TRUMPETING SUCCESS  Page 16

North Minneapolis HBCU-styled marching band gets in formation just 10 days after first picking up instruments

ALSO INSIDE

The road to a revitalized North Minneapolis must be paved by those who live here  Page 10

Urban League Family Day celebrates 31 years  Page 17
Letter from the Editor Harry Colbert, Jr.

The Northside is changing rapidly. There’s construction up and down most of the main thoroughfares of North Minneapolis … Olson Memorial Highway, Plymouth Avenue, West Broadway Avenue and 44th Avenue North. And of course, the pending riverfront developments, Upper Harbor Terminal. But with the changing landscape comes concerns of a changing demographic. To put it plainly, gentrification.

Now nothing is wrong with diversification. In most instances diversity is welcomed. It’s when the increasing “diversity” starts to resemble a takeover. Thus, it’s understandable that the much-needed investment in the 55411 and 55412 is being met with a healthy dose of skepticism.

Again, the development is needed. But what is the cost of progress? Historically, when cranes begin to dot neighborhood skies, they come with increases in housing costs and a displacement of residents and longstanding neighborhood businesses.

This time around (as has been the case in other neighborhoods that have succumbed to gentrification) the talkers are saying all the right things. “We’re seeking community input.” “Our first priority is the current residents of the Northside.” “We are partners in this.” Time will tell if this “partnership” is mutually beneficial. I hope so.

Truth be told, I’m looking forward to a world-class outdoor amphitheater in walking distance from my home. As a homeowner, I appreciate the rising value of our home due to development and the renewed desirability of living on the Northside. But our windfall cannot be at the peril and mass displacement of others.

Investment doesn’t have to come with the caveat of displacement … of gentrification.

In this edition of North News, staff reporter David Pierini offers a comprehensive look at several Northside developments and the potential long-term impacts. I hope you find it informative and insightful.

As always, together in community,
Harry

Twenty-two Northside sites hosted homegrown art of all genres, from painting and photography to dance and spoken word. Juxtaposition Arts was a major hub with a youth gallery, ceramic demonstrations, a youth arts gallery and a pop-up performance by local artist Poetic PLOW took place July 25 - July 27. Photos by David Pierre.
North Minneapolis

The largest Spotlight on Crime reward ever offered in Minneapolis is featured in a billboard campaign outside the Fourth Precinct headquarters.

The new reward offer was announced on Aug. 18 news conference outside the Fourth Precinct headquarters on Plymouth Avenue. Attending were family members of the three children shot, Anynu Allen, 6, Trinity Ottoson-Smith, 9, and LaDissonne Garrett.

Minneapolis police spokesman John Elder said dozens of tips came in after the announcement, but no arrests have been made.

“Today marks 100 days, my grand-son was young fighting for his life for 100 days,” Garrett’s grandmother, Shaniene Jennings, said at the Aug. 18 news conference. “We haven’t received justice. We haven’t received anything. We’ve got $180,000. Money talks. Money is the most evil thing. Someone is gonna say something. These were kids, babies, why are you keeping a code of silence.”

In addition to the families, Minneapolis police Chief Medaria Arradondo, the state’s assistant Commissioner of Public Safety, Brother Holness, Superintendent Drew Evans of the Minneapolis Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and Crime Stoppers of Minnesota Chairman Robert Denniston spoke at the press event.

“People sometimes say, ‘We’ve got something. We’ve got $180,000. Money talks. Money is the most evil thing.’ Someone is gonna say something. These were kids, babies, why are you keeping a code of silence.”

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Law enforcement officials announced they would offer up to $180,000 in reward money for information leading to the arrest of the shooter.

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North News August 27, 2021

RentHelpMN

Has COVID-19 made it hard for you to pay your bills?

If you are experiencing a financial hardship because of the pandemic, RentHelpMN may just be your answer.

COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance is available to all Minnesotans who qualify. You could receive up to 15 months total assistance for:
- Rent payments
- Utility payments (gas, electric, water/sewer, garbage/recycling and other utilities as approved)

We care about getting you the help you need, when you need it most.

