

NORTH NEWS

September 24, 2021

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2021 Voter Guide

To help voters make informed choices this election season, Pillsbury United Communities, Pollen, and Sahan Journal asked Minneapolitans what they wanted to learn about the people on their ballots. The result is a voter guide _____ created by the community, for the community. _____

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Letter from the Editor Harry Colbert, Jr.

CORRECTION: Last month's (Aug. 27) HBCU band camp cover story confused the identities of the trombone and trumpet players. De'Anthony Jackson is the trombone player and Ameer Webster plays trumpet. North News sincerely regrets the error.

Election

As you can see, we are dedicating much of this edition to the upcoming Nov. 2 general election. We, along with our parent organization, Pillsbury United Communities, partnered with Pollen Midwest to provide a comprehensive guide to the candidates running for mayor, city council Wards 4 and 5 and Minneapolis Parks & Recreation Board. We also provide explanations to the three ballot questions facing Minneapolis voters.

Make no mistake, this election is of the utmost importance. Minneapolis voters are being asked to decide how our (again,

our) police force will be governed moving forward and what representatives will be charged with executing our collective wishes.

This is no easy question. Most agree we cannot continue operating under a business as usual mentality. The murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin shined the hot light on the desperate need for change in our city. Conversely, with upwards of 65 murders this year in the city ... three of children 12 years of age or younger ... we cannot ignore the need to curtail the violence that is gripping our city ... in particular on the Northside.

Pay attention to words. Following the heinous murder of George Floyd, the loud call was to defund the Minneapolis Police Department. Somehow that call morphed into "abolish." Defunding the police does not abolish police. That's a key, key point. I see how many could have made that leap from hearing defund and

interpreting abolish. I wish the early call had been more clear in calling for a reallocation of funds, with greater emphasis on funding for mental health services and professionals, funding for incentivizing police to actually live in the community in which they patrol, funding for enhanced deescalation training, etc. Had that been the initial call, I think much of this turmoil and pitting neighbor against neighbor could have been avoided.

Yes, we need police in our community. More importantly, we need good police in our community. And we need mechanisms in place to easily root out the bad actors. It's not either or, it's and both.

Regardless, make sure your voice is heard. I truly think most of us want the same thing, but we have different ideas of how to achieve our collective goals. To a person I think all of us simply want comfort and peace.

And that's not too much to ask.

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Next issue delivered: October 29, 2021

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North Minneapolis at a glance

Program helps Hennepin homeowners avoid foreclosure

Up to \$35,000 available for individual homeowners

Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis recently announced a partnership with Minnesota Homeownership Center to create and administer the Hennepin Homeownership Preservation Program (HHPP).

HHPP is promoting foreclosure prevention to Hennepin County homeowners, along with limited financial assistance under certain circumstances.

Once eligibility is confirmed, applicants will be referred to a foreclosure prevention advisor with a Minnesota Homeown-

ership Center network partner. These organizations include Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES), LSS Financial Counseling, NeighborWorks Development Alliance, NeighborWorks Home Partners, PRG Inc. and Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity.

HHPP is providing limited financial assistance if an individual is experiencing a housing emergency, defined as being unable to pay a bill that may affect their ability to live in the home, can self-certify they have experienced COVID-related

financial loss such as loss of income, increased health care costs or additional costs associated with working from home, owns an owner-occupied property in Hennepin County, can self-certify they had a gross annual income of at or below 50 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) at the time of a missed payment, must be able to demonstrate ability to pay housing expenses moving forward and must participate in foreclosure prevention advising via the Minnesota Homeownership Center and its partners.

Past due bills eligible for potential financial relief include the following, with due dates between Jan. 21, 2020 and fifteen days after initial HHPP intake. The maximum amount available to any household through HHPP is \$35,000. Payments will be made directly to the entity owed the funds.

For more information on the program and how to apply, visit www.Hennepin-HPP.com or call (651) 236-8952.

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It is the policy of Minnesota Housing to affirmatively further fair housing in all its programs so that individuals of similar income levels have equal access to Minnesota 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.

JXTA breaks ground on new headquarters

By David Pierini, Staff Reporter

The walls were starting to crumble at Juxtaposition Arts a few years back and as important as the art and design organization was to the young North Minneapolis artists it employed and developed, the city inspectors weren't looking the other way.

Co-founders DeAnna and Roger Cummings wrestled with two questions: Could the old house that served as both heart and headquarters be fixed? Would the community support a sizable fund-raising drive for a new, long-lasting building?

The decision to appeal to the public four years ago paid off. The Cummings on Sept. 17 led a joyous groundbreaking ceremony on a \$14 million headquarters and campus upgrade.

The shovels went into the ground just \$400,000 shy. JXTA leaders expressed confidence they would raise the rest and also announced the start of a legacy campaign to raise \$5 million to expand programming. A week prior to the event, Bank of America gave JXTA \$1 million.

Before the two hour event ended, attendees had pitched in \$5,000.

Juxtaposition Arts is in its 25th year as the only Black-led art and design organization in Minnesota. With a

team of trained artists, JXTA employs young creatives from the community and provides them a hands-on education that creates pathways to future success.

Roger Cummings thanked the many donors in attendance and they have a part in JXTA's legacy.

"Where else can young artists work on projects like the Super Bowl, the Final Four, to have worked at the Guthrie (Theatre), to be able to work with 3M, Target, Reebok, Red Wing or meet artists like Rick Lowe, The-

Continued on page 34



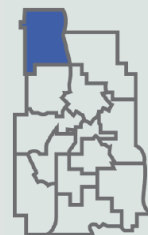
JXTA is close to raising all \$14 million needed for a new headquarters and other campus upgrades.



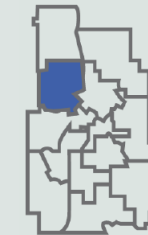
Juxtaposition Arts founder Roger and DeAnna Cummings celebrate after breaking ground on a new headquarters. Photo by David Pierini

catch up with our Council Members

Minneapolis City Council members Phillippe 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 4:
Phillippe Cunningham



WARD 5:
Jeremiah Ellison



Council Member Steve Fletcher (Ward 3) and I brought forward the ordinance to operationalize the new Department of Public Safety (Sept. 24). Notably, the ordinance will address many concerns Minneapolis residents brought forward related to this new department.

The charter amendment will enable structural reorganizing to consolidate all city's public safety services and functions under a single agency. In addition, the structural reorganizing will improve the quality of services provided to our residents by having a specialized public safety department. This ordinance will include the creation of a Division of Law Enforcement Services. This Division will be held by a police chief, and current police officers will be moved under this new division. The ordinance will define the position and appointment of the chief. Due to the current contract with the Police Federation and labor laws, no current officers will be fired because of this change. The interim commissioner will be nominated by the mayor and approved by executive committee and the Minneapolis City Council.

The Office of Violence Prevention will be included in the Department of Public Safety and will no longer operate under the Health Department.

Functions of the Office of Violence Prevention will remain leading evidence-based interventions like Group Violence Intervention, hospital-based bedside violence intervention, and violence interrupters, as well as expanding domestic violence interventions.

This new ordinance will get us into compliance with the charter change within the 30 days. However, a longer engagement process to fully build out the new department will take place throughout 2022. As a council member, I'm committed to continuing the work as we still have a lot of work ahead of us to build a public safety system that keeps all of us safe.

Please stay up to date on the Ward 4 office's work by signing up for our e-newsletter at minneapolisismn.gov/government/city-council/ward-4/newsletters. If you have questions, comments, or want to connect, join me for my weekly open community office hours on Mondays, 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. at Corner Coffee Camden (4155 Thomas Ave. N.) or virtual (check [FB.com/minneapolisward4](https://www.facebook.com/minneapolisward4) for the latest information). Don't forget to wear a mask. Hope to see you there.

Sincerely,

Councilmember Phillippe Cunningham

Early voting has begun for the Nov. 2 municipal election.

Offices on the ballot this year include Mayor, City Council, Board of Estimate & Taxation, and Park & Recreation Board. Since it's a city election, we'll use ranked choice voting this year.

Ballots may be cast early by mail or in person at the Early Vote Center, 980 East Hennepin Ave.

All mail ballots need to be received by Election Day (Nov. 2) for them to count. If voters choose to deliver their ballot in person to the Elections & Voter Services office, it still must be returned by 3 p.m. on Nov. 2. Mail ballots cannot be dropped off at polling places on Election Day.

The Early Vote Center makes early in-person voting more convenient for Minneapolis voters. It's especially helpful to people who need language support or other special accommodations, such as curbside voting. While we are in a pandemic, voting early can help people avoid lines and crowds at polling places on the day of the election.

The Early Vote Center's hours are 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday. The center will have extended hours for the final two weeks of voting, including Saturday and Sunday hours. For the last seven days of early voting, the City will open two additional Early Vote Centers. Find your voting location, register to vote, learn about ranked choice voting, see a

sample ballot, and more on the Elections & Voter Services website: vote.minneapolisismn.gov.

In addition to several municipal offices being on the ballot, there will also be three ballot questions that propose amendments to the City Charter. While the ballot wording for one of these amendments - the public safety charter amendment - was recently contested in court, thankfully the Minnesota Supreme Court intervened, affirming the wording of the ballot question, and ensuring that each vote will be counted. This matter is now settled.

You can learn more about all the proposed charter amendments for the 2021 ballot on the City's website at minneapolisismn.gov.

