWS

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INSIDE OUR "O"

Photos and text by **David Pierini** Staff Reporter

Churches observing Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17) needed to get creative with COVID-19 protocols discouraging touch and gathering indoors.

At Ascension Catholic Church, 1723 Bryant Ave. N., parishioners could drive up to the church to have Father Dale Korogi use swabs to trace an ash cross on their foreheads.

Ash Wednesday falls on the first day of Lent and starts the six weeks of penitence before Easter.



Clockwise from top: Mike Connor drove up for a blessing and ashes.

Gerardo Escamilla, Ascension's director of pastoral ministry and outreach, right, gave ashes to Atanasio Buecerra and Angelina Castellon.

The swab seems to apply a more defined cross than a thumb or finger tip.

In order to make Ash Wednesday as safe as possible, Father Dale Korogi used a single swab per parishioner.

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North Minneapolis at a glance

State lawmakers from Northside advance bill for small businesses rebuilds

The Minnesota House Capital Investment Committee advanced legislation that would authorize the use of appropriation bonds for businesses damaged during last summer's civil unrest in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The chief author of the bill is DFL Rep. Fue Lee (59A), whose district includes part of North Minneapolis.

"Through no fault of their own, entire communities of small businesses were devastated last summer, many of them owned by and serving Black, Indigenous, and communities of color," said Lee, who serves as the committee chair. "This is an unprecedented and extraordinary situation, and the one-time use of appropriation bonds in this manner provides us with a means to release a large amount of funds to provide this sorely needed assistance without putting the general fund's ability to provide for other essential areas of our state budget in jeopardy."

The bill authorizes the sale of \$300 million in appropriation bonds to help private businesses rebuild after damage sustained during last year's civil unrest. Minneapolis would receive \$200 with the rest to St. Paul.

The bill passed out of committee along party lines.

"We step up to help each other, no matter the zip code," said DFL Rep. Esther Agbaje (59B), a co-author of the bill, whose district also includes North Minneapolis. "Whether it's West Broadway, Lake Street, or University Avenue, inaction in assisting these communities will only continue our lack of investment in Black, Indigenous, and Minnesotans of color from owning and operating businesses in the communities where they live. As we continue to recover, we need to make sure these businesses aren't left behind."

Humanitarian group donates 400 pairs of shoes to SJA students

Samaritan's Feet recently distributed about 400 pairs of shoes to students of Sojourner Truth Academy.

As part of the National Day of Service earlier this year, the North High boys basketball team helped school staff pack "Hope Totes," which contained a new pair of athletic shoes, socks and a hygiene kit. Each tote had a note of encouragement from a supporter of Samaritan's Feet.

"Samaritan's Feet, has served at our school the past three years, and their commitment to Sojourner Truth Academy's school community and scholars is unmatched," said Julie Guy, executive director of Sojourner Truth Academy. "Even during a global pandemic, they are willing to come alongside us and meet the needs of our scholars by donating a new pair of shoes, socks and a Hope Tote. We are grateful for their continued partnership."

Samaritan's Feet International is a humanitarian aid organization committed to creating a world with zero shoeless children.

Sarah Clyne resigns from Northside Funders Group

The Northside Funders Group (NFG) recently announced the departure of

Sarah Clyne, who served as executive director for the past two years.

The NFG board praised Clyne's leadership during last year's uncertainty with the global pandemic and civil unrest following the police killing of George Floyd. NFG raised and distributed nearly \$4 million in grants to support small businesses in North Minneapolis.

"It has been an incredible role to live out my values and strengthen the com-

munities I care about most," Clyne said in a written statement. "I look forward to seeing NFG continue to embody this work in North Minneapolis."

Clyne did not disclose future plans and an NFG spokesperson said the board is considering staffing alternatives.



How to tell if it is a scam:



They ask for your personal or credit card information.

The Minnesota Department of Health and health care providers will never contact you and ask for your credit card, bank account, or Social Security number in order to get the COVID-19 vaccine.



They offer to sell you the vaccine.

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If you think you spot a scam, do not respond to it.

You can file complaints about scams with the Minnesota Attorney General's Office at [File a Complaint www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Complaint.asp](https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Complaint.asp).



U.S. Bank launches program to fund minority entrepreneurs, spur home ownership

Commitment includes \$25 million microbusiness fund for women of color business owners

By **Harry Colbert, Jr.**, Editor-in-Chief

U.S. Bank is making it easier for people of color – with an emphasis on Black individuals and business owners – to access funds and opportunities that were previously out of reach.

The U.S. Bancorp Community Development Corporation (USBCDC) fund is committing \$25 million in microbusiness grants and investments to women of color in efforts to close the ethnic wealth gap. The \$25 million is on top of the \$116 million the institution committed this past June in response to the killing of George Floyd and the civil unrest that followed. It was during that unrest that the West Broadway Avenue branch of the bank in North Minneapolis was heavily damaged and closed for a time being. The branch has since reopened, but a full reopening won't take place until later in the year.

Greg Cunningham, U.S. Bank's chief di-

versity officer, said the recent announcement is the bank's way of attempting to right past societal wrongs.

"The question for us is how do we support minority and Black-owned businesses, the community and our own employees," said Cunningham. "We realized we needed to change inside and out to attack this systematic problem of the racial wealth gap. U.S. Bank can't solve all systematic issues, but we can help to transform people's lives."

In efforts to transform lives U.S. Bank is partnering with nonprofits such as NEON and others to distribute the funds to emerging entrepreneurs who otherwise would not be able to qualify for traditional bank funding. According to a release announcing the contribution, the fund is focused on providing access to capital, technical assistance and networking. USBCDC will provide \$20 million in debt capital to Black-led and

women-focused community development financial institutions. U.S. Bank Foundation will provide \$5 million in grants to support expansion, capacity building, technical assistance and mentorship and networking.

In addition, Cunningham said U.S. Bank is addressing the gap in homeownership with the DREAM (Delivering Resources that Enable Access to Mortgage) initiative. The initiative includes financial education, youth outreach, and a mortgage loan officer development program focused on attracting underrepresented communities to mortgage as a viable career choice.

"Nothing is more important to building wealth than home ownership," said Cunningham. "(To do that) we need to hire Black mortgage officers. We need to hire and train Black loan officers."

That commitment to hiring cannot be just at the ground level.

"We need to move people to management at C-suite positions (at U.S. Bank)," said Cunningham.

The chief diversity officer said to do that, the financial institution mandates at least one person of color and one woman be considered for all future openings.