Apply today. Visit renthelpmn.org or call 952-542-5600.

RentHelpMN grassroots organization is working hard to get vacant storefronts redeveloped so that we can put Northsider-owned businesses in them. This is critical for the job and intergenerational wealth creation.

We are doing this through the City’s Commercial Property Development Fund, which I supported its creation. This Fund has already invested over $2,000,000 in Ward 4 businesses with approximately $4.5 million in upcoming projects. This is unprecedented! But we’re just getting started.

Please stay up to date on the Ward 4 Council’s work by signing up for our e-newsletter at minneapolismn.gov/ward4.

Peace and blessings,

Council Member

Council Members

Ward 5: Jeremiah Ellison

Earlier this month, the Minneapolis City Council voted to refer two rent stabilization Charter amendments to the voters on ballot questions at the general election on Tuesday, November 2, 2021. However, the mayor vetoed one of the rent stabilization Charter amendments, which would have allowed for a petition process for residents to refer a new landlord-tenancy relationship ordinance to voters in a future election. The veto was sustained after a Council vote last Friday, August 13th.

That means there will be one rent stabilization Charter amendment on the ballot this fall, which would give the City Council the power to write an ordinance for tenants to refer to voters in a future election.

At the end of writing, there are two other Charter amendments proposed for the ballot this fall: one for a new department of public safety, and another that would change the structure of our city government. You can learn more about all the proposed Charter amendments for the 2021 ballot on the City’s website at www.mncitycharteter.com/

Getting vaccinated is more important ever. Some health officials assert that vaccination, along with masking and physical distancing, remain our best public health strategies for slowing the spread of COVID-19. With the uptake in COVID-19 cases driven by the Delta variant, it’s more important than ever that anyone eligible for vaccination get that protection as soon as possible.

Vaccines constantly change and new variants of a virus are expected to emerge over time. New data suggests that an emerging variant, the Delta variant, is different than past versions of the virus and spreads about twice as quickly from one person to another. With the Delta variant, fully vaccinated people may be able to pass the disease to others.

However, the vaccines still work. Fully vaccinated people are less likely to get infected, and if a vaccinated person gets infected, the illness will likely be mild. The vaccine also greatly reduces the chance of hospitalization and death.

For more information on how to get vaccinated, visit Vaccines.mn or contact your health care provider. You can also use this map on the State’s website to find the nearest site for providers who are offering the COVID-19 vaccine: properties and structure.

Get your questions answered! We are doing this through the City’s Commercial Property Development Fund, which I supported its creation. This Fund has already invested over $2,000,000 in Ward 4 businesses with approximately $4.5 million in upcoming projects. This is unprecedented! But we’re just getting started.

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Ward 4: Phillipe Cunningham

Summer is coming to an end, but so many exciting changes are just beginning! Since knocking on doors in 2019, we’ve had equal success in Minneapolis housing programs, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, familial status, gender identity or sexual orientation.

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Pandemic impacts yet another school year; area principals ready for year of uncertainty

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

The deadly coronavirus has been with us so long, many forget it is COVID-19; the 19 being an indicator of 2019 – the year the virus was first detected. Thus, the third school year in a row is being impacted by COVID. The impact is taking a toll on school administrators tasked with both the education of their students and the safety of students and staff. With the school year upon us, principals Mauri Friestleben and Yusuf Abdullah will once again care for their students while trying to remember to care for themselves.

“The fall of 2020-2021 school year was difficult, spring was better. But going into the summer I feel I was duped again (by the changing guidance of how to best combat COVID-19 and the new Delta variant),” said Friestleben, principal at North Community High School. “Here I am again feeling uncertain.”

Friestleben’s uncertainty is understandable. Saying the science and resulting guidance surrounding COVID-19 has been fluid would be putting it mildly. Guidance regarding masking, the effectiveness of the vaccines and indoor gatherings are continuously being updated. Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) announced on Aug. 9 that all students, staff and visitors inside MPS buildings must be masked at all times. The district is offering exceptions for students with physical or behavioral limitations that make mask wearing a burden. For all other students who chose not to mask, they must enroll and attend classes via the MPS Online Academy, as there will no longer be a hybrid in-person/online option.