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 (Mondays 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.) or request a one-on-one meeting with me at minneapolisismn.gov/ward5.



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Park district candidates share an abundance of love for the places we play

By David Pierini, Staff Reporter

The three candidates vying to represent North Minneapolis on the Park & Recreation Board are not politicians.

Their ambitions start with heartfelt connections to parks that grew from childhood. But the candidates – Eric Moran, Mike

Shelton and Becca Thomas – are well aware of the importance the District 2 seat carries, and how the role of commissioner could shape the future of a North Minneapolis now in the early stages of redevelopment.

The winner will replace North High School Athletic Director Kale Severson,

who will step down after one term. The seat also ensures park-related representation on key development projects, such as Upper Harbor Terminal and Metro Blue Line Extension Corridor.

Minneapolis consistently tops the list of America's best park systems. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board first

formed in 1883 and serves with enough autonomy to govern, maintain and develop city parks. Every four years, voters elect nine commissioners, six to represent specific park districts and three who serve at large.



Mike Shelton

Mike Shelton, 48, is a third-generation Northsider and the outreach coordinator for Twin Cities Rise. He is also the associate head basketball coach at North High.

With a particular fondness for Jordan and Farrow parks, Shelton said he grew up using the parks of North Minneapolis. "I love them dearly," he said. "(The coaches) I met at the park influenced me and if I didn't have them early in my life, I would have come out this week. Each North Park, if the walls could talk, have very unique and individual stories."

His hopes are to bring new energy to the parks and bolster the importance they have in surrounding neighborhoods. He said parks have struggled to attract kids since the onset of the pandemic.

For the last few years, Shelton said he has been involved in the expansion of North Commons Park having helped raise more than \$9 million to update the facilities. He said he would use this experience to bring importance to the parks with other Northside development projects, such as Upper Harbor Terminals.



Becca Thompson

Becca Thompson, 46, is an adjunct teacher of mathematics at Augsburg University and though a native of South Minneapolis, is no stranger to the parks in North. As a kid, Thompson routinely rode her bike with a baseball glove to her local parks.

As she grew, the parks provided her summer work as a lifeguard, overseeing swimmers at Theo Wirth, Webber Park and North Commons. These summers gave her a sense that North was a much neglected part of the city.

"I felt like this city was divided in two. It didn't feel right," said Thompson, who has lived in North since 2010. "Now, 30 years later, it feels the same and this needs to be fixed."

She is a critic of the city's 2040 plan, feeling it shortchanges the park system. In her mind, parks are an equalizer bringing kids of all backgrounds together.

Thompson wants to protect park lands and create more open spaces as the city grows. She wants parks to hone in on families and individuals of all ages through increased programming as well as reviving some that were cut since her lifeguard days. This includes swim lessons.



Eric Moran

Eric Moran, 40, resides in the Victory neighborhood and recently won the endorsement of the Democratic Farm Labor party. An Eagle Scout and native of upstate New York, Moran works in IT and felt the District 2 seat needed a more robust commissioner.

Moran sees the buildings in each park as underused community resources, especially in North where youth often are cut off from activities, employment and safe spaces to gather. He wants people of all backgrounds and abilities to feel welcome in the parks. Two ideas Moran offers: increase Northsiders' access to the Mississippi River, made difficult by I-94 and redevelop the old Victory ice arena into a roller rink.

"Parks really should be the backbone of the community," Moran said. "I'm thinking about activities and recreation for everyone. We want to build back North to make it a destination. The parks are 100 percent critical in all developments."

Explaining Minneapolis ballot questions

A lot is being made about the language about the ballot questions on the general election ballot in Minneapolis. In an attempt to clarify the questions, we offer the following explanations for the three questions on the Minneapolis ballot.

CITY QUESTION 1 Government Structure: Executive Mayor – Legislative Council	CITY QUESTION 2 Department of Public Safety
<p>Shall the Minneapolis City Charter be amended to adopt a change in its form of government to an Executive Mayor-Legislative Council structure to shift certain powers to the Mayor, consolidating administrative authority over all operating departments under the Mayor, and eliminating the Executive Committee?</p> <p>EXPLANATION</p> <p>If a majority of voters vote "yes" on this amendment, the mayor of Minneapolis will have more power. In this new "strong mayor" structure, the mayor would serve as a chief executive, controlling all administrative aspects of the city, and the city council would be solely responsible for policy making. This ballot question was proposed by the Minneapolis charter commission who said that the current structure, in which all city departments except the police report to an executive committee that includes the mayor and council members, "lacks clear lines of accountability, is inefficient and costly, and creates an operating structure that is highly vulnerable to the politics of personality." This question is complicated by ballot question two, which also involves making a decision about mayoral power.</p>	<p>Shall the Minneapolis City Charter be amended to remove the Police Department and replace it with a Department of Public Safety that employs a comprehensive public health approach to the delivery of functions by the Department of Public Safety, with those specific functions to be determined by the Mayor and City Council by ordinance; which will not be subject to exclusive mayoral power over its establishment,</p> <p>EXPLANATORY NOTE</p> <p>This amendment would create a Department of Public Safety combining public safety functions through a comprehensive public health approach to be determined by the mayor and council. The department would be led by a commissioner nominated by the mayor and</p> <p>EXPLANATION</p> <p>This ballot question will determine key structural elements of the city's public safety and policing system. It is on the ballot due to a citizen-led petition.</p> <p>Currently, the city charter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives the mayor complete control over the police department. • Says a "police chief" must lead a department of licensed "peace officers." • Requires the city to fund a police force of at least .0017 employees per resident. The city council may impose an additional .3% property tax to fund this requirement. • Allows "fire police" to be housed within either the fire department or the police department. • Sets a term start date for police chiefs. <p>If a majority of voters vote yes on this question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The "police department" will be replaced by a "department of public safety" that takes a "comprehensive public health approach." This may include licensed peace officers "if necessary." • The requirement to fund .0017 police force employees per resident, and the accompanying taxation power would be removed. • The police chief would no longer be a city department head. Instead, there would be a commissioner of public safety, who would be nominated by the mayor and appointed by the city
	<p>maintenance, and command; and which could include licensed peace officers (police officers), if necessary, to fulfill its responsibilities for public safety, with the general nature of the amendments being briefly indicated in the explanatory note below, which is made a part of this ballot?</p> <p>appointed by the council. The police department, and its chief, would be removed from the city charter. The Public Safety Department could include police officers, but the minimum funding requirement would be eliminated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • council like other department heads. • The department of public safety would operate like any other city department and report to the executive committee (which includes council members and the mayor) rather than being under the "complete control" of the mayor as is currently the case with the police department. • The fire police could still be housed in either the fire department or the newly established department of public safety. <p>How that would measurably change life in Minneapolis in the near future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It creates a commissioner of public safety who will be the new boss of the police chief. It doesn't automatically eliminate or fire current police chief, Medaria Arradondo, as many have suggested. • It means that the mayor and council will share authority over the new department of public safety unless ballot question 1 passes. Then the mayor still has authority. • Because there is no longer a minimum required number of police officers, it creates a pathway to reduce the number of police officers and funding for them if that's what elected officials choose to do via the city's budgeting and legislative process. • That said, police can't be completely eliminated unless state law changes. Right now state statute requires licensed peace officers to perform certain duties. No one else can do them.

CITY QUESTION 3 Authorizing City Council To Enact Rent Control Ordinance

CITY QUESTION 3 Authorizing City Council To Enact Rent Control Ordinance
<p>Shall the Minneapolis City Charter be amended to authorize the City Council to regulate rents on private residential property in the City of Minneapolis by ordinance</p> <p>EXPLANATORY NOTE</p> <p>This amendment would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorize the City Council to regulate rents on private residential property in the City of Minneapolis by ordinance • Provide that an ordinance regulating rents on private residential property could be enacted in two different and independent ways: <p>a. The City Council may enact the ordinance.</p> <p>b. The City Council may refer the ordinance as a ballot question to be decided by the voters for approval at an election. If more than half of the votes cast on the ballot question are in favor of its adoption, the ordinance would take effect 30 days after the election, or at such other time as provided in the ordinance.</p>
<p>EXPLANATION</p> <p>This ballot question gives voters an opportunity to decide whether or not they would like to give the city council the legal authority to implement rent control (regulating rents on private properties in order to stabilize the cost of housing). Minnesota state law currently prohibits cities from enacting rent control unless it is approved by voters in a general election. If the majority of voters vote "yes" on this ballot question,</p> <p>nothing will immediately change. For a rent control ordinance to be enacted, the council would have to then follow the legislative process of creating one. Rent control policies in other jurisdictions vary, but most put a cap on how much rents can rise annually. Minneapolis commissioned this Rent Stabilization Study in 2020 and it will likely inform a local policy if the council pursues one.</p>

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There could be something new about this moment. A desire for change is reaching further than before. New faces are joining our city's colorful palette of folks who have been working for generations to change a broken status quo.

This may well be a turning point, but what comes next isn't just about policy. It's about imagination, vision, and courage.

Can we imagine a Minneapolis where we all feel safe? A city where everyone is housed, and everyone has enough to not just survive, but thrive? Can we imagine a Minneapolis that offers help to those who need it, and where justice is the foundation, not just an aspiration?

Minneapolis is us. We have the tools to make that imagination a reality in our city. Elections are one of them.

