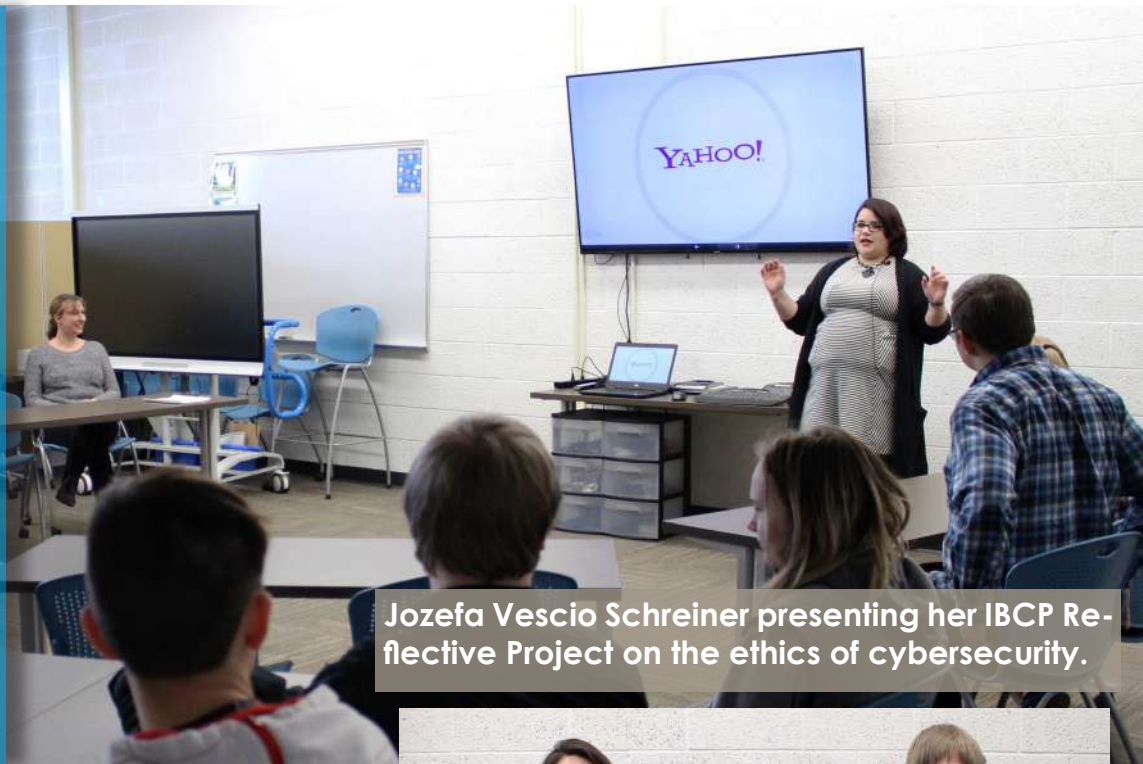


IB Career-related Programme students present Reflective Projects

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Members of the first graduating class of Fridley High School's International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme (CP) presented their culminating program projects on February 8, 2018.



Jozefa Vescio Schreiner presenting her IBCP Reflective Project on the ethics of cybersecurity.

Members of the first graduating class of Fridley High School's International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme (CP) presented their culminating program projects on February 8, 2018. The inaugural celebration was held to honor the two seniors who completed their Reflective Projects. Seniors Justin Anderson and Jozefa Vescio Schreiner will be the first students to complete the program at Fridley High School since the school earned CP authorization in 2016. Both Justin and Jozefa are on the Information Technology Career Pathway, one of the two CP pathways that Fridley High School offers.

The CP is a framework of international education which aims to prepare students to be career-ready upon graduation. CP

coursework is designed to build knowledgeable and highly-skilled workers and offers an opportunity to become certified in a specialized skill. Fridley High School currently offers two CP pathways, Information Technology and Emergency Medical Technician/Emergency Medical Responder (EMT/EMR).