"All this is about helping real people. (The killing of) George Floyd opened a lot of people's eyes to the history and reality of Black people in America," said Cunningham. "People are viewing things through a more honest and more thoughtful lens."

"We believe access to capital for minority small business, housing and homeownership and workforce advancement creates opportunities for systemic change," said Andy Cecere, chairman, president and CEO of U.S. Bank in a statement.



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Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board



Upper Harbor Terminal closed in 2015. Photo by David Pierini

Upper Harbor Terminal plan on hold for environmental review

By David Pierini Staff Reporter

Critics of a proposed redevelopment of the Upper Harbor Terminal in North Minneapolis won a temporary delay after they demanded an environmental review of the 48-acre site.

The Minneapolis City Council was scheduled to vote on a final plan to green-light the project in February but city attorneys advised council members to hold off until potential impacts of the development to the community could be assessed.

A vote is expected for late summer or early fall.

"It is good to see the City of Minneapolis following bedrock environmental laws by not proceeding with the vote until (the) review is completed, but there are still concerns about how the current proposal will change our community," said Northsider Roxanne O'Brien, an organizer for Community Members for Environmental Justice. "The City needs to study alternatives during this environmental review. We do not want to see our community members displaced, left out of the economic benefits of large development projects or continue to be separated from the mental health, recreations, and spiritual benefits of the Mississippi River."

The city shut down the former barge terminal in 2015 because of the potential for the invasive Asian carp to enter local waters. Now an unsightly hulk, the city wants to see the site developed with apartments, office and retail space, a park, restaurants and an outdoor music venue for up to 10,000 people.

Many North Minneapolis residents are divided over whether such an ambitious redevelopment would mean boon or bust to the community.

Some, like O'Brien, see the current proposal as a fast-track to gentrification, pricing people from their homes, destroying a rich cultural heritage and further widening the wealth gap between the city's white and Black residents.

Others, however, see an opportunity to improve life in an oft-neglected part of the city. Various committees with local cit-

Continued on page 17



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catch up with our Council Members



WARD 4:
**Phillipe
Cunningham**



UHT Coordinated Plan Update

Neighbors,
The Upper Harbor Terminal (UHT) project is coming together.

At the last Business, Inspections, Housing, and Zoning (BIHZ) meeting (Feb. 16), an update was given on the engagement and outreach efforts for the months of December 2020 and January 2021. The purpose of this update was to update the city council and broader public on the planning progress. We had a chance to hear from three key people involved in the engagement process: Markella Smith, Northsider and co-chair of the UHT Collaborative Planning Committee (CPC), Brandon Champeau from United Properties and Erik Hansen Director of Economic Policy & Development from the City's Community Planning and Economic Development Department.

Some of the highlights from the updates on engagement and outreach presentation include:

- The CPC's definition of community
- The CPC members have had or attended more than 35 meetings since the team began meeting in mid 2019
- Affordable housing parts of the plan
- Community ownership of the land
- Two online open houses were held, that have been recorded and can be viewed on the City's YouTube channel
- Four online events with community partners
- Six project updates to North and Northeast neighborhoods organizations
- Three interviews on culturally specific radio stations
- A digital campaign that included updating the project website, producing a project video, social media, emails to the 1700 subscribers, and an online survey

Themes that resonated through the engagement and outreach survey was community benefits, public realm/infrastructure/parks, and implementation. The community benefits that the en-

agement results showed was that the UHT project supports the recognition of the institutional harm that has been done to African Descendants of Slavery (ADOS), creating mixed housing that includes avenues for building generational wealth, and retaining community ownership of the land, as well as getting money back to the community to be invested in meaningful ways that benefit current Northsiders.

What the survey showed for the benefits of the public realm/infrastructure/parks theme was that pedestrian connections and making sure the area is accessible by public transportation and having a dedicated space that preserves the natural environment of the area are part of the plan that resonated with the respondents. Also, the implementation theme focus was put on making sure organizations that will be working within the project are managed properly and vetted, have accountability, and that BIPOC communities are engaged at every level in the project.

When I took office, I knew the magnitude of the impact of this project and what it could mean for Northsiders, that's why I pushed for the creation of the Collaborative Planning Committee. The CPC is comprised of our community members and they have been working extremely hard on the Coordinated Plan for this project. This update was packed with a lot of information, and I have only shared a portion of that here. You can watch the presentation on the city's YouTube channel (watch the Business, Inspections, Housing, and Zoning meeting) and visit www.upperharbormpls.com/ In community, Councilmember Cunningham ward4@minneapolismn.gov (612) 673-2204

Minneapolis City Council members Phillipe Cunningham (Ward 4) and Jeremiah Ellison (Ward 5) were inaugurated in January 2018. We have invited them to keep in touch with the community through this monthly column in our newspaper.



WARD 5:
**Jeremiah
Ellison**



If you are feeling confused about how and when you will be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, or are wondering how safe it is and what to expect, there are two extremely helpful resources that are newly available from the state and the city that I encourage you to check out.

The State of Minnesota has launched a new web tool called the COVID-19 Vaccine Connector. All Minnesotans who have not yet been vaccinated are encouraged to sign up, regardless of their current vaccine status. The Vaccine Connector will help all Minnesotans find out when, where and how to get their COVID-19 vaccine. Minnesotans can sign up at www.mn.gov/vaccineconnector. Minnesotans unable to sign up online can call (833) 431-2053 for assistance signing up over the phone. Translation is available by phone in all languages.

The City of Minneapolis has also developed a new web tool to help residents find information in multiple languages on the current status of the vaccination rollout, what to expect when getting the vaccine, and the safety of getting a vaccine. This web tool is one effort in the city's commitment to ensure equity, justice and transparency in distributing the vaccine, and acknowledges past trauma for those who have experienced discrimination in medicine and vaccinations. Find the city's new COVID-19 vaccine web tool on the city website, www.minneapolismn.gov/coronavirus/vaccines.

Switching gears, I want to make sure folks are aware that an online meeting on the city's work to transform community safety has been scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 2. An RSVP will be posted to the City's web page soon (www.minneapolismn.gov/government/programs-initiatives/community-safety/). This past summer, the Minneapolis City Council passed a resolution committing to creating a transformative new

model for cultivating safety in Minneapolis. Since then, internal work groups and key stakeholders have been exploring ways to develop an integrated community safety response that works for everyone. If you're unable to attend the meeting, you can always stay up to date by visiting the city's community safety webpage, which has updated information on public-health-oriented responses for preventing violence, alternatives to police response, and law enforcement reforms. You can also share your thoughts about what community safety looks like to you.