We've got big choices ahead of us in Minneapolis. Our city is at the center of a national conversation on public safety after the murder of George Floyd, putting that issue — alongside housing, the economy, racial disparity, and climate change — at the forefront of our minds.

To help voters make informed choices this election season, Pollen worked with Sahan Journal and Pillsbury United Communities to ask Minneapolitans what they wanted to learn about the people on their ballots. We used their responses to create the questions we sent to each candidate.

The result is a voter guide created by the community, for the community. It goes deep on the issues from a perspective that centers voices too often ignored in political spaces: Black, immigrant, working class, Indigenous, members of the broader African and Asian diasporas, and others.



Vote on Tuesday, November 2, 2021

Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. Find your polling place at pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us. You can also vote by mail, or vote early in-person starting September 17. More information at vote.minneapolismn.gov. The City of Minneapolis also offers voter assistance. More information at vote.minneapolismn.gov/voters/assistance.

All polling locations have translation resources available via phone. Election workers will connect the voter with a translator who assists via phone/speaker mode. The City also strives to assign election workers to polls with fluency in the most prevalent languages spoken in larger numbers within each precinct; primarily Hmong, Somali, and Spanish.

Know your rights

You have the right to take time off from work to vote. To vote if you're in line by 8 PM. To register on election day. To ask for help. To bring your children to the polls. And to vote after serving a felony conviction.

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Contributors

Pillsbury United Communities

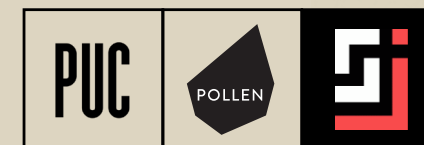
Pillsbury United Communities co-creates enduring change toward a just society. Built with and for the people we serve, our united system of programs, neighborhood centers, and social enterprises empowers individuals and families across the region to own their future on their own terms.

Sahan Journal

Sahan Journal is the only independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit digital newsroom fully dedicated to providing authentic news reporting for and about immigrants and communities of color in Minnesota. We aim to chronicle the struggles, successes and transformations of Minnesota's immigrants and communities of color, whose stories are often overlooked by traditional news organizations.

Pollen Midwest

Pollen is a media arts organization that fosters empathy, encourages connection across difference, and inspires meaningful action by sharing stories of individuals who want to change our collective story for the better. Through storytelling, art, and connection, Pollen works to advance social change movements by challenging and changing harmful and dominant narratives—demonstrating the power of narrative change through all of the media we create, events we host, and connections we grow.



Design by Pollen Midwest; Art and Illustration by Allegra Lockstadt, Emma Eubanks, Leslie Barlow, Luis Fitch, Ricardo Levins Morales, Teresa Moses; Photography by Ben Hovland, Ryan Stopera and Jaida Grey Eagle

Get to know the candidates.



mpls is us

WARD 4

Ward 4 candidates for City Council.

pollenmidwest.org/mplsus



Phillipe Cunningham

cunninghammpls.org

Public Safety

How will you keep young Black and brown kids safe — those who are simultaneously the most at risk from gun violence but also most at risk during interactions with the police? What do you believe are best practices for solving these issues in tandem, and how will you involve the communities most affected in problem solving and determining next steps?

Our public safety challenges today that are largely carried on the shoulders of our kids are the result of the racial disparities showing that Black folks, in particular, in our city have been left behind across nearly every aspect of our lives. It is no coincidence that over 80% of gun violence victims in our city are Black. Police violence has similar numbers. Yes, we need short-term solutions and to hold people accountable who cause harm in our community, but we cannot lose sight of the entire context. If we truly put the racial disparities behind us that have plagued our community for generations, then we will achieve sustainable peace. We are being forced by the status quo into a false choice — either we accept police violence if we want to stop community violence or we accept community violence if we want to stop police violence. I speak to this issue further in the next question.

For us to keep young Black and brown kids safe, we need to look to positive youth development as a framework for decision-making in both policies and investments. An example of this

in practice is prosocial out of school time programming that focuses on social-emotional learning, building positive relationships among peers and with adults, and increasing kids' sense of competence and mastery of skills. This is work I have led like investing \$1M in youth development programming from the American Rescue Plan federal funding. Ideally, those funds will be allocated through some sort of participatory budgeting process led by young people with the Minneapolis Youth Congress.

People of color in Minneapolis are killed or otherwise harmed by law enforcement at disproportionately high rates, despite many attempts at reform over several election cycles. How do you intend to reshape a policing system that has been resistant to change, and slow to show meaningful strides toward equitable community outcomes?

It is important to first clearly state that Councilmembers cannot truly shape our policing system as it currently exists in the City Charter, which is why I support the Yes4Mpls Public Safety Charter Amendment to create a Department of Public Safety. Currently, only the Mayor can make substantive changes to police policies and operations. That being said, when I ran for the first time in 2017, I ran on a platform of building out a comprehensive system of public safety built on the public health approach. That is the work I have been

relentlessly focused on this entire term. Below is my framework for reshaping our public safety system to keep ALL of us safe:

1. Build out alternative responses to certain types of 911 calls (e.g. mental health crises, drug overdoses, homelessness response, etc.)
2. Invest in evidence-based violence prevention and intervention strategies like Cure Violence, hospital-based bedside violence interventions, Group Violence Intervention, and others.
3. Transform rather than just “reform” the police. This specifically looks like allocating our police resources to more effective, collaborative strategies like problem-oriented policing and focused deterrence, in partnership with the Office of Violence Prevention.
4. Create a reentry support network to help our neighbors coming home from incarnation be set up to succeed in the face of legal, permanent disenfranchisement due to their records.
5. Develop common sense public safety governance structures that increase transparency and accountability while also improving overall services provided.

What are your stances on memorializing public spaces when our community is grieving, and/or demanding action through constitutionally-protected protests? What policies would you put in place or what organizations would you engage to ensure residents can do these things safely?

Thinking about this specifically in terms of North Minneapolis, a part of taking up public space to demand action is to disrupt people's everyday lives to get their attention on an issue. In North Minneapolis, our people already intimately understand the issues we face whether it be police violence harming our neighbors or community violence killing our kids. Recently, during the occupation of the intersection of Laneal Frazier's death from a MPD officer crashing into Mr. Frazier's vehicle, someone was shot nearby, but the emergency vehicles weren't allowed through this major intersection that connects two of Ward 4's main corridors. This young man almost died as a result and remains in critical condition. We have to find a reasonable balance to hold space for grieving in public space, demanding change through protests, and the added trauma these things can add to a community already bearing the brunt of so much systemic and community violence. Any specific policy that is put into place has to capture this nuance or else it would likely have unintended consequences in the most vulnerable parts of the city.

Housing

Rental assistance from the federal government has helped keep people in their homes through the pandemic. This funding is not permanent, however, and inability to pay is the leading cause of evictions. What is your stance on more permanent rental assistance, rent stabilization, and/or rent control measures in Minneapolis?

I support the City stepping into the space of permanent rental assistance, which is why I have been a long-time partner with the mayor on the Stable Homes, Stable Schools program. Further, it is important to put into place rent stabilization and rent control policies based on the latest research and evidence of outcomes from other cities' policies. This is a way to help to

make housing more stabilized and predictable for renters, who make up more than half of our city's residents.

Gentrification results in cultural loss for communities and major economic impacts for those priced out of their longtime neighborhoods. As our city grows, what plans do you have to combat gentrification and increase the amount of affordable housing available in Minneapolis?

Anti-displacement strategies must be baked into all of the relevant work of the City. An example of what this looks like is our work on the Upper Harbor Terminal redevelopment project. Preventing displacement and gentrification isn't an afterthought – it's a core value of the project. Alongside the UHT Collaborative Planning Committee members, we have created a revenue stream to significantly invest in anti-displacement strategies in the neighborhood surrounding the development. On the site, there will be mixed income senior and family housing – both rental and owner-occupied – with “affordable” defined on Northside income levels rather than the Area Median Income. Through the work we have done with UHT, we have redefined how to do community development in our city.

As for increasing the overall amount of available affordable housing, this is something I have actively pursued as a Councilmember. The Minneapolis 2040 Plan allowed me the opportunity to undo the systemically racist zoning in Ward 4 that prevented multifamily housing and mixed use buildings from being developed in our community. Now, we have to invest in small, local BIPOC developers and set them up to succeed in addressing our own communities' needs.

In the last few years, Minneapolis has experienced a spike in encampments of unhoused people on public land – a high percentage of whom are Black and/or Indigenous. Many of our unhoused neighbors see this as their best housing option over shelters (for reasons of personal safety, pet ownership, or having to abandon property). What will you do to protect these neighbors and connect them with safe and stable housing?

We must address the housing crisis in our city. A city as prosperous as Minneapolis in a country as wealthy as the United States should not have so many people unhoused. I support a Housing First policy that will eliminate any and all barriers to different housing options. For example, “wet housing” options that help people struggling with substance abuse disorders get stabilized in housing in order to help them just focus on getting sober and on their feet. This will require partnership with homeless resource service providers and the County. Long-term, I would also like to author an ordinance that ends discrimination of certain breeds of pets in housing to prevent issues of homelessness stemming from people having to choose either their pets or their housing.



LaTrisha Vetaw

latrishafoward4.com

Public Safety

How will you keep young Black and brown kids safe – those who are simultaneously the most at risk from gun violence but also most at risk during interactions with the police? What do you believe are best practices for solving these issues in tandem, and how will you involve the communities most affected in problem solving and determining next steps?