The Reflective Project is the culminating piece of work for CP students. Within their chosen career field, students take components learned in their CP pathway and core courses to identify and analyze an ethical dilemma found in a respective

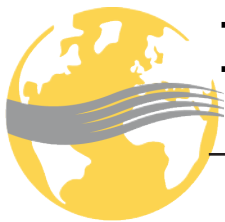


Jozefa Vescio Schreiner, Career & Tech Teacher Michelle Miner, and Justin Anderson

industry. The project allows students to think critically and creatively to further explore different perspectives, as well as consider potential solutions to problems they may have to face in the future.

"The Reflective Project is an opportunity for our students to dig deep into

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issues in their chosen career field,” Career & Technical Education teacher Michelle Miner said. “They look at all the different sides, how does the issue identified affect our local community? How does it impact the worldwide community? It’s a fun project because there really is no right answer, but its teaching our students to look into ethics and how to solve ethical issues.”

Miner said teaching these skills is important in this day and age. “Since our world is so full of instant information, and not necessarily truthful information, this is helping our students to work through and think about what is right and wrong,” Miner said.

Both Justin and Jozefa are planning to complete a two-year computer engineering/computer science program at Hennepin Technical College upon graduation. With the valuable hands-on skills that they have gained from CP, both are confident in their abilities and are excited about the future.

Justin said his main reason for choosing the CP was because he had the opportunity to job shadow and engage in hands-on work. He added that completing the CP also allowed him to take rigorous Diploma Programme (DP) courses.

“I had a lot of fun in CP,” Justin said. “My favorite part about it was helping with the Hour of Code at Stevenson Elementary.” The Hour of Code is an annual activity that allows Stevenson students to engage in an hour of learning about coding and computer science.

“It was really nostalgic going to Stevenson and helping the kids, and maybe helping them to spark an interest in computers,” said Justin.



Justin Anderson presenting his IBCP Reflective Project on the ethics of privacy and Internet service providers.

Jozefa knew that the CP would be a great opportunity to take specific technology classes while in high school.

“I’ve learned a lot in these classes, in computer science and A Plus,” Jozefa said. “This CP pathway gives you a very marketable skill. Especially with the rise of technology, more and more companies are hiring specialized tech workers. It’s really been a great experience to get into technology before you’re out in the real world.”

Both Jozefa and Justin have been interested in computers since they were young and always knew they wanted to pursue a career in the technology field. Miner said, for students with specific interests like this, the CP is an unbeatable opportunity to gain experience in either the technology field or EMT/EMR.

“If you’re thinking about attending a technical college or thinking about a skill-specific career, then CP is a great option,” said Miner. “CP is attuned to what your needs are, so you’re getting the skills that you need to be successful

after you leave Fridley.”

Through CP, students can also earn college credits which are transferable to many local technical colleges, including Hennepin Technical College or Century College. Students also have the option of earning certification. On the IT Pathway, students can earn A Plus Certification which is an entry-level computer certification for service technicians. Students on the EMT/EMR Pathway can earn EMT certification, which would allow them to become an emergency medical technician upon graduation.

“We just want our kids to look back at their Fridley education and know that they are prepared in whatever they aim to do,” said Miner. “With the CP pathways, we can get you ready, you can walk out of school with credits and certification, and be ready for a career. We just want our kids to be prepared for their futures.”



Area Learning Center holds Celebration of Excellence

The Fridley Moore Lake Area Learning Center (ALC) held its Celebration of Excellence on February 22, 2018. The Celebration of Excellence is held to recognize the hard work and accomplishments of the ALC students, as well as honor the 2018 graduating seniors.