One final update I'll share is the city council's recent approval of a new ordinance that prohibits the city from buying facial recognition technology or using data derived from it, with very narrow exceptions. Minneapolis now joins Boston, San Francisco and more than a dozen other cities across the country that have either banned or limited the use of the technology. Studies have shown facial recognition technology to be significantly less accurate in identifying people of color, women, and other groups, raising concerns that incorrect identifications by law enforcement would further harm already disadvantaged communities. I was glad to support this ordinance and am grateful to my colleagues who championed it.

As always, there are several ways to be in touch with me, so don't hesitate to reach out. You can sign up for the Ward 5 newsletter, RSVP to my weekly virtual office hours (Saturdays at 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.) or request a one-on-one meeting with me at www.minneapolismn.gov/ward5

A Northsider comes home to run the Fourth Precinct

By David Pierini, Staff Reporter

As a homicide detective for the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD), Charlie Adams had a knack for getting a tight-lipped suspect or witness to talk.

This was the kicker: “You know, I’m from the Northside, right?”

It’s a clear piece of shorthand. It signals to the person being interviewed that Adams needed only a faint whiff to smell the bull in a story. It also commanded instant respect and trust because they were talking to one of their own.

Adams’ ties to home turf are what guides him as the new inspector of the Fourth Precinct. He is the first Northsider to ever run the Fourth and his appointment sparks hope for many Northsiders feeling imperiled by surges in violent crime and a record shortage of police officers.

“The chief wanted me to come up to the Northside,” said Adams, 58, a 34-year veteran of MPD who started at the Fourth Precinct in January. “I’m here and I’m happy. This is a community-led precinct. I can’t solve anything or cure violence without the help of community.”

Longtime civil rights activist Spike Moss thanks God for allowing him to live long enough to see the appointment of Adams. Moss has been an unapologetic irritant to city and police officials over the years, fighting racism and police brutality and advocating for the hiring of Black officers.

“I (also) wanted to see Black police officers have rank and run the precincts. This is special to me,” Moss said of Adams’ promotion. “We weren’t going to get a fair shake if the precincts were controlled by men breaking the law with their badge.”

“He brings decency, respect and the ability to communicate. That’s all we ask for is for someone to be able to communicate with us like a human being.”

Adams finds himself in a unique spot ... a Black man helping to lead a department under fire since last May, when a white MPD officer, Derek Chauvin, killed George Floyd while kneeling on his neck in custody. Chauvin’s murder trial begins March 8.

The unrest that followed Floyd’s killing prompted calls to defund the police, and rage from the community in part led to dozens of police officers leaving the force. The anger, the exodus of cops and economic and social stress created by a global pandemic fed an uptick of crime.

Now the city is at odds with how to balance public safety and much-needed re-

forms in policing. At the same time, residents in his own precinct have sued the city over inadequate policing in North Minneapolis.

With public safety in Minneapolis in flux, Adams could shine a light on how police and community can serve one another.

“I think he’s the right person and at the right time,” said Lisa Clemons, a retired MPD officer who founded the street outreach group, A Mother’s Love. “He’s a grassroots guy, raised in North Minneapolis and he understands the dynamics and needs of this community.”

“He has the capacity to wear blue and stay Black. If anyone can bridge the gap with community, it’s him.”

One early test came on Jan. 14 in the Victory neighborhood. Police got a call from a man being threatened by another man with a gun. After a brief chase with the suspect ended in a crash, the suspect open fired on police as they were trying to remove him from his vehicle. Officers returned fire and the man eventually surrendered after another officer fired a non-lethal round.

Adams called in community allies, such as A Mother’s Love, We Push for Peace and the Rev. Jerry McAfee, to meet with anxious neighbors.

“He knows everybody and he’s not waiting for them to come to him. He comes to us,” Clemons said.

Adams has always appreciated the help. He could be on a case and a real break would come through a friend, a relative, even his mother, who may have heard something at church, the grocery store or elsewhere in the community.

He says he cleared 90 percent of his cases when he worked in homicide, “not because I’m smart. That was the community doing that.”

A lengthy career, a family affair

Adams grew up in low-income federal housing and at an early age understood the indignity of white police viewing Black people with suspicion. He had periodic encounters with police as a kid when he was out and about with friends. There was one instance when his brother was getting ready for prom and about to take his father’s Cadillac when stopped and had it



Inspector Charlie Adams now heads Minneapolis’ Fourth Precinct. Photo by David Pierini

towed away.

“They saw it parked and thought people like us shouldn’t have a car like that,” Adams said. “I was upset and my mom jumped in and said ‘You need to be part of the system if you want it to change.’”

After stints as a security guard and bus driver, Adams went through the academy and joined MPD in 1987. In his early days on the force he bristled over how Black officers were treated. One of his mentors, the late civil rights activist, Rod Edwards, encouraged him to advocate for diversifying the mostly white, male MPD.

In 2007, he was part of a group of Black officers to sue the department for racial discrimination that included being passed over for promotion and overtime. The officers settled with the city and one of the other officers involved in the lawsuit is now Chief Medaria Arradondo, the city’s first Black chief.

Over the course of his career, Adams has worked in four of the city’s five precincts. He served in Internal Affairs and in the Juvenile and Homicide units. Prior to being named inspector of the Fourth Pre-

inct, Adams was commander of the Violent Crimes Division.

He is one of three from the Northside Adams family to work for the Minneapolis Police Department. His brother, Tony Adams, was an MPD officer for 30 years, and helped run the Police Athletic League. He retired and now runs security for the Minnesota Timberwolves.

Charlie Adams’ son, Charles Adams III, was the longtime resource officer at North High School before he left MPD last year to head security for the Minnesota Twins. He remains a beloved mentor in North Minneapolis, especially as the Polars head football coach. The senior Charlie Adams has served as an assistant coach of the team for 10 years.