Keeping our community safe is the most basic duty of the government. Our current Council is failing us. Instead of engaging experts and community members to find real solutions that reduce crime, our Council Members bicker with folks on Twitter over silly hashtags like “defund the police.” And I know that police brutality is real. I've experienced it myself. It was at a family gathering in North Minneapolis when I was a young girl. There were a bunch of kids and a few adults. One minute, the kids were just playing. The next minute, the door is down and the police are storming the house we were in. They ziptied all of our hands behind our backs – including my three-year-old twin cousins. They made us lie down on the floor and they put a sheet over our heads. As I'm lying there, already scared out of my mind, one of the officers says: “We could kill them all and no one would care.” Imagine that. These are our public servants. So I know that MPD needs deep, structural change. But we also need officers. Our

neighbors need to have someone they can call when they hear gunshots outside their window at night. Sending in social workers to a shootout just isn't going to cut it. We can reform the police without getting rid of them. We must.

People of color in Minneapolis are killed or otherwise harmed by law enforcement at disproportionately high rates, despite many attempts at reform over several election cycles. How do you intend to reshape a policing system that has been resistant to change, and slow to show meaningful strides toward equitable community outcomes?

To reshape the Minneapolis policing system, we must have a “both/and” approach. We need both safety beyond policing and law enforcement that includes police presence. When I am elected, I will support expanding the funding of the Office of Violence Prevention for the Minneapolis US Strategic Outreach initiative, where trusted community members work together on neighborhood teams to serve as outreach workers. They use non-physical conflict resolution, mediation, interruption techniques to de-escalate conflict, and then connect community members with services that can assist with housing, medical and mental health support, and employment. I will also support expanding the use of the

Mental Health Co-responder Unit which deploys mental health professionals to respond to police calls involving individuals who are or may be experiencing a mental health crisis. But policy changes and training alone will not accomplish a culture shift which is so essential in seeing justice for LGBTQ, Black, Brown, and indigenous communities. We need the ability to get the wrong officers out, which means anything from changing the police union contract to enhancing our disciplinary process and reforming the problematic arbitration system. I will work directly with leaders in community and the city enterprise as well as the Minneapolis Police Chief and the Mayor. Leaders include representatives from the Lake Street Council, West Broadway Business and Area Coalition, Latino Economic Development Center, African American Leadership Forum, Black Women's Wealth Alliance, Hmong American Partnership, Minnesota Trans Health Coalition, Native American Community Development Institute, and many other groups.

What are your stances on memorializing public spaces when our community is grieving, and/or demanding action through constitutionally-protected protests? What policies would you put in place or what organizations would you engage to ensure residents can do these things safely?

I believe memorializing public spaces is a crucial part of community healing. Peaceful protests and all other peaceful practices are one of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. As city council member, I will make sure that both of these continue to be protected.

Housing

Rental assistance from the federal government has helped keep people in their homes through the pandemic. This funding is not permanent, however, and inability to pay is the leading cause of evictions. What is your stance on more permanent rental assistance, rent stabilization, and/or rent control measures in Minneapolis?

I start from the standpoint that housing is a right. Each of us deserves to live in a home that is safe, secure, comfortable, and affordable. As a city council member, I will continue to prioritize the preservation of existing and creation of new affordable housing with a focus on those making 30-60% of AMI and with a special emphasis on units serving those at or below 30% of AMI. I also will advocate for our city's work in the 4D Program which incentivizes landlords to retain affordable units in exchange for property tax reductions. I will stand behind More Representation Minneapolis, which has provide legal assistance to countless residents facing eviction, and during the COVID-19 pandemic has assisted in expunging eviction records.

Leslie Davis

DID NOT RESPOND

In terms of rent control measures, I will use a data-driven approach to evaluate any policies that are brought forward.

Gentrification results in cultural loss for communities and major economic impacts for those priced out of their longtime neighborhoods. As our city grows, what plans do you have to combat gentrification and increase the amount of affordable housing available in Minneapolis?

I believe that our obligation is to retain residents of all backgrounds, and especially BIPOC and new American neighbors. I support policies that retain affordable housing and funding towards homeownership among BIPOC communities.

Homeownership prevents displacement and builds intergenerational wealth. That's why I support policies like down payment assistance that allow longtime community members to purchase homes, remain in their neighborhoods, and build wealth.

I will also support the 2040 Comprehensive Plan which brings forward a diversity of housing options and therefore a socioeconomic diversity of people in every neighborhood.

We also must acknowledge that rent control has failed in every city it's been tried in. In fact, more often than not, it causes average rent prices to rise by disincentivizing construction of new units. Why members of our City Council would advocate a policy that housing experts categorically denounce is beyond me. As legislative leaders, we must listen to data. That's what I'll do when I'm elected.

In the last few years, Minneapolis has experienced a spike in encampments of unhoused people on public land — a high percentage of whom are Black and/or Indigenous. Many of our unhoused neighbors see this as their best housing option over shelters (for reasons of personal safety, pet ownership, or having to abandon property). What will you do to protect these neighbors and connect them with safe and stable housing?

Our unhoused and unsheltered neighbors must be treated with dignity and respect. Presently, a gap exists between people experiencing homelessness and the deeply affordable housing in our city. Those who Minneapolis is not meeting the needs of are forced to move from place to place searching for housing. This is disruptive to their lives, their children's education, their community relationships, and their ability to retain employment. As a city council member, I will support increasing the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to provide gap financing for the production and preservation of affordable housing for families earning less than 50% of AMI. I will also continue to support policy initiatives like Stable Schools Stable Homes and the 4D Program. Furthermore, our city needs more homeless shelters, including culturally-sensitive and specific shelters for our BIPOC communities. This along with collaboration with community organizations will help decrease Minneapolis' unhoused individuals.



This non-partisan voter guide was compiled by, designed, and published by Pollen Midwest. It is part of a larger Minneapolis voter engagement initiative with Pollen, Pillsbury United Communities, and Sahan Journal designed to center the voices and lives of BIPOC Minneapolis residents, and to provide comprehensive, fact-based, and engaging information about the issues and the candidates. The questions we asked of the candidates came straight from Minneapolis residents through an extensive community engagement process that included surveys and listening sessions. We would like to thank the following community organizations for their participation and insights: African Immigrants Community Services, Center for Hmong Arts and Talent (CHAT), Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research (HACER), Karen Organization of Minnesota, Coalition of Asian American Leaders, CAPI USA, and Comunidades Organizando el Poder y la Acción Latina (COPAL MN) We did our best to include the voices of as many candidates for mayor and city council as we could reach, and will continue to update the guide up until election day with submissions from candidates who did not respond to our original request.

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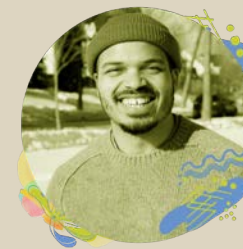
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Ward 5 candidates for City Council.

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Jeremiah Ellison

jeremiahforward5.com

Public Safety

How will you keep young Black and brown kids safe — those who are simultaneously the most at risk from gun violence but also most at risk during interactions with the police? What do you believe are best practices for solving these issues in tandem, and how will you involve the communities most affected in problem solving and determining next steps?

My top priority as a public servant and neighbor is to see that my community make it home safe at the end of the day. This starts with focusing on peoples' needs—like housing and employment stability—but there are also the day-to-day emergencies that must be addressed, and we have an obligation to ensure that that system works for everyone.

We need a system of emergency response that understands what kinds of emergencies the police are the best response to, and what emergencies need a new type of response—one that goes beyond the police-only model that produced George Floyd, Jamar Clark, Terence Franklin, and the list goes on.

We need to define the scope of the police, a scope that has broadened by the decade, to the point that nearly every 911 call that isn't a fire or physical medical emergency gets a police response whether the situation truly calls for it or not.

The public health approach of the Office of Violence Prevention needs more investment—the aim is to target and treat cycles of violence before they get fully started.

Delegating traffic enforcement, homelessness response, and mental health emergencies to services more equipped to de-escalate, mitigate harm and create safety is a simple, easy, and necessary start to keeping people safe in our communities.

Those most affected by violence deserve to be at the helm of those conversations. There won't always be agreement, but people should be given access to the truth and not fear-mongered into not asking hard questions or imagining a more just world.

People of color in Minneapolis are killed or otherwise harmed by law enforcement at disproportionately high rates, despite many attempts at reform over several election cycles. How do you intend to reshape a policing system that has been resistant to change, and slow to show meaningful strides toward equitable community outcomes?

I believe we need a complete rethinking of how we keep each other safe in Minneapolis—this means replacing MPD with a new Department of Public Safety, one that decenters police as the sole means of creating a safe community, and incorporates other forms of emergency response into its model of public safety. Our modern reform discussion has its roots in the 1919 race massacres in Chicago—known as Red Summer—and hasn't really advanced in the subsequent 100+ years.

Often, going beyond the police-only model has been done in small bursts. We've seen Violence

Prevention style programs be as or more effective in reducing violence in communities, only for them to disappear once violence goes down. These initiatives should grow, and they should become a regular part of how we keep people safe.

We should be reducing the role that police play in punitively regulating behavior that is generally nonviolent (such as chemical dependency, to give one example) and requires a different approach to actually solve the problem being faced.