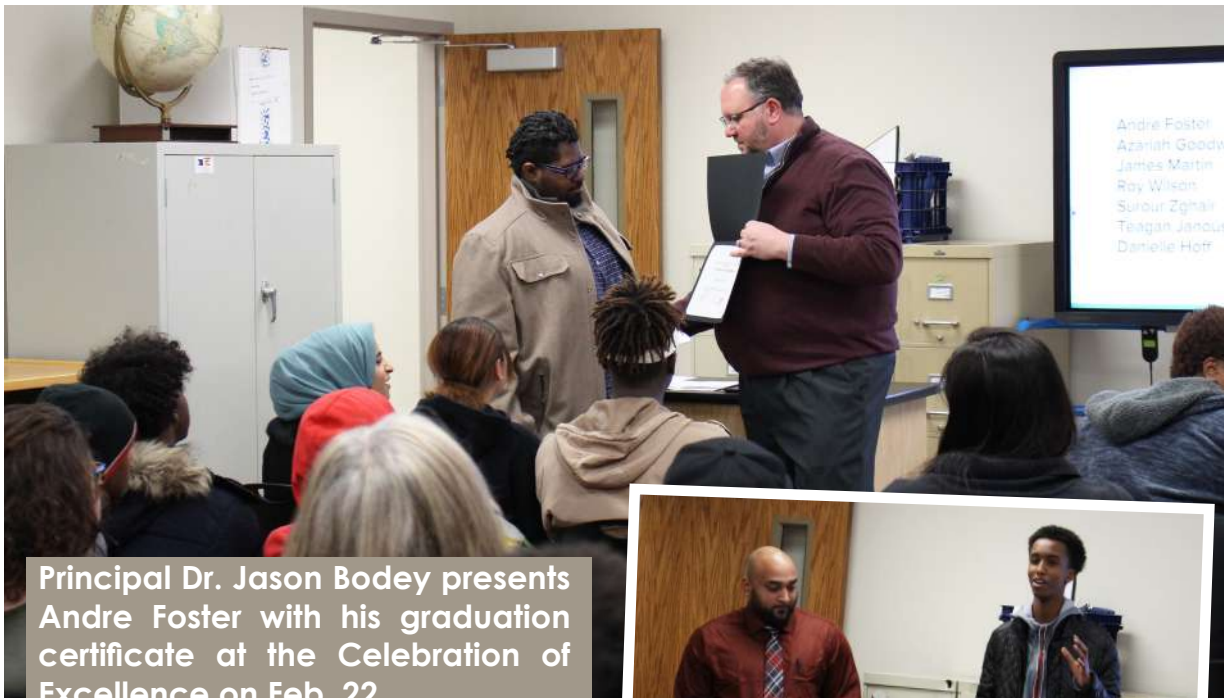
The theme of the celebration was “purpose” which was selected to remind students and staff of what their motivations are for their hard work that they put in every day.

The Celebration of Excellence also honors the student progress that has been made throughout the year. Students are recognized for academic excellence, attendance, most improved and the 3D Award (Desire, Determination, and Discipline).

Students of Tiger Streak, an ALC Leadership Group, also recognized their teachers with awards.

“Our students decided to award teachers because they feel that many of their accomplishments are due to the commitment and support that the ALC staff provide,” said ALC social worker MacKenzie Laurion. “We have a small staff and they are consistently supportive of our students no matter the circumstance. Students wanted to recognize the individual strengths and characteristics of each staff member to show them that they care.”

ALC Principal Dr. Jason Bodey said, “This celebration also boosts



Principal Dr. Jason Bodey presents Andre Foster with his graduation certificate at the Celebration of Excellence on Feb. 22.

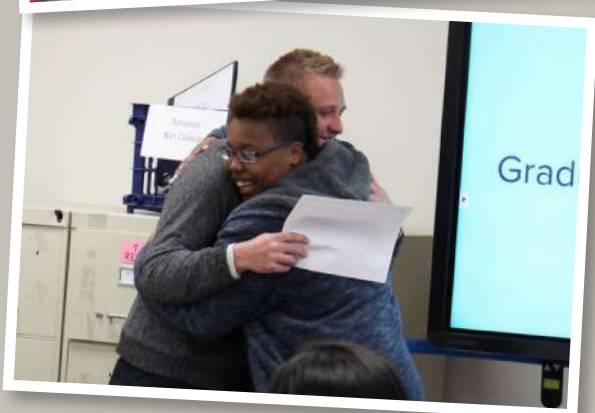
the staff morale and helps us remember why we come to work everyday. It restores our purpose as educators.”