The challenge ahead

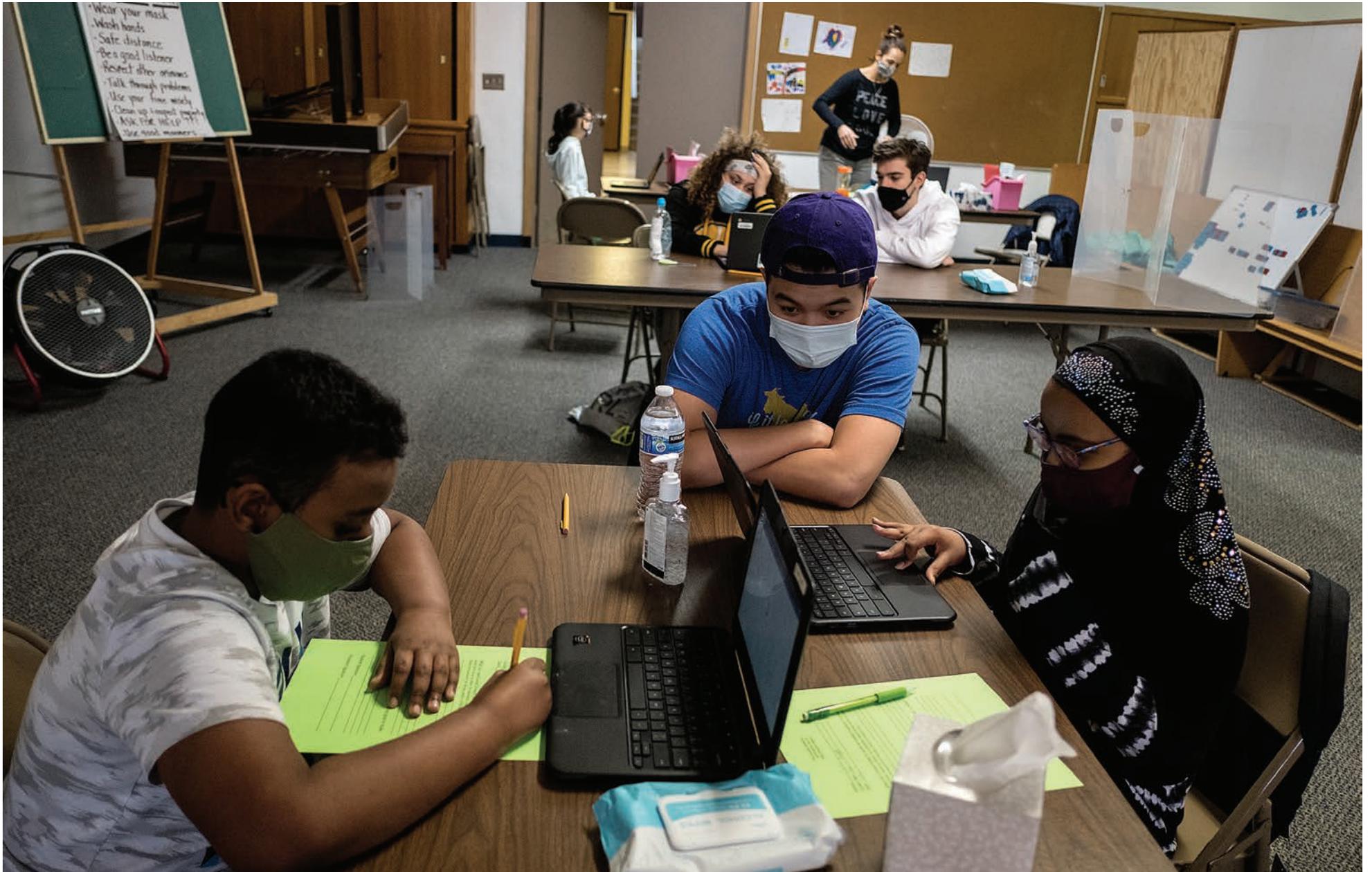
Adams is a student of Sir Robert Peel, who is considered the father of modern policing. As England’s home secretary, he established the country’s first full-time organized police department. That was in 1829, but Peel’s nine principles of policing echo many of today’s calls by reformers for an ethical police force.

To hear Adams talk about community partnerships is a philosophy seemingly shaped by Peel’s most famous quote, “The police are the public and the public are the police.”

Adams wants to bring that teamwork approach to two hot spots in North Minneapolis; the intersections of Lyndale and Broadway avenues and Lyndale and Lowry avenues. He wants to put more police in those areas but also partner with peace and crime prevention groups to address issues like substance abuse.

During his officers’ confrontation with the armed man in the Victory neighborhood last month, he said some of his officers worried there would be backlash for the return of fire. However, the positive response from people nearby, and Adams’ move to call in community partnerships “should open their eyes.”

“The Northside supports you,” Adams said he told his officers. “When have you ever heard of people suing the city for a lack of protection. This is our precinct and we have citizens that have our backs.”



Siblings Ibrahim and Ibstan Ibrahim finish homework with tutor Phi Truong.

Camden Collective is homework help and social balm in the time of COVID-19

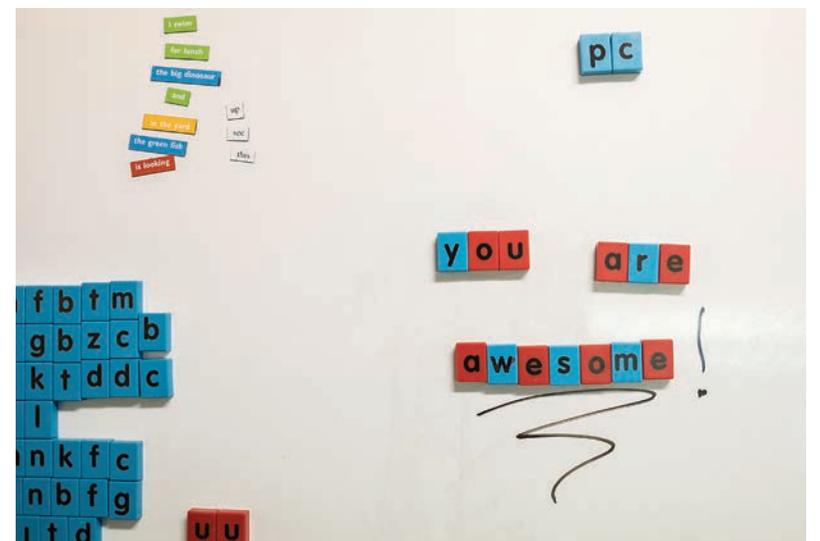
Photos and text by David Pierini Staff Reporter

As the fear of a swiftly spreading coronavirus shutdown schools and social gatherings, things soon “felt weird” to sixth-grader Ibrahim Ibrahim.

“It was different,” he said. “It felt like a zombie apocalypse.”

Ibrahim said so in a space free of an apocalyp-

tic feeling and in the company of other kids and a few adults shepherding them through game play and homework. Two afternoons a week, the Camden Collective Learning Center brings a sense of pre-Covid-19 normalcy to more than a half-dozen kids – and the adults who tutor them – in the basement of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4150 Dupont Ave. N.