Friestleben said she supports the decision to not offer hybrid learning.

“Teaching online is not the same as teaching in person,” said Friestleben. “Some teachers are better at teaching online and others are better in the traditional setting. (Hybrid) was difficult for both teachers and students, so I fully endorse the plan not to offer hybrid.”

The uncertainty of the coming year weighs heavily on the mind of Yusuf Abdullah, principal at Patrick Henry High School. He has concerns for his students, staff and himself.

“I found myself wondering about my mental health,” certified Abdullah. “I was questioning do I get vaccinated; do I offer the school as a vaccine site? It’s challenging and your moral compass gets tested. But what focused me is keeping the students at the center of all my decisions. My main concern is ‘are my kids going to be safe?’”

Abdullah said he had many conversations with his wife and with Friestleben, who was dealing with similar dilemmas.

“We have a partnership and connection,” said Abdullah, affirming that the school’s rivalry is strictly limited to athletic contests.

The two principals said they have been hearing from frustrated and concerned parents wondering how to approach the coming school year.

“I’ve had parents joking with me saying, ‘don’t have me buying all these school clothes and y’all shut down,’” said Friestleben. “So, we’ve been trying to deal with this with humor.”

It wasn’t humor, but sadness that struck North’s principal when she overheard her teenage daughter talking about the return to mask wearing.

“She was talking to her friends – all Black girls – and they were expressing something I never realized was impacting them. They were talking about the insecurity they felt as a result of wearing masks. They said when they stopped wearing masks in the summer they felt vulnerable – and not about COVID – but about their looks,” said Friestleben. “And to go back

Continued on page 18

Help Slow the Spread so We Can Stay in School Together

Get vaccinated.
Wear a mask.
Stay home if you feel sick.

Whether this is your first time quitting or your tenth, we’re here with the free help 24/7. Curious about how to double your chances of quitting smoking? Say good to your quit coach and using patches, gum or lozenges* at the same time. Whenever you’re ready, drop by online or say hello on the phone.

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"Patches and texts from Quit Partner are helping me stay on track."

Shawn, day 3 of quitting menthols

Free help to quit smoking or vaping your way
North Minneapolis will build its own wealth for generations to come, said Sebastian Rivera, an NPLA member of the community’s Uptown neighborhood, which is being redeveloped. “We’re going to get some of the things we deserve,” said Rivera. “Now is the time to make the Northside a place we can truly call home.”

**Fear and optimism**

North Minneapolis and many Black city dwellers hold a deep respect in development after watching “progress” decimate the communities they live in. The current Nakota development project is one of the active residents in shaping how the future Upper Highway and V3 Sports Center evolve. The project is facing skepticism from residents who see the plans as a way to make money for developers. “I have to see the project before I can support it,” said Rivera.

Kevin Buehler, a lifelong Northsider and a collaborator on the project, said the development will follow and make the Northside unrecognizable. “The fear is outside developers’ interest and what will happen for many residents. Project planners and developers will see the numbers for themselves and the community in St. Paul. If at least they have a set of numbers to improve quality of life, gentrification can take place. It’s a real step towards improving the picture it comes back around us is changing.”

The investment is long overdue and North Minneapolis has been a growing Black and diverse middle class. The question is whether or not the wealth for generations to come will follow and make the Northside a place we can truly call home. The road to a revitalized North Minneapolis must be paved by those who live here. 

David Perrier, Staff Reporter

The road to a revitalized North Minneapolis must be paved by those who live here.
Bridges believes North Minneapolis will “no longer be a community of deficit” or at least headed in a more vibrant direction 10 years out. “We are so much further along,” said Bridges, who is the founder of the AACDC.

The AACDC is a 30-year-old community development corporation for Minnesota’s Black communities. It seeks to advocate and influence economic development in Black communities, bringing residents together to plan commercial and residential development for their areas. It will work to attract investment into those communities to create jobs, wealth in Black households and political leaders.

“The decisions for what development looks like are made by a few people who have sway and influence in getting a deal made with the city or county,” said Bridges, the AACDC founder. “This creates a barrier for African-American developers or developers of color. We want our communities to have the opportunity to shape to shape the future.”