Bodey added that the celebration provides a great sense of community at the ALC.

“We want our kids to be recognized for the hard work that they have done. Also, for the newer students, they get to see the older students graduate and earn recognition from their teachers. It’s hopefully motivation for them to understand what the ALC is all about.”

Laurion said she is proud of the students and staff for the individual work that everyone did to make this day possible.

“From writing speeches, designing artwork, creating slideshows, and more,” said Laurion. “It was great to see how we all came together as a community to pull it off.”





Fridley Middle School celebrates African American Parent Involvement Day



Fridley Middle School held its 2nd annual African American Parent Involvement Day on February 12, 2018. All students had the opportunity to invite their parents to experience a few hours of school. Moms and dads were able to sit in on their classes, meet teachers and school administrators, as well as have lunch with their child and play educational games.

African American Parent Involvement Day is a national movement held on February 12. The annual event is designed for all parents to come to their child's school, see what their day is like and support their child's education. The day reinforces the importance for parents of all races and ethnicities to support their children's education by being involved.

"African American Parent Involvement Day is a great way to get our parents engaged," said Aloda Sims, family and cultural liaison at Fridley Middle School. "Parents get to meet the people that their kids talk about every day. We want to be able to build that partnership and allow our parents to get this experience with their children."

Shiretta Saunders, mother of 5th grade student Nia Kean, said she enjoyed the time that she got to spend with her daughter.

It was great to see our parents *engaged* and *welcomed* into our schools. They were so *excited* to sit side by side with their children and experience the *academic piece* that their students have every single day.

ALODA SIMS
FAMILY AND CULTURAL LIAISON

"It's been great. My personal experience with my daughter has been so fun, just seeing her in action in math class and engaging with other students, helping each other," Saunders said. "The staff has also been so warm by greeting us and helping us get around."

Saunders added that she appreciated the fact that she could bring Nia's younger sister along to experience this day with her.

"I was very grateful that she could at-

tend and see her big sister go to class. I think it should be offered more than once a year. It's a way to get parents involved on a different level," she said.

Michael Fowler, father of 5th grade student Jaydah Fowler, said he was thankful for the unique opportunity to get involved.

"I've worked at a lot of schools in the past but I've never seen anything quite like this, especially geared toward a group that generally does need a stronger parental presence in the educational system. There aren't a lot of opportunities for fathers to get involved in the educational process, but it's great to see schools making changes towards that," said Fowler.

Fowler said he enjoyed meeting the friends and teachers that Jaydah interacts with on a daily basis.

"It was nice to meet the kids she is hanging out with, get to know her friends, and determine what types of decisions she's making in life. It really helps reflect back on what we're

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teaching them,” he said.

Malika Dahir, mother of 5th grade student Nurah Muhammad, was glad she got to share this experience with her daughter, as it was her first time going into Nurah’s classroom at the middle school.

“She was really looking forward to this and I’m very glad I was able to share this with her. How long is she going to think its cool for mom to come to school with her?” Dahir said.

“It was great to see our parents engaged and welcomed into our schools. They were so excited to sit side by side with their children and experience the academic piece that their students have every single day,” Sims said.

She added, “I think that it helps boost confidence for our students when they are shown this support at school. The number of parents who attended has grown from last year. It’s just been a really great day.”

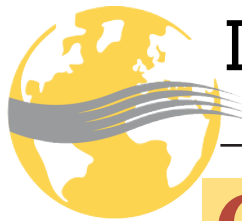
Across the district, Hayes Elementary School also held its African American Parent Involvement Day on February 12 while Stevenson Elementary School welcomed parents on February 16. This parent engagement opportunity is open to all parents who would like to spend a few hours with their child in their school.



Opossums, Mosquitoes, Coyotes, Oh My!



Fridley Middle School 7th grade students attended field trips to Springbrook Nature Center on Feb. 14-16 with their science classes. Learning about predators vs. prey, students were assigned to various animal groups. They had to navigate the nature center, “searching for food” and “avoiding fellow classmates” who were predators. It was a morning of education and fun!