A message for kids joining the Camden Collective Learning Center on a recent February afternoon.



Ibstam Ibrahim, right, and Kira and Krysta Drescher spell out words with magnetic letters.



Tutor and student work on clearly recognizing and writing numerals.

Camden Collective was the idea of teacher Anna Gerdeen, a resident of the Camden-Webber neighborhood who worried that students in her community would regress from remote learning to peers from families able to afford reliable internet access or a private tutor. The idea of families coming together to form learning pods began to crop up in July and August when it became apparent that many school districts, including Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS), would start the year in distance learning.

Students had already felt isolated having been cut off from sharing a physical space with friends and classmates since March. MPS administrators also noticed declines in math and reading performance they attributed in part to the absence of the kind of one-on-one time with a teacher that naturally occurs in a classroom.

"I think it's important for kids to have a structure and sense of community and that's what we're trying to build with a small group of kids," Gerdeen said. "We're not trying to replicate the entire school day. This is a place where they can feel like they're a part of something, get some homework done, play games

and just be kids."

For now, the Learning Center runs for two hours after the school day each Tuesday and Thursday. Everyone is required to wear a mask and the room is large enough for students and volunteer tutors to break up into small clusters of two or three with social distancing in mind.

The volunteers are a mix of former

teachers and teachers in training. The first 30 minutes is for a group activity, like with the game charades, then an hour or so of homework, followed by free time for kids to play board games, draw pictures or finish up homework.

Each child fills out a form at the beginning of each session to list to-dos and goals for the two-hour period.

"Even as a parent, I think it's nice to

come to a space that's different from the confines of your own home," said Martha Hoepfner, the lead tutor. "Even if they are not fully integrated with other kids, we do a nice group. It's socialization for mental health. It's hard to see the kids in isolation. Human beings are meant for that."

Continued on page 17



Each session begins with a group activity to engage in-person socialization.



Siblings Ibstam, right, and Ibrahim Ibrahim play a game with tutor André Borka.

Back To School With Caution

Photos by David Pierini Staff Reporter

School bells in some of Minneapolis Public Schools rang on the morning of Feb. 8 for the first time in nearly a year as some of the city's youngest students returned to school.

Schools shut down last March because of COVID-19, but Gov. Tim Walz recently allowed districts to offer families an option to send their kids to school with safety precautions in place.

Many pre-schoolers and kindergartners started back while first through fifth grades returned later in the week. Middle and high school students will continue with remote learning.

Superintendent Ed Graff greeted students at Jenny Lind Elementary School, remarking he was looking at the students' eyes for smiles that were covered by masks.



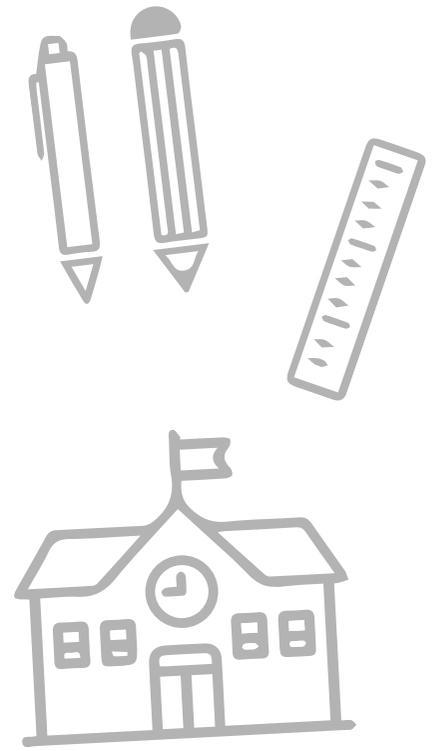
Jenny Lind Elementary High 5 students maintained proper distance from one another in a reading circle to start of their first day at school.



Drinking fountains are off limits with the COVID-19 pandemic underway. Each student will need to carry their own water bottle.



Tiffany Bracey, the school's food service coordinator, made sure each returning student got their breakfast.



Jenny Lind Elementary staff members greeted students as they arrived by bus this morning.



Pre-school teacher Jenny Trammell shows one of her High 5 students their cubby to store their coat and backpack.

University of Minnesota set to offer free tuition to lower economic students



Seeing this sign on campus will come at no cost to students from families making \$50,000 or less. Photo courtesy of the University of Minnesota

By **Harry Colbert, Jr.**, Editor-in-Chief

The University of Minnesota is offering free tuition.

The university announced it will offer free tuition to students of households annually making \$50,000 or less. The news is being celebrated by area families and educators as removing a steep barrier to higher education.

"I think it's a great step in the right direction. What's equally important is enrolling and retaining students of color and seeing that they graduate as debt free as possible," said Yusuf Abdullah, principal at Patrick Henry High School in North Minneapolis.

Abdullah said beyond the freeing of a financial burden, students need additional attention.

"(It's) then working twice as hard to place them in their prospective careers. It's bigger than just tuition," said Abdullah.

The free tuition would be throughout the five campuses within the University of Minnesota system (Twin Cities, Crookston, Duluth, Morris and Rochester). Students from families making less than \$50,000 attending the U already have much of their tuition covered by federal and state grants and need-based scholarships, but there is still a gap that leaves as many as 2,800 state students on the

hook for the remaining costs. The new initiative, approved by the University of Minnesota Board of Regents on Feb. 12, addresses those costs. Students would still have to cover room and board and other fees if they choose to stay on campus.

"I think that is a great equity-based move on the part of the U," said Alex Leonard, a North Minneapolis school counselor.