Property ownership only increases the negotiating power of a community. Earlier this year, Phillips United Communities (PUC) launched a program called Justice Built Communities. The PUC, which owns North News, is in the process of purchasing vacant land and buildings as a way to inform re-development plans that are community-centered. The program would guide and help Black-owned enterprises get started on the right foot.

“Like the Phillips Foundation finance agreement with Three Squared on the 927 Building, Justice Built Communities would negotiate an agreement to turn the land over to the local enterprise to build generation wealth,” said Bridges.

So far, PUC has raised $6 million for the program and intends to raise an additional $14 million.

“This is an opportunity for North to set its own trajectory,” said Lujack Mosley, PUC president and CEO. “This piece will be driven by community and will allow us to ensure voice, ideas and aspirations are baked into development projects.”

North 2031

NorthPoint Health and Wellness recently announced plans to double its campus to include dental services, day care and food pantry.

If Northside’s uses themselves as powerless to the forces of gentrification, a town of business owners and black leaders has emerged to help residents claim a place at the dialogue, said Bridges, who intends to decide how best to reboot their North Minneapolis.

The formation of the African American Community Development Corp. (AACDC) arrives at a critical moment as infrastructure projects search for a home in long-neglected North Minneapolis.

“There’s a need for an organization to focus on economic development and wealth building that engages the community so that we have an opportunity to shape before the shovel,” said Dorothy Bridges, a longtime banking executive who founded AACDC and now serves as its president. “Whether North Minneapolis is mentioned is about community decision 10 years out. Is this what people want or need in the direction we’re headed? Will people feel included in the process or will it be somewhere where we should be writing our own story.”

Community development corporations often get confused with economic development corporations. Each focus on development and wealth building.

Community development, however, intentionally brings local residents into the process of making a better place to live and work. It is more holistic with empowerment, social justice and self-determination baked into the urban environment, create a Wakanda in North Minneapolis,” said AACDC President Dorothy Bridges.

It will support commercial and residential development projects that allow for the building of household wealth, said Bridges.

AACDC seeks to be a powerful intermediary that brings government barriers and gain influence in community development decisions that bring proper returns on investments in the Black and Brown communities.

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Vereen, create a Vibespace in North Minneapolis, said AACDC President and CEO Erin Heron McKinney, a North Minneapolis native and a former senior adviser to two mayors in Washington DC. “How do we put all the pieces in place? Our mission is to make sure we are advocating at all levels.”

Bridges, who until recently lived in the 100 for her work in banking and community development.

In 2018, Bridges was a 2018 inductee as a senior vice president from the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. Bridges was on a taskforce to talk about development in north Minneapolis. Everyone at the table heard ideas and Bridges suggested a community development corporation for Minneapolis’s Black communities.

The idea stuck in the mind of William English, the consulting project director for the North Job Creation Team, who was at the table that day. He called Bridges to encourage her to form what is now AACDC.

The inaugural board, chaired by Bridges, includes Steven Belton, vice chair; Keith Boley, secretary; and Elena Mancini, treasurer. English has helped launch the board that includes Tim Bridgeman, chair; the Rev. Jerry Anderson; Ravi Norman, Shauen Pearson, Matthew Remmel, Brandi Smith and Malia Zulu-Gibbons.

AACDC formed just before the COVID-19 pandemic, shut down all non-essential businesses. Horne McKinney, a North High graduate, had returned to Minneapolis to wait out the pandemic with family and wound up staying to be the organization’s first president and CEO.

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Bridges, who until recently lived in the Hoxworth neighborhood for 17 years, is a member of the US Bancorp’s executive committee. She took on national development,” said Bridges.

If Northside’s uses themselves as powerless to the forces of gentrification, a town of business owners and black leaders has emerged to help residents claim a place at the dialogue, said Bridges, who intends to decide how best to reboot their North Minneapolis.

The formation of the African American Community Development Corp. (AACDC) arrives at a critical moment as infrastructure projects search for a home in long-neglected North Minneapolis.