Chinese Culture Day at Fridley Middle School

中国文化日



More than 200 students and families attended Chinese Culture Day at Fridley Middle School on February 16, 2018. Coinciding with Chinese New Year, all families in the district were invited to learn more about the Chinese culture through games, activities and traditional performances.

FMS Chinese language students hosted booths and activities for attendees to enjoy. This was an opportunity for students to practice their language skills, as well as show others what they have learned in class. Students taught calligraphy writing, an art of writing in traditional China, as well as various paper art crafts, including how to make a Chinese paper lantern, and an origami dog in honor of the Year of the Dog.

Attendees also learned how to use chopsticks; play diabolo, a Chinese yo-yo; shuttlecock,

a game similar to badminton; ping pong and more. Chinese language students also performed with the diabolo, and others danced and sang along to Chinese songs. A group of students performed original choreography to Chinese song "Power," by South Korean-Chinese boy band EXO. Students also performed songs, "Bo Po Mo" and "Baby Shark," two songs which are taught in Chinese language class to help teach new concepts.

FMS Chinese language teacher Yueh Nordin said she was impressed with her students with only two weeks of practice before the event.

"I was amazed at what they could learn, improve and achieve with only a couple weeks of practice in class," Nordin said. "Two weeks ago, my

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students didn't even know how to get the diabolo started, but after practice, they were able to wow the audiences with their performance."

She added that her students didn't know the song or routine, but after two weeks of practice, they were able to amaze the audience with a complex routine and amazing dance moves.

Last year, Fridley Middle School was awarded a grant from the University of Minnesota to purchase Chinese culture-related materials, which helped to make the Chinese Culture Day possible. Nordin

hopes to continue this tradition for years to come.

"We had great feedback from students and parents and they were asking to continue this event. We hope to make this a yearly event," Nordin said. "I feel really empowered to know that I can help teach other people something that they have never tried before. It's really fun and educational."

Special thanks to parents who volunteered at the event: Rose Nordin, Blair Berger, Bill and Anne Stevenson, Neneng Henriott, and Andy Nordin



R.L. Stevenson Elementary celebrates African American Parent Involvement Day

R.L. Stevenson Elementary School celebrated its African American Parent Involvement Day on Friday, February 16, 2018. Stevenson students in all grades invited their moms and dads in to share their school experience and meet administrators, staff and teachers.

Stevenson's family and cultural liaison Hope Laroche said that National African American Parent Involvement Day (NAAPID) is an incredibly important event at Stevenson.

"NAAPID is a day for all parents to come to their child's school, experience a portion of their child's day, and support their child's educational success," said Laroche. She added that the goals of the national event are to address the serious achievement gap facing African American students, and promote and provide strategies for all parents and students to take full advantage of the educational process at all levels of the educational system.

"Additionally, we want to promote parent involvement in their child's education," Laroche said. "When parents and schools work together to promote academic achievement, children succeed at higher rates. Student success is our ultimate goal as an institution, and that is why we will continue to encourage and support parental involvement at our school."





FRIDLEY HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN CREATIVE FUNK MUSIC WORKSHOP

Fridley High School music students learned new skills and styles during a creative funk music workshop on February 16, 2018. Midwest-based funk band Porky's Groove Machine led the hour-long session for students in varsity band, jazz ensemble, concert band and choir. The six-member band includes Luke Rivard, Casey Frensz, Marshall Yoes, Matt Lowe, Nick Allen and Ilan Blanck.

The workshop was designed to encourage creativity and fun with music at school, which can be difficult to incorporate during concert performance schedules. The workshop also teaches students about the vast variety and styles of music, and that musical skills learned at school can be built upon with a little jamming practice.

"I think many high school music students don't really realize what they can do with what they've learned," said band member Ilan Blanck.

Fellow band member Nick Al-

len agreed. "When I graduated high school, many of the best musicians who had been in school ensembles their whole lives just stopped playing, as soon as they didn't have the director giving them curriculum. We want to give musicians the practical skills to just play, with their friends and for themselves, beyond your part, which can be a limitation because of how music is often taught at schools," he said.