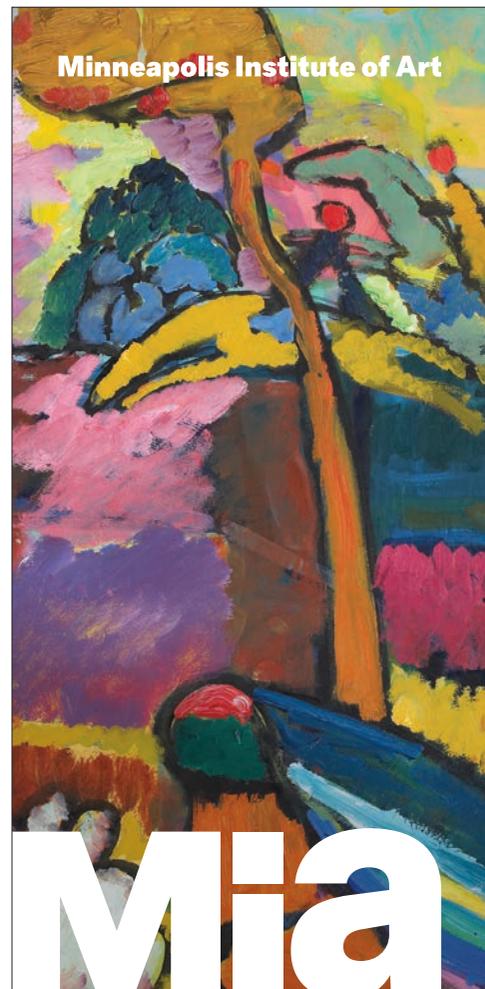
Leonard, like Abdullah, said there is a need for full wrap-around services for students, which he hopes the university will address.

"I hope they provide the necessary supports for students coming from that economic background as their needs will be different than their typical students," said Leonard.

The counselor encouraged the University of Minnesota and other schools to remove the barrier of costs for all students, regardless of economic status.

"I believe this type of move begs the broader question if whether or not education should be free in general or how to put a cap on the cost of college," said Leonard. "The cost of college in the past 50 years has gone from something you could pay for out of pocket, to a massive debt that many will never be able to pay off."

The plan is set to take effect in the coming fall semester.



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Vasily Kandinsky, *Study for Improvisation V (detail)*, 1910, oil on pulp board, gift of Bruce B. Dayton 67.34.2

Polars star Davon Townley to roam the gridiron at Penn State

Photos and text by
David Pierini Staff Reporter

North Minneapolis was already giddy with one of its own about to play on football's biggest stage. With Tyler Johnson lining up to catch passes from Tom Brady in the Super Bowl, how could the Polar nation be any prouder?

North Community High School senior Davon Townley made the week leading up to the Super Bowl even more exciting when he announced his commitment to play football at Penn State.

The 6-foot-7, 200-pound Townley picked the Nittany Lions from more than 20 other college offers, including Nebraska and Washington.

"I'm super excited and grateful and just blessed to be in this position," Townley said during a Feb. 3 signing ceremony at North. "It means a lot. I worked very hard and I just want to make my family, my friends, and my community happy."

Townley becomes the first member of his family to attend college, but just the latest Polar to attract the attention of big college football programs.

Prior to the start of the 2020 high school season, Polar quarterback Zach Yeager, a 4.0 student, turned down offers from Ivy League schools to sign with North Carolina A & T.

Blazing a trail for more Polar success was Johnson, who earned a Super Bowl ring on Feb. 7 with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in his rookie season. Johnson led the Polars to a state championship final as quarterback before transitioning to wide receiver for the University of Minnesota.

North High football coach Charles Adams said Townley got Penn State's attention as a sophomore, when he recorded four sacks at US Bank Stadium in a state semifinal game.

"I'm proud of any kid from my program that competes and does what they're supposed to do," Adams said. "Davon has a lot of upside and he can be a pro if he sticks with it and continues to work hard."

"But I'm excited that the big programs are starting to recognize the kids here in the city."

If you think Townley is big now, re-



Davon Townley reveals his choice to play football for Penn State University.

cruting analysts said he will need to bulk up.

Recruiting analyst Allen Trieu described Townley as playing a physical game with attitude and intensity, showing explosiveness when he dunks for the Polar basketball team.

"(He) needs to work on technique but (the) upside is huge," Trieu said in an article published by CBS 24/7 Sports. Townley ranked 19th nationally among strong-side defensive end prospects in the 2021 recruiting class. "The ceiling is that of a Power Five starter and potential Sunday player."



Townley during the Polars undefeated 2020 season.

Polar Pride: HBO 'Real Sports' highlights connection between coach and community

By **Maurice Hudson**, Intern Reporter

After civil unrest unfolded in Minneapolis last year, rebuilding and healing the community was the goal for the future.

Building community has always been the focus of Charles Adams III. North High School football coach Adams was featured on the 27th season premiere of "Real Sports With Bryant Gumbel," on HBO. The episode highlighted how in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, Adams and fellow Minneapolis police officers developed and built trust with the players on the football team and the community. The former officer, who is now head of security for the Minnesota Twins, said it was a blessing to be recognized by somebody like Bryant Gumbel and it's good to have outlets showing positive light in the community.

"You have to be here to really know and

experience the overall pride that we have been building within our team and the Northside," Adams said.

Adams said the time on the show has helped people understand the positive things that are really happening in Minneapolis and he pointed to the recent Super Bowl and a recent player signing as examples of that positivity.

Tampa Bay Buccaneer and former Polar, Tyler Johnson, and current Polar defensive lineman, Davon Townley, Jr., have been a beacon of hope for the Northside. Johnson contributed to a "once in a lifetime" milestone by helping the Buccaneers capture a Super Bowl win over the favored Kansas City Chiefs. Adams coached and mentored Johnson while the wide receiver suited up for the blue and white from 2012-2016.

"Tyler's accomplishments show people what we have always known," Adams said.

Adams said Johnson being part of the Buccaneers' success displays hope for the Northside.

"It means so much, for the simple fact of him being a Polar and representing the Northside," Adams said. "Him being on the biggest stage in the world and winning a world championship, it really sheds a positive light in North Minneapolis."

A positive light

The Polars have generated consistent success in terms of athletes and academics. Senior defensive lineman Townley has made a name for himself while wearing the Polar uniform and recently signed to play for the Penn State Nittany Lions.

Adams said he believes Townley is going to go into the program and do well, but the success isn't going to come easy.

"I was honest with him," Adams said. "I told him it's not going to be easy and it's going to be tough, but you have to embrace the situation and you have to continue to have pride in yourself and make yourself the most excellent person you can be."

With the success on and off the field for the Polars, Adams said he believes that this is only the start for transforming North Minneapolis.

"It really opens up opportunities for more kids and more people on the Northside," Adams said.



Screenshot HBO Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel/YouTube



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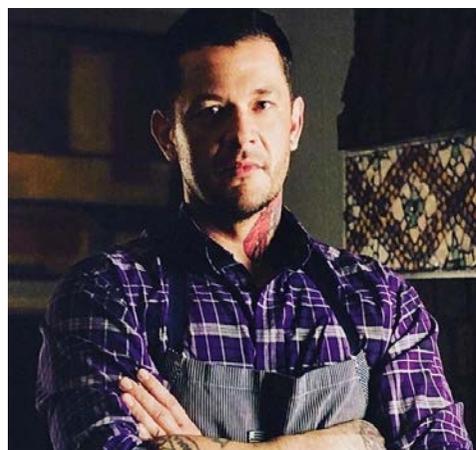
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COVID survivors tell harrowing tales of trauma, lasting symptoms

By Maurice Hudson, Intern Reporter

"There was a point in time where I had to ask the doctor if I was going to die."