“There’s a need for an organization to focus on economic development and wealth building that engages the community so that we have an opportunity to shape before the shovel,” said Dorothy Bridges, a longtime banking executive who founded AACDC and now serves as its president. “Whether North Minneapolis is mentioned is about community decision 10 years out. Is this what people want or need in the direction we’re headed? Will people feel included in the process or will it be somewhere where we should be writing our own story.”

Community development corporations often get confused with economic development corporations. Each focus on development and wealth building.

Community development, however, intentionally brings local residents into the process of making a better place to live and work. It is more holistic with empowerment, social justice and self-determination baked into the urban environment, create a Wakanda in North Minneapolis,” said AACDC President Dorothy Bridges.

It will support commercial and residential development projects that allow for the building of household wealth, said Bridges.

AACDC seeks to be a powerful intermediary that brings government barriers and gain influence in community development decisions that bring proper returns on investments in the Black and Brown communities.

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Vereen, create a Vibespace in North Minneapolis, said AACDC President and CEO Erin Heron McKinney, a North Minneapolis native and a former senior adviser to two mayors in Washington DC. “How do we put all the pieces in place? Our mission is to make sure we are advocating at all levels.”

Bridges, who until recently lived in the 100 for her work in banking and community development.

In 2018, Bridges was a 2018 inductee as a senior vice president from the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. Bridges was on a taskforce to talk about development in north Minneapolis. Everyone at the table heard ideas and Bridges suggested a community development corporation for Minneapolis’s Black communities.

The idea stuck in the mind of William English, the consulting project director for the North Job Creation Team, who was at the table that day. He called Bridges to encourage her to form what is now AACDC.

The inaugural board, chaired by Bridges, includes Steven Belton, vice chair; Keith Boley, secretary; and Elena Mancini, treasurer. English has helped launch the board that includes Tim Bridgeman, chair; the Rev. Jerry Anderson; Ravi Norman, Shauen Pearson, Matthew Remmel, Brandi Smith and Malia Zulu-Gibbons.

AACDC formed just before the COVID-19 pandemic, shut down all non-essential businesses. Horne McKinney, a North High graduate, had returned to Minneapolis to wait out the pandemic with family and wound up staying to be the organization’s first president and CEO.

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The Capri plans weeks of festivities to celebrate reopening

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

It’s seven days of celebrations. That’s the plan to reintroduce the community to the Capri Theater, 2027 W. Broadway Ave. A grand opening will be held from noon - 5 p.m. on Oct. 3 with free tours, music on the plaza, food trucks, a ribbon cutting ceremony and more.

Other events planned for the week include “Capri Quiz,” Oct. 5, IMPS in concert, Oct. 6, First Thursday Films Oct. 7, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Oct. 8 and “Legends @ the Capri,” Oct. 9 and Oct. 10.

The Capri closed in May 2019 to expand and improve the historic space. Construction was completed in the spring of 2021, with finishing work and a few soft-open events taking place during the summer.

The Capri Theatre is set to once again welcome guests. The historic venue celebrates its grand reopening Oct. 3. Photos by Harry Colbert, Jr.

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Emerging journalist Kennedy Rance, 15. Photo Courtesy Kennedy Rance

Taking her word for it

Patrick Henry’s Kennedy Rance shines at ThreeSixty Journalism camp

By Chad Caruthers, Editor-in-Chief

It’s Godwin, tomorrow it’s Rance.

This past April, Kim Godwin made history as the first Black woman to head the news division of a major network when she was named president of ABC News. Do not be surprised when a few years down the line Patrick Henry High School’s Kennedy Rance directing news coverage on the line Patrick Henry High School’s most recent journalism program run by the University of St. Thomas. Rance said she was drawn to the program as a result of the narrative of North Minneapolis being reported by major media outlets.

“Anytime you see us (North Minneapolis) represented on the news it’s always negative, but living here and seeing so much that’s positive, I didn’t understand why that isn’t represented,” said Rance, who recently finished her third year in the program run by the University of St. Thomas. Rance said she was drawn to reporting as a result of the narrative of North Minneapolis being reported by major media outlets.