What are your stances on memorializing public spaces when our community is grieving, and/or demanding action through constitutionally-protected protests? What policies would you put in place or what organizations would you engage to ensure residents can do these things safely?

I believe communities should be allowed to lead when it comes to memorializing spaces.

Protocols for conversation/negotiation with communities seem long overdue. When a tragedy strikes an entire neighborhood (or the entire city), residents deserve to be engaged in good faith, not just when there is fearful of backlash or outrage. Residents that do show outrage should have a platform, and not be treated with hostility or annoyance from the City.

Housing

Rental assistance from the federal government has helped keep people in their homes through the pandemic. This funding is not permanent, however, and inability to pay is the leading cause of evictions. What is your stance on more permanent rental assistance, rent stabilization, and/or rent control measures in Minneapolis?

Tenant rights have been the defining pillar of my first term in office, and I will continue to advocate for and fight for the dignity and stability of renters.

I am proud to have co-authored the two Rent Stabilization charter amendments. I'm very happy to see at least one of them advance to voters this November—I urge everyone to vote “yes” on Rent Stabilization. In my first year in office, I was told this policy was an impossibility in Minneapolis, that the state law was too high a bar to clear and that the political will did not exist. We are proving that the residents of Minneapolis are more than willing to clear the state's bar, and with the passage of this charter amendment, we will finally be able to draft and pass a substantive Rent Stabilization ordinance.

Gentrification results in cultural loss for communities and major economic impacts for those priced out of their longtime neighborhoods. As our city grows, what plans do you have to combat gentrification and increase the amount of affordable housing available in Minneapolis?

My colleagues and I have already surpassed the previous rate at which affordable housing is being built in our city, but it's not enough,

there is still a ton more work to be done.

I created the Renter First policy—which centers the dignity of renters in the inspections process. Previously, city action against recalcitrant landlords has often resulted in the displacement of the very tenants the City has hoped to serve. The Renter First policy changed that, deploying legal tools at the City's disposal to prevent tenants from being displaced as we hold their landlords accountable.

I researched and championed the City's “right to return” preference policy, which will give preference for homeownership and rental properties to people displaced from the neighborhood for a list of defined circumstances.

I co-authored the City's Renter Protection ordinances, which expand access to renters through the regulation of screening criteria and by capping security deposits.

I created the Emergency Stabilization pilot program as a way to field test the best ways for the City to ensure housing stability and potentially expand and promote access to homeownership.

Most recently, in addition to co-authoring the Rent Stabilization charter amendments, I'm co-authoring the city's Tenant Opportunity to Purchase ordinance, which will give tenants the first right to buy the property they live in when their landlord goes to sale it.

In the last few years, Minneapolis has experienced a spike in encampments of unhoused people on public land — a high percentage of whom are Black and/or Indigenous. Many of our unhoused neighbors see this as their best housing option over shelters (for reasons of personal safety, pet ownership, or having to abandon property). What will you do to protect these neighbors and connect them with safe and stable housing?

I am seeking to center the agency and safety of encampment residents in my approach. Encampments can be incredibly difficult situations. Self sufficiency is often not valued by local governments; determined encampment populations are essentially punished by a lack of engagement from local governments; lack of engagement often leads to abuse within the encampment. It's a predictable cycle that we can prevent by building more lower barrier shelters and increasing rental assistance and employment accessibility. Other things, like the creation of safe injection sites and cluster developments, will also be important steps for us to take in addressing this crisis.



Kristel Porter

northsidersforkristel.org

Public Safety

How will you keep young Black and brown kids safe — those who are simultaneously the most at risk from gun violence but also most at risk during interactions with the police? What do you believe are best practices for solving these issues in tandem, and how will you involve the communities most affected in problem solving and determining next steps?

In order to make sure that children are safe we have to first make sure they have their basic needs met; shelter, food, love, etc. So first, I would advocate that MPRB, MPS, and all organizations that provide programming, meals and activities to children be expected to work together. No more silos. MPRB & MPS should be working hand in hand. When schools are out (whether it be evenings, weekends, holidays or summer), the parks are in. MPS staff should be allowed to bid on jobs available at our parks and offer stipends for coaching. Not every park has a Recreational Facility, but every park has children. We need to staff these parks so that children can have mentors that they recognize from their schools and can grab a lunch provided by the MPS food truck. Creating partnerships gives community members a 1 stop-shop to find out where and when there is programming for their children so that they don't have to call around for hours. It also helps organizations get the word out when their programming budgets are already limited.

The real way to address gun violence is something that is outside the authority of the city council and

would take for our state and federal legislatures to regulate online ammunition purchases. However, as a city council representative and the relationships I have developed with state legislators, I will work to advocate for that since Ward 5 residents have a higher than average rate of gun violence. When purchasing a gun online, you have to show up to a local store to pick it up. However, many guns that are in the hands of those who are committing violent acts, have purchased their guns illegally or were able to access their guns illegally by theft. When they want to buy ammunition online, they can order a box and have them sent directly to their home. No need to provide Identification, no need for a permit, just the money needed to purchase. (<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/guns-crime/reports/2019/10/07/475538/bullet-control/>)

People of color in Minneapolis are killed or otherwise harmed by law enforcement at disproportionately high rates, despite many attempts at reform over several election cycles. How do you intend to reshape a policing system that has been resistant to change, and slow to show meaningful strides toward equitable community outcomes?

I am someone who has always believed that the Minneapolis Police Department was in desperate need of reform. The Federation that represents Minneapolis Police Officers has been representing and saving officers jobs, who have been repeatedly abusing their authority for years through a process called “arbitration” which has

been operating off of precedence since 1972 when the Police Officers Federation earned collective bargaining rights and became a fully recognized union. Fifty percent of officers that go through arbitration, get their job back because of precedence (letting one person get away with someone because someone else did before). So I would support that the Minneapolis Police Department have written in their contract that any officer that is fired because of using force or or found to be dishonest on a police report, is not allowed to go through the arbitration process. They will not be allowed to serve as an officer in our city. Also, a common sense approach to making this possible would be to require officers to carry liability insurance (since most high risk professions do). This way if they are uninsurable, they cannot serve as an officer in our city. I also oppose the fact that our lieutenants and inspectors, (ie supervisors) are represented by, and share the same union as their subordinates (those who are supervised). It is a major conflict of interest and only allows corruption at the top since all members do not want their bargaining powers to be compromised by disciplining another member (smh). I would also like to highlight the fact that officers do not abide by the requirement that they are to take 12 hours off in between shifts in order to rest and manage their mental health. “Off Duty Work,” which pays them a lot more than “On Duty” is not counted as work within those 12 hours (hmmm).

[Editorial Note: The original response exceeded our word count limit. Only the first 300 words are published here.]

What are your stances on memorializing public spaces when our community is grieving, and/or demanding action through constitutionally-protected protests? What policies would you put in place or what organizations would you engage to ensure residents can do these things safely?

Allowing people the right to protest and memorialize when they have lost a loved one is essential to the process of healing, and should always be the right of anyone and everyone. Anything less would be undemocratic.

The only time that government should interfere, is when the space is posing a proven health or safety risk to the community and in that case, it would be the responsibility our elected representatives to sit down with the community and allow them to lead their representative to an agreeable solution to memorialize fairly.

Housing

Rental assistance from the federal government has helped keep people in their homes through the pandemic. This funding is not permanent, however, and inability to pay is the leading cause of evictions. What is your stance on more permanent rental assistance, rent stabilization, and/or rent control measures in Minneapolis?

This is a very complex question with layers so I will answer each one separately:

The moratorium has been great for the renters who are able to get access to it or are civically engaged enough to know it exists. The most recent one (Zero Balance Project) has been even more beneficial because the landlords can take matters into their own hands and apply yet must wait on the renters to approve the online application. I know of landlords that have been waiting months for their tenants to go into their emails and approve for the

funding to be released so their landlords mortgage and water bills can be paid. This is a major problem. I support the moratorium, and we need figure out a way to help the renters get the funding needed to the landowner, so that the landowner does not risk defaulting and losing the home that they are providing for rent.

If we want to make rental assistance permanent, this will need to come from federal funds which will be allocated by our state legislature, and decided on by our County Commissioners. Unless we are willing to create a TIF district to provide funding for rent assistance programs, energy efficiency and renewable energy updates and upgrades for blighted communities through our State Legislature, which I would be in full support of. When it comes to the issue of Rent Control will not work without TOPA. We have to address that one right away. Once again, I represent North Minneapolis where the rent only increases between 1-1.5% annually and where we have the lowest rents in the city. I have three friends in North Minneapolis who are Black and who own single family homes that they rent out. 2 out of 3 have put their homes up for sale because of the proposed Rent Control and 1 of them turned their home

into a Air BNB.

[Editorial Note: The original response exceeded our word count limit. Only the first 300 words are published here.]

Gentrification results in cultural loss for communities and major economic impacts for those priced out of their longtime neighborhoods. As our city grows, what plans do you have to combat gentrification and increase the amount of affordable housing available in Minneapolis?

The city needs to start getting a little more creative on this one.

We could start by allowing the construction of tiny homes and allowing more creative ways to ease the financial burden of those who want to build wealth through land ownership. The housing market is ridiculous right now. Just a decade ago, I could purchase a home in my community for \$10k, now you can't find anything under \$200k. The quickest way to creating generational wealth is through landownership, so we cannot afford to continue placing affordable rentals as a higher priority than affordable ownership models.