Porky's Groove Machine has released several albums and has toured around the nation. As all the band members are teaching music either at a school or in private lessons, the musicians decided to create the music education workshop to share with students across the Midwest.

The band members agreed that teaching music education is incredibly rewarding.

"We love being able to inject something kind of goofy and different into the school day," band member Matt

Lowe said. "We want to show kids how awesome playing music can be and hopefully inspire them to keep playing."

Fridley High School band director Becca Shuman was glad that this opportunity was provided to her students. She said Porky's Groove Machine is a perfect example of what you can do with music beyond high school.

"I loved that it showed kids that you don't just have to limit yourself to one style of music and play in concert bands all the time," Shuman said.

She added, "I loved that the students get to step out of their comfort zones. That's the whole point, taking that whole experience and applying it to our music, whether it's jamming as a group or being creative with improvisation. It's very helpful to have all those connections be made."

Shuman said there is a lot of value in

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Porky's Groove Machine, a Midwest-based funk band, taught FHS music students during a creative workshop on Feb. 16. Members of the quirky band dress in costumes during performances.

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learning to play in an improvisation and jamming style.

"Not only is it low pressure and really fun, it's also great to learn how to communicate within the ensemble and listening and knowing what the other instruments are doing. You're working as a team rather than just as a bunch of individuals. That's really helpful for creating that group team effort that we look for in concert bands," said Shuman.

Stevenson Elementary awarded Outdoor Learning on the Riverfront grant

R.L. Stevenson Elementary was recently awarded the Outdoor Learning on the Riverfront grant through the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization. The \$3,000 grant will allow the school to expand outdoor learning opportunities by creating a rain garden and butterfly garden in the center of the newly created turnaround area near the school's playground.

The grant will also fund a partnership with Heidi Ferris of Growing Green Hearts. Ferris is an environment STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education specialist who partners with schools and community groups to boost science literacy in programs and create on-site solutions for a number of today's environmental issues. She will be helping to design the garden area, working STEM educational pieces into cur-

riculum, and visiting classrooms and teaching lessons.

Much of the lessons will be part of the PYP units of inquiry. First graders will have their life cycle unit tied into the butterfly garden this spring, while 4th graders will learn about water cycle in the rain garden next fall.

PYP Coordinator Veronica Mathison said the value in incorporating these hands-on lessons for students is endless.

"By participating in these projects, I think they can really start to see how their small actions can have long lasting effects on our environment, as well as working to create a place where learning can take place," Mathison said. "They're also making connections with what they are learning in textbooks and in the classroom because they are going to see their learn-



Photo: Growing Green Hearts

ing come to life. Seeing these plants and butterflies grow will be a great learning experience for our students."

The grant is also inspiring this year's annual Day of Action, which is a community service project for students and staff. Tentative plans include cleaning, de-weeding, and sprucing up the current outdoor learning area near the Mississippi River behind Stevenson.



A Champion of Change

The struggle for mental health and wellness is an ongoing battle for many Americans, young and old. Deemed a national crisis, from mild to severe cases, mental illness affects millions of people in our country. A young student in Fridley, who is **passionate about breaking the stigma surrounding mental health disorders**, is undoubtedly working to **change the world**, one step at a time.

Reed Sietsema is a 17-year-old Fridley Public Schools student who receives his education at the Northeast Metro 916 Capitol View Alternate Learning Program (ALP). He has overcome many struggles throughout his young life and now uses his personal voice and experience to stand up for those with mental illnesses.

Reed has been highly involved in organizations and community groups to make a difference in the realm of mental health. He was recently recognized with the Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health (MACMH) Champion of Change Award after producing a video that outlined his work advocating for mental health challenges. The Champion of Change Award recognizes young people who are committed to working toward positive change for those with mental health needs.

For two years, Reed has visited the Minnesota State Capitol to speak with legislators and state representatives about mental health needs and services.