Recalling his painful experience with COVID-19, Joshua Hedquist, executive chef for Macalester College and COVID-19 survivor, said he experienced some peculiar and rather scary effects from the virus.



Chef Joshua Hedquist spent three weeks hospitalized due to COVID-19. Photo courtesy of Joshua Hedquist's Facebook page

Hedquist said it all started when he couldn't taste anything and then it was a downhill process from there. The chef said he started to develop COVID ulcers that were in his sinuses and throat and developed "COVID rashes" all over his body.

"I couldn't drink water at times because it hurt so much and it was hard breathing because I had all this stuff going on in my esophagus where things were swollen or inflamed," Hedquist said. "I was telling my girlfriend to facetime me every two hours at night to make sure I'm not going to suffocate at night because of this."

Hedquist said initially he thought COVID-19 would feel similar to a



Dayna Hudson is once again smiling after her bout with COVID-19. Photo courtesy of Dayna Hudson

normal common cold, but the virus is very unpredictable. He said he got to a point that a quarantine wouldn't be enough, he decided after two weeks of enduring his effects of COVID-19 to go to the Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC).

During his three-week stay at HCMC, Hedquist said it was overcrowded and understaffed and he had to wait in a closet for more than 18 hours. He said he went almost a week without proper care because of the number of patients to nurses and doctors.

"I was there six days, didn't shower and I got rotten skin hanging off my body because I didn't have a proper room," Hedquist said. "But, when the nurses and doctors came to see me, I thanked every single one of them for the work they did."

"It (COVID-19) is like this thing inside of you that you can't see, you can't defeat, it's kicking your ass, and there's nothing anyone can do," Hedquist said.

Upon returning home, Hedquist said the recovery to his full self was taxing.

"I got out of the hospital and then it probably took me a month after that to where I could start eating normally," Hedquist said

Throughout the process, Hedquist said that he has lost 35 pounds and he is still working on getting back to where he was to this day.

Dayna Hudson, professional oil painter and COVID-19 survivor, experienced a different set of symptoms from the virus. Hudson said when she

contracted the virus her first symptom was the loss of smell.

"It (loss of smell) wasn't from congestion," Hudson said. "My sinuses stopped working like it was non-existent and my nerve endings were not sending signals to my brain."

Alongside the loss of smell, Hudson said she was experiencing shooting pains and joint pain that was caused by the virus.

"I have fibromyalgia and I had extreme shooting pains where I could barely walk without feeling like I was stepping on nails," Hudson said.

Hudson said she felt the pain starting at her chin down to her ribs and it would come about at various times throughout the day.

"It follows a pattern and it felt kind of cold and kind of hot like electricity shooting in that area," Hudson said. Hudson said she is still recovering from symptoms of COVID-19 after testing negative for the virus.

"I still experience a thing called phantom smell and it has happened at least a dozen of times since recovering," Hudson said. "I have flashes of smells that are heightened and smells like burnt ash."

Despite the horrendous experiences that Hedquist faced, he said he wouldn't take it back and he's using what he went through to educate people on the dangers of the virus.

"I think I'm the right guy for this to happen to," Hedquist said. "I sit on the board of directors for nonprofits here locally, I'm a small business owner, I work at a college, and I'm outspoken, therefore, I feel like I can reach more individuals and tell them my story to give them perspective."

Upper Harbor Terminal Continued from page 7

izens in direct discussions with developers and investors say they have helped shape the current plan to bring benefits to the Northside, including jobs, entrepreneurial opportunities and outlets for arts, entertainment and recreation.

"I understand the fear and discomfort, but if we are involved and we're intentional about it, we have the chance to do something different," said Markella Smith, a Northsider and member of the Collaborative Planning Committee. "We can't continue down the same path of disinvestment."

Smith said the community performing art center, which will be owned by First Av-

enue, would provide jobs, training in theater arts and project management experience for youth.

"Just saying no to something and not having options to replace it is not productive," Smith said. "This could be a game-changer for North Minneapolis. I see it, for the life of me, I see it. I wish I could explain the hope I have to everyone else."

The entertainment venue is the most contentious piece of the plan. Critics worry about everything from increased traffic to entertainment events too expensive for Northsiders to enjoy.

The scope of a privately owned venue limits potential, some say, to what could be a larger park that would foster a connection between Northsiders and river life.

Another committee, one overseeing the development of the park, put in writing to city officials its objections to the entertainment venue as proposed.

Colleen O'Connor Toberman, river corridor program director for Friends of the Mississippi River, hopes the delay and the results of the environmental impact study will steer the city in a different direction.

"There needs to be a plan that responds to Northsiders first and foremost," she said. "The alternatives haven't been considered."

Camden Collective Continued from page 7

The Learning Center ran for a few weeks during the fall semester at a different Northside church before it temporarily shut down when the state issued stricter guidelines on social gatherings as transmission numbers rose sharply.

The collective, a non-profit, started the Learning Center back up in the middle of January in a spacious recreation room in the basement of Salem. The church has also offered additional space should the collective grow, which, Gerdeen says, is the goal.

To show the collective's potential of being more than an after-school program, volunteers distribute 75 boxes of food every Wednesday evening. The food boxes are funded through the Sanneh Foundation.

"Our intent is to expand and continue providing youth educational support and mentoring even when students go to school full time," Gerdeen said. "There's some fabulous talent coming in and helping us right now."

Families can email info@thecamden-collective.org for enrollment information. You can also visit www.thecamdencollective.org

School of New Music to open on the Northside

By **Maurice Hudson**, Intern Reporter

The Minneapolis School of New Music (MSNM) is set to open this fall.

MSNM is a tuition-free charter school for grades 6-8 that will provide an extra outlet and opportunity to the youth through music-immersion education. The school at 4021 Thomas Ave. N. will be aligned with the Minnesota Guild of Public Charter Schools and its overall purpose being a music-focused college-prep liberal arts school with a project-driven learning structure.

Executive director and founder of MSNM, Bart Johnson, said the vision of the school will incorporate and ignite the students' creative side through music while obtaining a valuable education.