As I stated in the previous question, the city needs to start identifying vacant, boarded

and abandoned properties. Then develop a partnership with a mix of neighborhood led Community Development Corporations, local developers, and residents to creatively place-make and develop high quality residential spaces that are desired and needed for that particular neighborhood.

Yet the only way we will be able to accomplish this, is for our representatives, local developers, community driven realtors, and lenders, to get more creative on financing affordable housing. Three years, it way too long and way to complicated to organize all the hoops and hurdles needed to fund affordable housing projects. It makes many not want to do it, and leaves us with very few developers with big enough hearts to weather the storm.

We need to be serious about prioritizing Tax Increment Financing to develop affordable ownership and rentals on residentially zoned properties. Yet we also need to be mindful about not building 100% residential and instead building mix-use residential on our commercially zoned corridors. 100% residential on commercially zoned properties, robs us of a major tax base which holds back the future funding needed to ensure the sustainability of our schools, parks, roads, and other public spaces.

Also, we need to be mindful of how our community is changing along with its needs.

[Editorial Note: The original response exceeded our word count limit. Only the first 300 words are published here.]

In the last few years, Minneapolis has experienced a spike in encampments of unhoused people on public land — a high percentage of whom are Black and/or Indigenous. Many of our unhoused neighbors see this as their best housing option over shelters (for reasons of personal safety, pet ownership, or having to abandon property). What will you do to protect these neighbors and connect them with safe and stable housing?

Our government massively pulled funding out of Mental Health in 1981 when President Reagan repealed Carter's legislation with the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act. This pushed the responsibility of patients dealing with mental health issues back to the states. That legislation created block grants for the states, but federal spending on mental illness declined drastically, now fast forward to today the U.S. Department of Justice estimates that 10 percent of state prisoners have symptoms that meet criteria for a psychotic disorder and 55 percent of people experiencing chronic



Cathy Spann

DID NOT RESPOND



Elijah Norris-Holliday

DID NOT RESPOND



Victor Martinez

DID NOT RESPOND



Suleiman Isse

DID NOT RESPOND

homelessness report they have emotional or psychiatric conditions.

Why are the most vulnerable populations not receiving preventative care, therapy, medication and housing immediately while they are transitioning out of the public school system? They needed housing, three square meals daily, therapy, medication, and public workers to spend time with them and love on them, immediately. Why are we waiting to react when these vulnerable and precious neighbors reach adulthood and have already spent years in and out of jail, self-medicating, committing crimes and becoming victims of crime?

In order to move forward and to address adults currently living in encampments today; I support building tiny home villages that are maintained and managed by social workers, case workers, nurses, and contracted by locally owned property maintenance companies. In order to address our youth and very young adults living with mental illness and physical and mental disabilities; we need to create a robust strategy to properly and immediately meet their basic needs while exiting our public school system.

This will take time, yet in one short decade, we will begin to enjoy a sustainable model that will have a positive impact on our cities livability for generations to come.

For the full questionnaire and to read responses from other candidates, view our online voter guide at:

pollenmidwest.org/mplsisus



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Neda Kellogg found a calling in what she was missing growing up.

Project DIVA founder helps Black girls discover what is possible

By David Pierini, Staff Reporter

Neda Kellogg had plenty of love growing up. What she didn't have was a person to help navigate the emotions unique to a Black girl in America.

She needed a mentor with a roadmap and instead wound up walking - sometimes stumbling - on a meandering path that would lead Kellogg to create Project DIVA International, where coaches deliver guidance for personal and professional development. It is a judgement-free space for Black and Brown girls to dream.

"I found this calling and it was like I needed to go through every last experience so that I can be the example to all the girls who come to me," said Kellogg, 49. "That's the special thing about all the leaders on my team. We have Northside experience, suburban experience, corporate experience, moms-taking-care-of-kids experience. There's a gamut of wisdom that comes from our life experiences and past mistakes."

Kellogg started Project DIVA for the girls attending Dunwoody Academy in 2007. She has since grown it to serve girls in grades six through 12 throughout the Twin Cities, including North Minneapolis. It partners with several area schools, including Edison and Patrick Henry high schools, and also provides culturally-appropriate coaching to about 200 girls.

Since COVID-19, mentors and the group's youngest members meet mostly over video conferences. During safer periods of the pandemic, they have gathered in-person.

This year, when International was added to the name, the organization began recruiting mentors and girls beyond the Twin Cities.

Project DIVA (Dignity, Integrity, Virtue and Availability) seeks to pave a smoother road for Black girls.

Kellogg saw a need for a program where Black girls could explore identity, ask questions about their bodies, learn what makes healthy relationships and develop tools for building professional success and resiliency. It recently added a program for financial and investment literacy.

"We start off with a blueprint of self-discovery and then we go into vision boarding," Kellogg said. "We don't tell them what they're good at, we let them tell us. It's not about finding a super power as it is about having conversations that matter according to where you want to go in life."

A DIVA will rise

A Google search for "Neda Kellogg, Minneapolis" greets the viewer with a picture of a smiling woman wearing a sunny-yellow top with arms extended. She appears to dance joyfully and ready to hug like she is happy you found her.

In person, she sparkles and radiates the energy ready to support a young girl adrift in angst. There is also a velvety calm

Continued on page 34

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OPEN STREETS

Photos by David Pierini, Staff Reporter

Open Streets West Broadway Avenue, canceled last summer, made a welcome return Saturday. Northsiders strolled the thoroughfare with their children and stopped to greet friends, skip rope, complete art projects and sway to the music of bands and DJs. It also gave healthcare workers a chance to promote Covid-19 vaccines and local candidates for public office time to shake hands and remind voters of the upcoming city election.



Molly Kroyer, 10, blew bubbles and then tried to catch them on her bubble wand without popping them.



LaSean Williams assists his son A'Qelle, 3, paint a mask at a station led by artist Geno Okok.



Nadine Graves shows her two sons, Noah, left, and Nicholas, she still has the ups and the timing for jump roping.



Valerie Lunderville didn't let her winged daughter Chloe, 5, flit too far down West Broadway Avenue without her.

Welcome to the neighborhood

Big Brothers Big Sisters relocates to North Minneapolis

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

Meet the people where they are. The adage typically applies in the metaphorical sense, but for Big Brothers Big Sisters Twin Cities (BBBS) and its new CEO, they took the adage literally. Thus, the mentoring organization set out to firmly establish roots in North Minneapolis, recently relocating its headquarters from an office unit it was renting in Roseville to a BBBS-owned building at 3110 Washington Ave. N. The thought is closer proximity means more authentic connections.

"To be honest, we were disconnected (physically) from our youth," said BBBS CEO Patrick Sukhum. "We wanted to own our own building and be close to the community we serve, so North Minneapolis went to the top of our list."

Big Brothers Big Sisters is a one-on-one mentoring organization that seeks to connect adults (Bigs) to youth ages 8-13 years (Littles). While there are no set parameters for youth, often they face a variety of obstacles, be they financial or societal. Today, BBBS serves close to 3,300 area youth. Of that, 14 percent reside in the North Minneapolis zip codes of 55411, 55412 and 55430.

In relocating the headquarters to North Minneapolis, Sukhum said he hopes to shape a more positive narrative of the Northside.

"When I was a 'Big' my 'Little' lived in North Minneapolis and before that I had never really been to the area. So, I had preconceived notions, but the ideas I had

dissipated and I realized they were based out of fear," said Sukhum. "(Being here) we want to be a community partner."

Sukhum is only four months into his role as CEO of BBBS, but he is hardly new to the organization. The former health industries corporate executive began mentoring his "Little" in 1998. Twenty-three years later he and his former mentee remain close.

"He's (his mentee) a brother. He was the best man at my wedding," said Sukhum. "I learn from him the same way he learns from me. Becoming a 'Big' was life changing. It was the best thing that happened to me."

Prior to being named CEO, Sukhum served on the BBBS board of directors for 10 years. And though a national search occurred to replace outgoing CEO Michael Goar, who left to take over as CEO of Catholic Charities of St. Paul & Minneapolis, the final choice ended up being someone closest to the organization.

Like most, BBBS has been operating while navigating the challenges of COVID. Sukhum said the current pandemic has caused some "Littles" to withdraw, but conversely, 350 new mentoring relationships were formed. According to the new CEO, 250 of those relationships began virtually. BBBS is seeking to form more relationships.

"We have openings for 'Littles' to join our program (and) we're always looking for more volunteers, especially men of color," said BBBS director of Marketing and Communications, Lori Dossett.

To become an adult volunteer or to enroll a youth visit www.bigstwincities.org.



Big Brothers Big Sisters CEO Patrick Sukhum. Photo courtesy of Big Brothers Big Sisters



The new digs for Big Brothers Big Sisters at 3110 Washington Ave. N. Photo courtesy of Big Brothers Big Sisters



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COMCAST RISE TO GIVE \$10,000 GRANTS TO 100 TWIN CITIES SMALL BUSINESSES OWNED BY PEOPLE OF COLOR; TOTALING \$1 MILLION

Studies* show that small businesses owned by people of color, including those owned by Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, and Asian American individuals, among others, have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Beginning on October 1 through October 14, eligible businesses in the Twin Cities can apply for a \$10,000 grant at www.ComcastRISE.com. A total of 100 grants in the Twin Cities will be awarded in late November 2021.