“I consider myself a global citizen, in addition to reporting for ThreeSixty, Rance has written for Minnesota Public Radio editor Bill Wareham (right) and student journalist Kennedy Rance make tweaks to her broadcast article on mental health and Black men, which was produced during its most recent journalism camp that took place the last week of August.

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“The Capri plans weeks of festivities to celebrate reopening Built in 1927, the Capri is the last of 13 theaters that once graced the Northside of Minneapolis. Improvements include new auditorium seats, more space in the lobby and backstage, the new Paradise Community Hall and a Best Buy Teen Tech Center. Architects retained the intimate feel of the interior and the original stage floor on which Prince performed his first gig as a solo artist. The gallery of treasured Prince photos by Greg Helgeson is still on display as well.

The space was designed to provide the Northside and metro-wide community with countless opportunities to experience and produce art.

The Capri is owned and operated by PCYC, a community-based nonprofit.

The Capri Theatre is set to once again welcome guests. The historic venue celebrates its grand reopening Oct. 3. Photos by Harry Colbert, Jr.

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Young music novices feel the rush of playing like an HBCU band

Text and photos by David Pierini, Staff Reporter

The band stood ram-rod straight awaiting the signal to begin its maiden march onto a stage and into a future not conceivable by the musicians 10 days prior.

That’s because, 10 days prior, the collection of wary teenagers knew nothing about music and had never picked up a trombone or drum stick. There was fear, there was confusion and literally no time to panic.

A concert where they would sway, high-step, dance and perform two memorized musical numbers, like the show bands of America’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), was scheduled for North High’s auditorium on July 30.

The 13-member Northside United, which included three dancers, pulled off a life-changing performance, according to the teachers who set them on their musical path during a two-week-long summer camp.

“Many of these students are living in underprivileged circumstances,” said Joan Larson, North High’s band director. “They’re not used to being in a big band.”

Family and friends hooted their approval and tears welled up in the eyes of grown musicians -- many of whom marched with HBCU bands -- who prepared the youth for what amounted to a successful moon shot.

“When they came to us, they were looking at us like, ‘I don’t even know how or what to play,’ said David Billingsley, who won a grant for the camp and helped organize it. “We said, ‘OK, you take the trombone, you take the trumpet, you take the tuba … and let’s go.’ They didn’t know how to hold the instrument, they didn’t know about embouchure (applying a mouth to a musical mouthpiece), nothing.”

The summer camp was funded with a $30,000 Genius and Joy grant from the Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation and the Minneapolis Foundation. It came about when North High principal Mauri Friestleben asked Billingsley, a local musician and educator to start an HBCU-style band.

Friestleben had the right person for the task in Billingsley taught band and choir at North last school year. Still, it was daunting to Billingsley, he said.

HBCU bands have distinctive “show style” featuring geometric maneuvers with straight lines. Between drills, there is high-stepping and energetic dancing, routines known as breakdowns.

Young music novices feel the rush of playing like an HBCU band

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Jerome Roberston graduated from North High School but still took part of his summer to learn tuba.
First Independent Bank
Continued from page 18
At the end of May and the beginning of June, Minneapolitan Arab Americans who learned there would be a new location of the bank branch of First Independence Bank in North Minneapolis, will be the first endeavor in their community to open a bank of their own.

The new Minneapolis branch is slated to open along the South Minneapolis. Kelly said he hopes to

Kanece Rance
Continued from page 14
The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities is an educational grant of $50,000 from the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA). The grant supports the club’s science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programming. An event to celebrate the grant is being planned to encourage a continued interest in music.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities are incredibly honored to partner with PhRMA in introducing young people to the world of science, said Terryl Brumm, president and CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities. "Strong STEM programming develops the critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, and technology literacy skills that help youth to succeed in today’s world," she said.

"PhRMA represents the country’s top biopharmaceutical research companies that allow the United States to be a leader in innovation, particularly in the fight to combat COVID-19," said Terry Burnum, president and CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities. "Strong STEM programming develops the critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, and technology literacy skills that help youth to succeed in today’s world," she said.

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