"We really want to amplify the voices of young people, give them a space and the encouragement to be creative and get their voice and creativity out in the world," Johnson said.

With the school just an idea in 2016,

Johnson said they wanted to give the youth of Minneapolis and the surrounding areas a piece of the "music pie" the community has to offer.

"I wanted the school to be in Minneapolis proper because I think that we have a strong presence with First Ave (the historic music venue featured in the movie 'Purple Rain,' Prince and with all the iconic Minneapolis music and people in the scene," Johnson said.

Johnson said the school will take an alternate approach to student's academics by steeping its subjects with music.

"We take a humanities approach to learning about things that happened in the world," Johnson said. "Literature, history, arts,

and music all happen at the same time and they're influenced by each other."

Johnson said integrating the concepts into each lesson taught would help improve the students' overall engagement and help them tie the values together.

"As a teacher, I would often hear when the social studies teacher would get together with the English teacher, and they'd teach a unit together because it seemed to fit in a chronological time frame," Johnson said. "Why not do that all the time? Music is a part of everyone; it is fundamental to human culture. Music creates deep connections between people."

To help MSNM's success, the program has been

working closely with community partners such as Slam Academy, Music Lab, Izotope, Blue Tree Music, High School for the Recording Arts & Studio 4, Hopewell Music and the Capri Theater. Johnson said he hopes the school will leave an everlasting mark on Minneapolis' community.

"I feel like this school will help take the legacy and move it forward with the new generations of kids who could love music, make their own new music and walk in the footsteps of the people that made Minneapolis what it is today," Johnson said.

Creative Director and Operations Manager at MSNM, Sam Needham, said music plays a prominent role in our lives. And with the social unrest that has occurred in Minneapolis over the past year, Needham said he wants MSNM to be a beacon of hope and an outlet to new change and positivity in the community.

"Music is a healing element," Needham said. "I think that we are going to serve as a hub for a lot of healing, inspiration, and happiness in this community."



The Minneapolis School of New Music is set to welcome students this coming fall. Photo by Harry Colbert, Jr.

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GRADUATIONS & OTHER ACADEMIC HONORS

Several students with local ties were named to the 2020 fall semester Dean's List Normandale Community College in Brooklyn Center. They are: **Melissa Carlson; Richard Harrison; Siham Hashi; Zuhur Hashi; Madalyn Juarez; Katie Kranz; Ashley Perez; Aubrey Stafford; Vanessa Weaver; and Ma Yang**... Two local students received fall Dean's List honors at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. They are: Sophomore **Cheng Lee**, Pre Business; and senior **Nou Lor**, International Studies... **Antonio Maddox** of Minneapolis graduated from Rochester Community and Technical College at the end of fall semester 2020. **Antonio** received an Associate of Arts for Liberal Arts and Sciences... The following students from the area have been named to the University of Wisconsin-Stout Dean's List for the fall 2020 semester. They are: Senior **Megan Conover**, BS, Applied Science; sophomore **Abby Moore-Reich**, BS, Psychology; junior **Brandon Vang**, BS, Applied Mathematics and Computer Science; and junior **Yue Yang**, BS, Computer Net and Info Tech... Senior **John Rudd**, of Minneapolis, was on the fall Dean's List at Connecticut College. **Rudd** is majoring in Psychology... Two local students received academic honors for their work during the fall semester at St. Cloud Technical & Community College. **Pahchie Vang**, of Brooklyn Center, held a grade point average between 3.5 and 3.99 to make the Dean's List. **Ashley Gaard**, of Minneapolis, was named to the

President's List with a 4.0 average... **Julian Jackson**, of Minneapolis, recently received a bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls... Two local students graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison during a virtual commencement ceremony in December. They are: **Kalley Carlson**, BA, Psychology; and **Mira Grinsfelder**, BS (with Distinction), Education Studies... Seven students with local ties were fall semester graduates of St. Cloud State University. They are: **Adjovi Amouzou**, Masters, Applied Clinical Research; **Kalib Buesing**, BS, Mass Communications; **Laura Enninga**, BA, Magna Cum Laude, Studio Art; **Willard Addo**, Associate, Liberal Arts and Sciences; **Suhayb Ibrahim**, BS, Computer Science; **Blake O'Donnell**, BS, Summa Cum Laude, Finance; and **Chee Yang**, BS, Cum Laude, Elementary/K-6 Education... **Jannelle Whalley**, was named to the fall semester Dean's List at Bethel University.

BE AWARE

Police recruitment push: Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey and MPD Chief Medaria Arradondo recently announced new recruitment priorities for incoming police recruits. The city is assigning greater weight to applicants who live in the city and have experience in social services. The changes also include greater weight on volunteer experience, mental health work and substance abuse counseling. The department will also emphasize degrees in criminal justice, social work, social sciences and other fields. Watch for postings on the city's website in the coming days.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

COVID-19 vaccine update: Track distribution of the vaccine in Minnesota and learn when it might be your turn to get your vaccine by visiting the Minnesota Department of Health website. The vaccine information page can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3qs0bVX>

Food distribution: The Camden Collective and the Sanneh Foundation sponsor a weekly free food pickup each Wednesday from 4-5:30 p.m. in the Salem Lutheran Church Parking Lot, 4150 Dupont Ave. N. Each box contains a meal kit, that includes produce, proteins, spices and recipes. Walk-ups are welcome.

Grocery delivery: The Northside Residents Redevelopment Council will continue a weekly "Northside Nice" grocery delivery service. The service is available to senior citizens and single parents who are unable to get groceries on their own. Visit www.nrrc.org for more information.

North Minneapolis Pet Resource Center, 1401 44th Ave. N., is a program created and operated by My PitBull is Family to keep it in their homes by providing resources, referrals and pet supplies to families in need. It is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5 to 8 p.m. but you have to place a pickup order on the group's Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/NoMiPRC/>

Radio updates in your language: Tune into Minneapolis's cultural radio programs for COVID-19 updates. The city is broadcasting updates on KMOJ 89.9 FM (English), La Raza 95.7 FM (Spanish), KALY 101.7 FM (Somali) and WIXK AM 1590 (Hmong).

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North Minneapolis native Tyler Johnson ended his rookie NFL season with a kiss of the Vince Lombardi Trophy after his Tampa Bay Buccaneers won the Super Bowl. Photo courtesy of Tyler Johnson's Facebook page.

North Community High School Class Of 2016 – University Of Minnesota Class Of 2020

Tampa Bay Buccaneers Wide Receiver

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