To help, Comcast announced that through the Comcast RISE Investment Fund the Twin Cities is receiving \$1 million in grants to give 100 small businesses owned by people of color each \$10,000.

“While we know that no single organization can solve historic and systemic inequities overnight, we are committed to taking tangible actions that can drive long-term impact and change,” said Kalyn Hove, Regional Senior Vice President, Comcast Twin Cities. “Comcast RISE and the Comcast RISE Investment Fund offer the opportunity for small businesses owned by people of color to help grow their businesses, create jobs and play a vital role in supporting our communities. This new round of Comcast RISE grants will provide more entrepreneurs of color with the resources and tools they need to scale their businesses and thrive for years to come.”

Comcast RISE champions Representation, Investment, Strength, and Empowerment for small businesses owned by people of color by providing marketing, technology and capital resources to sustain, support and rebuild communities.

The Comcast RISE Investment Fund is focused on small businesses that have been operating for three or more years with 1-25 employees. Businesses eligible include those in the seven-county Twin Cities metro (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties).

Comcast RISE is part of Comcast’s ongoing efforts to advancing digital equity and helping to provide underrepresented small business owners with access to the digital tools and funding they need to thrive.

* Robert W. Fairlie, “The Impact Of Covid-19 On Small Business Owners: Evidence Of Early-Stage Losses From The April 2020 Current Population Survey”; https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w27309/w27309.pdf





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JXTA continued from page 6

ater Gates and Caroline Kent,” Roger Cummings said. “Where else can young people go get internships at Blue Dot or... Target. Very few places. (Not) any places. That’s what your investment is doing.”



The modified house at 2007 Emerson Avenue will soon be torn down. Photo by David Pierini

Project DIVA continued from page 26

to her voice. Kellogg never found the holistic mentoring her organization now provides, but some tumultuous years and several loving aunts changed her scattered trajectory. It was self-discovery the hard way but from it, she found her purpose.

Kellogg was born and raised in Omaha, Neb. Her mother was a strong, early influence who became sidelined by mental illness during some of her daughter’s crucial years. Her father showed love by providing for the family and dispensing practical advice on the importance of staying out of trouble, going to college and finding a job.

Missing was the deeper conversation about responsibility, self-discovery and matters of the heart. She wanted confidence so she could succeed in the challenges ahead. How would she get through school? What do healthy relationships look like? How are careers chosen? She didn’t know how or who to ask.

During high school, she clashed with her father and left home two days after graduation. There were relationships that left her demoralized, low-paying jobs and a two-year period of homelessness. She tried to be an entrepreneur but didn’t know how to develop a business plan.

She learned to style hair and eventually opened a salon, This gave her much-needed stability and critical insight. From the chair, clients discussed struggles with their daughters that sounded very familiar.

“It was some of the same stuff I’ve been through,” she said. “Now I’m in my late 20s and I’m like, ‘Where did I end up?’

A blueprint to go by

The salon talk proved valuable to her own journey.

She began an-after school workshop called Impressions and ran it for two years before moving to Minneapolis in 2006. The after-school sessions in Omaha “gave me the fire” to work with girls.

Kellogg was hired as an executive business assistant at Dunwoody Academy and quickly saw a need for its girl students to get specialized attention. The name Project DIVA was born out of the “village of women,” cousins and aunts who at times sheltered her and gave her steady, loving affirmation.

DIVA is a nod to these aunts who were dignified and dressed impeccably. “They wouldn’t go to the mailbox without their fur coat and lipstick,” Kellogg said. “They had a very strong foundation of self-love.”

Kellogg established Project DIVA as a 501(c)(3) organization in 2009 while still at Dunwoody.

She didn’t want to do Project DIVA alone. She contracted with coaches and recruited mentors, all with the love-changing aunts energy.

Girls create a self-discovery blueprint that encourages critical thinking, develops insight to understand feelings and fosters a world view. They are asked to

chart out plans to achieve “big, hairy, audacious goals” as well as finding regular ways of personal care.

Members of the organization from all walks of life are recruited to share their stories in group sessions. High school girls are “teen executives” and learn to pass wisdom to younger girls.

Project DIVA is also there for parents and encourages them to provide the same level of support for their daughters’ self-discovery as they would a child’s pursuit of sports or art. The organization asks women to invest in a monthly membership of \$25. This lends financial support to the program and gives them access to sessions for sharing wisdom or for tending to their personal growth.

Her work creating Project DIVA earned Kellogg a Bush Fellowship in 2018. While running the organization limits her time coaching, she is still able to work with a girl or two in one-on-one sessions. She does a weekly YouTube video called “Come Here Girl, Let Me Talk to You.”

Karen Pineda, a member of Project DIVA’s first class, got pregnant during high school but Kellogg was there with

unconditional support.

She would even provide an extra set of arms for the baby, a girl named Leanna, so that Pineda could do homework or keep an appointment.

Leeanna is now in Project DIVA’s “Girl on the Go” program for middle schoolers.

There is no single way Pineda can describe Kellogg.

“She has a lot of roles in my life,” said Pineda, a Northsider. “She can be a mentor and play the role of a mom. My parents have always been working class and I never had a mom to go to after school. (Kellogg) was always there for me to get through my teenage years.

“She was the one I went to when I was pregnant. She didn’t judge me but she gave me an adult’s perspective because I had to grow.”

<To learn how to be a part of Projective DIVA International <https://www.project-diva.org/> or email Leadership and Development Director LaQuisha Hunnecook at laquisha@projectdiva.org>

NEIGHBORS

NOTICES

GRADUATIONS & OTHER ACADEMIC HONORS

Jesse Yang from Minneapolis graduated this past spring with an associate of science degree in nursing from Northwest Technical College in Bemidji... Three students with local ties were named to the summer Dean’s List at North Dakota State University. All three are from Minneapolis. They are: **Katherine Konold**, Business Administration; **Kaylee Causo**, Marketing; and **Anna K. Schumacher**, psychology... **Cassidy Courey** of Brooklyn Center was named to the spring Dean’s List at Mount Mercy University in Cedar Rapids, Iowa... **Sean Kunstman** of Minneapolis was a spring graduate of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. **Kuntsman** received a degree in Computer Science...**Sidney Meader** and **Marie Miller** made the spring Dean’s List at UW-La Crosse... Several scholars with local ties were named to the spring Dean’s List at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. They are: **Aisha Abdulahi**, College of Education/Human Development; **Mahamed Abdulahi**, College of Liberal Arts; **Lucia Allen**, College of Liberal Arts; **Daniel Banker**, College of Design; **Samuel Barthold**, Carlson School of Management; **Emmanuel Blabuh**, College of Education/Human Development; **Eliana Branch**, College of Liberal Arts; **Elizabeth Bush**, College of Liberal Arts; **Jack Callahan**, College of Liberal Arts; **Marlisha Carter**, College of Design; **Murphy Cauble**, College of Design; **Gerald Claessens**, College of Contin & Prof Studies; **Kenneth Clungeon**, College of Science and Engineering; **Karla Cortes Miguel**, College of Liberal Arts; **Jacob Dommer-Koch**, College of Design; **Nypri Fisher**, Coll of Contin & Prof Studies; **Matthew Fistler**, College of Liberal Arts; **Lydia Flachman**, College of Liberal Arts; **Johanna Garrison**, College of Liberal Arts; **Isabella Gold**, College of Liberal Arts; **Gregory Gronseth**, Coll of Contin & Prof Studies; **Rae Guntzel**, Medical School; **Redwan Hassan**, Coll of Contin & Prof Studies; **Zoe Henson**, College of Liberal Arts; **Mitchell Hockenberry**, College of Science and Engineering; **Marcella James**, College of Liberal Arts; **Nathan Johnson**, College of Liberal Arts; **Julian Kinneavy**, College of Sci and Engineering; **Makenna Larson**, College of Design; **Majestic Lasky**, College of Liberal Arts; **Jennifer Lee**, College of Liberal Arts; **Regina Markert**, College of Liberal Arts; **Sagal Mohamed**, Coll of Contin & Prof Studies; **Quinn Morris**, School of Nursing; **Elena Munger**, Col of Food, Agr & Nat Res Sci; **Laura Norman**, College of Liberal Arts; **Vanessa Pesantez**,