"I wanted to get involved because I really want to make a change," Reed said. "There is such a different perspective that comes from someone who is actually going through life with a mental illness, and that is usually not a perspective that is in the conversations about mental health when it comes to making decisions about laws, resources and funding," he added.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



"There is such a different perspective that comes from someone who is actually going through life with a mental illness, and that is usually not a perspective that is within the conversations about mental health when it comes to making decisions about laws, resources and funding."

- REED SIETSEMA

His perspective has had an immense impact on educating government leaders on the importance of mental health programs and policies that support children and teens. His goal is to aid in the understanding of mental illnesses and change the stigma that surrounds it.

"I want people to look at mental illness like it's not a burden," Reed said. "In reality, it should be looked at as something different about a person. I want to give people more power to stand up and say 'yes, I have a mental illness, but it doesn't define me.'"

The mental health needs of youth of color is another aspect that fuels his passion for advocating for mental health supports. As a young black man, Reed said it

is important to him to speak out for those who are not comfortable asking for help.

"Not every black person will be the first one to admit that they have a mental disorder or be the first one to go and seek help," said Reed. "It's very important to empower others to know how to ask for help. Some people want help but don't want the stigma, and that stigma is what I'm working to change."

Reed realized that he could make a difference after a field trip he took to the Minnesota State Capitol on Mental Health Awareness Day on October 10, 2016. This was his first opportunity to speak with lobbyists and legislators about a new bal-



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lot for mental health. His strong public speaking skills and valuable perspective were noticed by the Ramsey County Children's Mental Health Collaborative. A representative from the organization reached out to him to inquire about his interest in working with the group. From there, Reed's involvement with the organization grew. He now works with the Collaborative to offer insight and perspective on various initiatives.

The Collaborative featured Reed in the documentary 'Children's Mental Health: The Whole Story.' The film was designed to raise awareness about mental health and trauma. It offers a down to earth and holistic look at challenges, strengths and opportunities for intervention, as well as serves as an outline of mental health-related policies and what is still needed.

Reed has also connected with the St. Paul Police Department and received an opportunity to learn about the department, and work side-by-side with police officers in ride along experiences. He has also learned more about Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training, a training program designed to educate officers about how to interact with those who have mental health disorders, particularly, how to de-escalate mental health crises.

"I think this is really helping police officers to learn how to view these crises from a different perspective," Reed said. "Before, a crisis would be considered a bad moment or a tantrum, but now, police are starting to look at the reasons behind the behavior, giving them a better response. It's gives them more knowledge and understanding."

ALP Principal Liz Shopbell said she has seen tremendous behavioral and academic achievement from Reed. Shopbell has known Reed since he was 10 years old and said she is proud of the man that he has become.

"He has become a young man who is reflective, responsible and goal-oriented," Shopell said. "Reed has been involved in several situations where he has advocated for legislation for increased mental health services for students. In addition, he mentors our middle school students in decision making, which will have great impacts in their futures."

Fridley Special Education Coordinator Terri Rieser has also seen Reed

I am so proud of all that he has **accomplished.** In addition to his volunteer efforts, he has been **extremely successful** in school and has clearly demonstrated that he is ready for post-secondary.

- TERRI RIESER
FRIDLEY SPECIAL
EDUCATION COORDINATOR

grow and thrive.

"Reed and I have been on this journey for a while," Rieser said. "I've seen him grow into a wonderful young man, and I am so proud of all that he has accomplished. In addition to his volunteer efforts, he has been extremely successful in school and has clearly demonstrated that he is ready for post-secondary."

Rieser also credits Reed's mother, Judy, for being so supportive in Reed's educational journey and accomplishments.

"Without her continual support, and being an active partner with both Fridley and ISD 916, he wouldn't be where he is today," she said. "Reed's potential is limitless."