Col of Educ/Human Development; **Sophie Richardson**, College of Liberal Arts; **Kathryn Richner**, Senior, College of Liberal Arts; **June Roettger**, College of Liberal Arts; **Ruby Roettger**, College of Liberal Arts; **Inga Schierkolk**, College of Liberal Arts; **Colt Schiller Olson**, Col of Food, Agr & Nat Res Sci; **Johnathan Schocker**, Carlson School of Management; **Amaal Shire**, Col of Educ/Human Development; **Colette Sime**, Coll of Contin & Prof Studies; **Bec Skelton**, College of Liberal Arts; **Abigail Smith**, School of Nursing; **Caroline Smith**, College of Liberal Arts; **Grant Staplin**, College of Liberal Arts; **Ella Svee**, College of Design; **Susan Tincher**, Coll of Contin & Prof Studies; **Tyaisha Torrance**, Col of Educ/Human Development; **Charles Turner**, College of Liberal Arts; **Megan Vandewalle**, College of Liberal Arts; **Kiana Vang**, College of Sci and Engineering; **Mai Yia Vang**, Col of Educ/Human Development; **Anna Van Kampen**, College of Liberal Arts; **Maya Wells**, College of Liberal Arts; **Kathy Xiong**, Col of Educ/Human Development; **Samantha Xiong**, College of Liberal Arts; and **Lisa Yang**, Col of Educ/Human Development... Several Minneapolis scholars were named to the spring Dean’s List at Minnesota State University-Mankato. They are: **Helen Adetunji**, **Edoh Amou**, **Mohammad Ansari**, **Teja Boddan**, **Dejah Frazier**, **Makiyia Harvey**, **Mariana Jordan**, **Samuel Jorgenson**, **Znia Richmond**, **Juan Sanchez Garcia**, **Bee Thao**, **Ashton Valentines**, and **Chong Xiong**... Two Minneapolis students graduated spring semester at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. They are: **Ninah Divine**, Doctor of Medicine; and **Ka Lor**, Bachelor of Science, Genetics and Genomics... Several local scholars received associate degrees from Normandale Community College. They are: **Finagnon Hermann Avoisse**, Computer Technology; **Mashown Yang**, Liberal Education; **David Parker Duren**, Liberal Education; **Siham Jama Hashi**, Liberal Education; **Abdi A Haybe**, Liberal Education; **Pheadra Johnson**, Psychology Transfer Pathway; **Victoria Joy Lynch**, Liberal Education; **Sarah Renee Nasser**, Nursing; **Kiara Danielle Sanigular**, Dietetic Technology; **Kiara Danielle Sanigular**, Nutrition Studies; **Shadae Thomas**, Dental Hygiene; **Vanessa Christine Weaver**, Psychology Transfer Pathway; **Whitley Nichole Wright-Hadley**, Liberal Education; and **Whitley Nichole Wright-Hadley**, Criminal Justice Transfer Pathway. Those making the springs Dean’s List at Normandale include: **Abdibasid Muhamed**, **Melissa Carlson**, **Alyeska Dellinger**, **Nicolas Essomba**, **JoAnna Grunnes**, **Siham Hashi**, **David Hillen**, **Christopher Hoier**, **Lily Levin**, **Hamze Mohamed**, **Matthew Riehle**, **Nicholas Smith**, **Vanessa Weaver** and **Ma Yang**.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Rent help: COVID 19 Emergency Rental Assistance is available to Minnesotans struggling to pay their rent and utility bills because of the pandemic. If you are eligible, you could receive up to 15 months total assistance, paid three months at a time for rent payments and utility payments (electric, water/sewer, garbage/recycling and other utilities as approved by RentHelpMN). Apply today at renthelpmn.org or if you have questions, call (612) 234-1707. A RentHelpMN representative will guide you through the process.

Internet cheap or free: With the school year underway, families might be looking for help with internet. The federal Emergency Broadband Benefit provides discounted or free internet to many households. If you qualify, you can get a discount of up to \$50 per month toward your internet service. Anyone in these households can apply for discounted internet: Anyone receiving Medicaid, SNAP or SSI benefits. Families with students who receive free or reduced-price school meals. Anyone with a current Pell grant. Anyone eligible for Comcast Internet Essentials. Anyone who has experienced a substantial loss of income since Feb. 29, 2020. Some plans also offer a discount for a laptop, tablet or desktop computer. To apply online, call 833-511-0311.

Free cancer screening: NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center will host s free breast and cervical cancer screening on Oct. 2. Participants can get results and treatment plans the same day. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the CDC reports that rates of cervical cancer screen dropped by almost 80 percent in many parts of the U.S. To reserve a spot, call 612-767-9154 (Español: 612-767-0338; Hmoob: 612-767-9192). The screening event will be part of a health fair to learn about other health services. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

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 WIXX AM 1590 (Hmong).

BE AWARE

Join the orchestra: How does making music during your Saturdays sound? The MacPhail North Youth Orchestra (MNYO) wants to fill its chairs and encourage musicians to grow. After last season’s virtual rehearsals and concerts, the new MNYO season will be conducted in-person. Any musicians who play brass, woodwind, strings and percussion are invited. MNYO will hold auditions on Oct. 2 from 1-2:30 p.m. in the club building at Ascension Catholic School Weekly rehearsals will begin Oct 9 at Ascension. Contact MNYO@macphail.org for more information.

Loring school family: If you have a child starting at Loring this year, be sure to join the Loring Elementary Parents and Families group to get school/PTA updates and connect with other parents! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/loringfamilies/>

UHT park proposal: The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) has published a concept plan for a new regional park at the Upper Harbor Terminal site along the North Minneapolis riverfront. The concept plan will be open for a 45-day public comment period ending Oct. 21, 2021. The MPRB and the city have been working with community members to create a plan to redevelop UHT since the closure of the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam ended barge traffic to the site in 2015. The MPRB is moving forward with plans for a 19.5-acre park at the 48-acre site and has roughly \$8 million budgeted for the first round of park improvements. The concept published today was created after more than 100 meetings, tours and other public events to listen to Northside community members about their aspirations and concerns about developing the site. For information on how to view the park concept plan and companion public art plan, contact Kate Lamers of the Park Board Planning Department at Email: Klamers@minneapolis-sparks.org Phone: 612-230-6486.

Early voting: The Early Vote Center at 980 E. Hennepin Ave opened at 8 a.m. Sept. 17 for voters to cast their ballot early and in person for the Nov. 2 election. Also on Sept. 17, Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services began mailing ballots to voters who have requested to vote early by mail. Visit <https://vote.minneapolismn.gov/> for more information.

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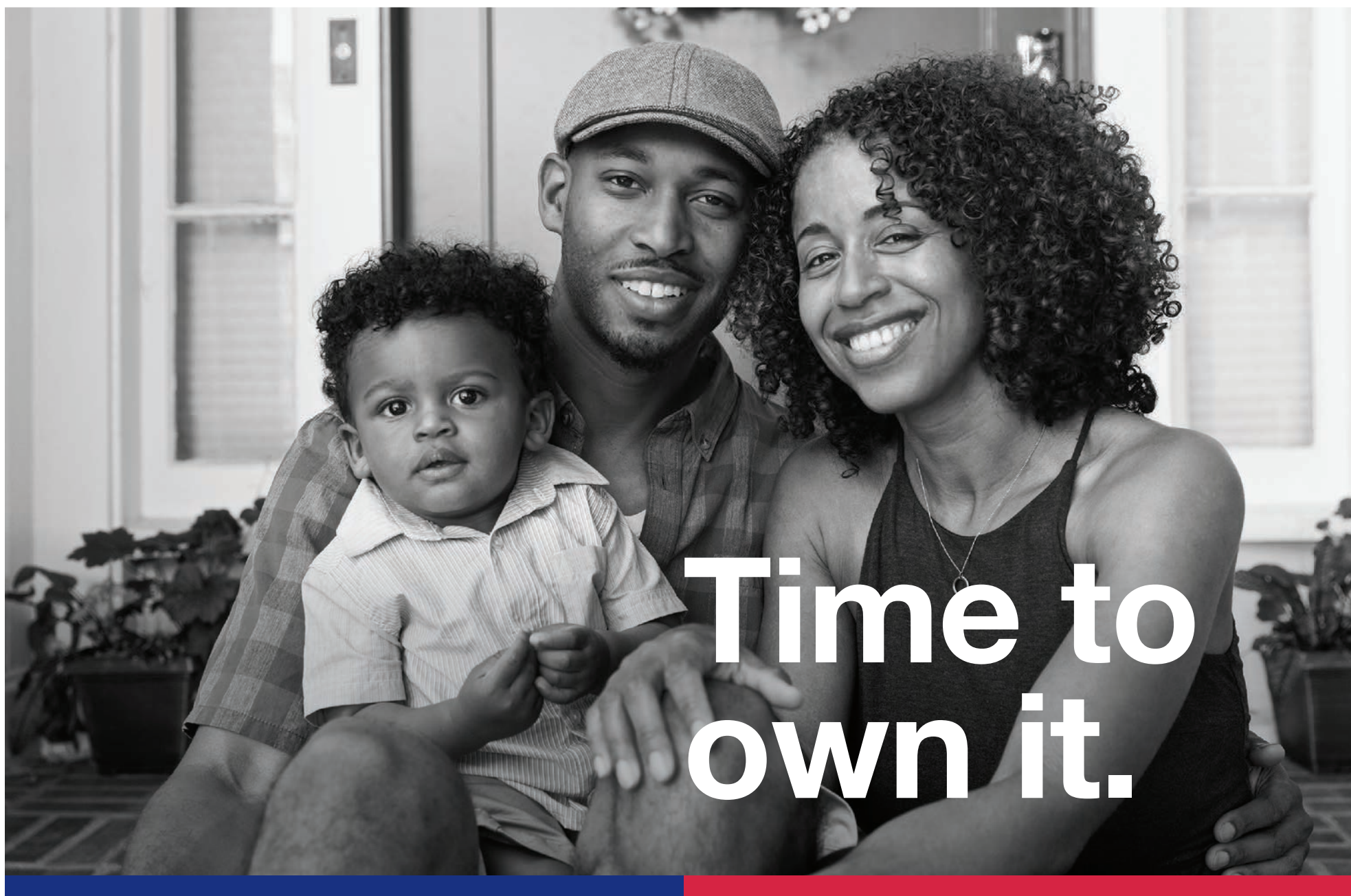
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