Reed said he is thinking of this Champion of Change Award as a stepping stone. His main goals are to edu-

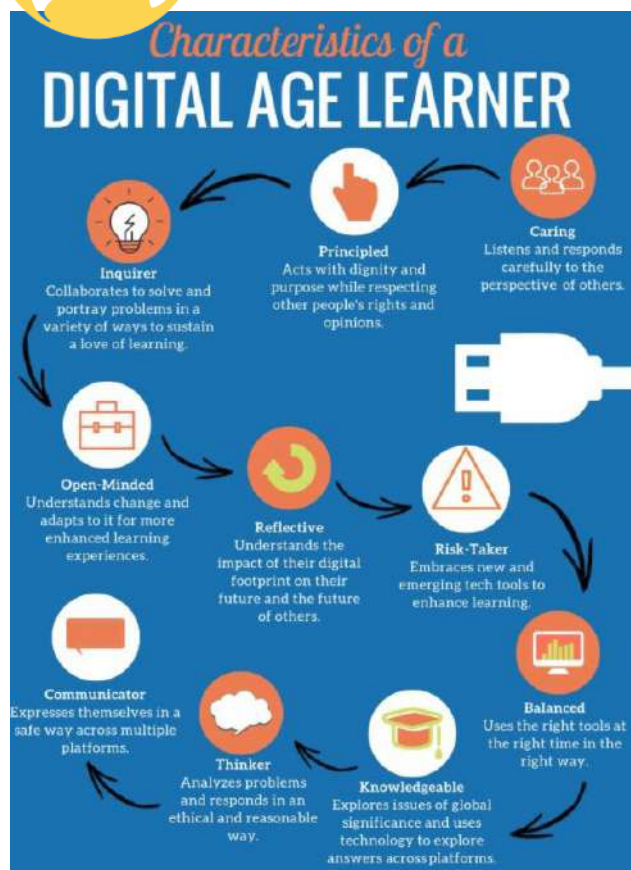


Reed Sietsema was featured in the Ramsey County Children's Mental Health Collaborative documentary film 'Children's Mental Health: The Whole Story.'

cate others about mental health, and ultimately change the mental health stigma and let others know that it is okay to ask for help.

"This recognition was impactful to me because if I achieved this, it makes me think I can do even more for those with mental health needs," said Reed. "It's all been hard work but I've gained valuable experience. I'm using all this to help prepare myself for what else is to come. It's all about moving forward."

As a Champion of Change, it is certain Reed has a bright future ahead of him. In addition to ALP at Capital View, he is taking classes at Century College in White Bear Lake and is interested in pursuing a career in criminal justice or business marketing.



HAYES TEACHER RECOGNIZED FOR CREATING IB DIGITAL AGE LEARNER POSTER



Hayes Elementary School teacher Sarah Armstrong was recognized by the International Baccalaureate (IB) Organization for creating a Digital Age Learner poster, “Characteristics of a Digital Age Learner.” The poster outlines the IB Learner Profile attributes and how they relate to digital skills. All these characteristics can be linked to being a responsible, respectful and ethical citizen in the 21st century.

“Right now, one of the district’s initiatives is to create 21st century learners,” said Armstrong. “That means we are getting all of these new tools that have drastically changed the ways that our kids are learning. It also drastically changes the way that we’re teaching kids and how to use these tools.”

Last year, Armstrong participated in the Verizon Mobile Learning Academy (VMLA), a 10-week virtual professional development experience designed to help teams, schools and districts implement or improve their mobile learning strategy. VMLA aims to encourage schools to discover how to design creative learning experiences, identify effective management strategies, gauge student readiness, and teach safe online practices.

Armstrong designed the poster as one of the projects during the cohort experience. She connected the ideas behind VMLA with IB and the Learner Profile traits.

“I linked how each of these characteristics would lend itself to a digital learner,” said Armstrong. “It’s so important to teach our students about Internet safety, how to use digital platforms and understand how to represent themselves.”

The “Characteristics of a Digital Learner” poster was shared among professionals on Twitter. The IB Organization also linked Armstrong’s poster on the IB website.

Armstrong teaches kindergarten at Hayes and she said she is always impressed with how quickly her students are able to pick up and learn new tech items.

“They are just insane navigators with everything that I give them, so after five minutes they are all of a sudden professionals. It’s amazing what these young minds can do with very little training, so it’s interesting to think of what they could do with training. That’s why it’s so important to begin to instill responsible characteristics in our students starting as soon as they enter school.”

