# NORTHUS

November 17, 2023

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# The Legacy continues:

Montessori school JJ Legacy settles into new home.

Page 6

### **ALSO INSIDE**

Remembering Andre
Debonair McNeal **Page 4** 

Taylor'd Cosmetolgy school opens on Northside Page 12

During a math lesson on breaking down large numbers, Grayson Howell (left) jumped up with teacher Kandice Childs' encouragement, to 'break it down' with his dance moves. Photo by Azhae'la Hanson



# **Northsiders** demand Blue Line officials get to the fine details

Whether you want a light rail running through North Minneapolis or are adamantly opposed to the proposed extension of the Blue Line, many would agree project planners have been relatively ample with community engagement.

They've held meetings in driveways,

community centers, churches and with individuals at their businesses. They stand calmly, often the targets of a person's anger, fear and distrust, and acknowledge the potential pain of change.

Blue Line officials have, in some cases, changed parts of the proposed route because of the feedback from those that, you will have to change that."

But some of the regulars are getting restless for details

At an Oct. 30 meeting at Juxtaposition Arts, attendees worried about a lack of parking that could impact West Broadway Avenue businesses, especially near Penn

Then, the austere baritone voice of Andrew McGlory filled the room. McGlory residents are demanding them. lent his voice early on to steer the route off West Broadway. The revised route spares this important artery by sending the light rail down 21st Avenue. But the line will connect to West Broadway near Irving, putting businesses between there and Penn Avenue in jeopardy of major disruption and possible displacement

going to tell us how you're going to solve this problem and then we're going to tell you whether that works," said McGlory, a

longtime Northside architect. "We're not going to come to another meeting talking about parking. You need to answer that, and you should already have the budget

"At the next meeting, I want a solution for the parking. If we're not pleased with

McGlorv's insistence reflects the change in tenor in recent meetings. Rather than say no light rail, residents are making suggestions and asking for features of the project that will shape the project as something for them rather than something

Even if the process at this stage of planning does not allow refined details,

No detail creates as much angst as compensation for displacement. Bruce Barron, who lives on 21st Avenue, said whether it's renters, property owners or business owners, people need to be fairly compensated to relocate.

Barron said compensation cannot be based on the value in a depressed "So, the next meeting we have, you're marketplace. The person who bought a building for \$60,000 several years back will not be able to find the same kind of space for that money.

He said businesses may not be able to survive the long construction period.

Barron complimented the project planners for the meetings and the willingness to listen, but he warned they must address the property question soon.

"It's really important that for where there is displacement, you recognize that we're not trading apples for apples," Barron said. "Whoever gets displaced is going to spend a hell of a lot more money than what the depressed value is here. This isn't Eden Prairie. It shouldn't be carte blanche for a half-billion dollar project to be a predatory purchaser."



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# North Minneapolis at a glance

# **Northside** incumbents retain council seats

**NEWS** 



Ward 4 Councilwoman LaTrisha Vetaw (left), and Ward 5 Councilman Jeremiah Ellison.

On Nov. 7, Northside voters sent the incumbents back to City Hall for another term on the Minneapolis City Council.

Both incumbents won in the first round of ranked choice voting, according to unofficial totals.

Ward 4 Councilwoman LaTrisha Vetaw won 69 percent of the vote. She defeated Marvina Haynes (19 percent), Angela Davis (10 percent) and Leslie Davis (1 percent).

In Ward 5, Councilman Jeremiah Ellison won a third term with 53 percent of the vote over challenger Victor Martinez (41 percent) and Phillip "OMac" Peterson (4 percent).

# **Samuels** announces candidacy for Congress

Northsider Don Samuels, a former school board and city council member in Minneapolis, will mount a second challenge to unseat U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar. Samuels made his announcement in a written statement released on Nov. 9.

Last year, Samuels lost to Omar, who represents the Fifth District, in the Democratic primary in a close race separated by less than three percentage points. She went on to defeat her Republican opponent, Cicely Davis.

Samuels joins local attorney Sarah Gad and Air Force veteran Tim Peterson in next year's Democratic ballot, on which the list of candidates is likely to grow. Already, Dalia al-Agidi, a Muslim who fled Iraq during the regime of Saddam Republican

"I can't tell you how many people said (last time), you can't win. It's a fool's effort," Samuels said. "They weren't going to put money or effort into the race. So, the fact that I came that close was a

the race and help us over the edge."

# One step away from a new name

Students and Northside residents pulled names from far and wide to Hussein, announced she will file as a rename the local high school. But the one likely to replace the name of the slave holder Patrick Henry came right from the neighborhood.

How does Camden High School

Minneapolis Public Schools interim

surprise too many. Now they see a clear Supt. Rochelle Cox recommended the potential and are willing to put effort into name on Nov. 14. If the board approves the Camden name at its Dec. 12 meeting. Henry students will go to school under the Camden name beginning next school

> For nearly a decade, students lobbied the district to replace Patrick Henry, an American Patriot who famously said. "Give me liberty or give me death." Alumni fought to keep the Henry name, but the board eventually signaled its willingness

> A student committee researched and debated several names (Prince was among them) and even gave the public a chance to forward and vote on ideas.

No word vet on a mascot change or if the school will stick with the red and

# **Champions again**



The North High football team are 4AAA section champions after a 51-0 win over Holy Family Nov. 3 at Hobbs Field. The win qualified the Polars for the state football tournament. Photo by Azhae'la Hanson

#### **NORTH NEWS**

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Story ideas and letters to the editor under 300 words are always welcome. Unsigned letters will not be run

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Next issue delivered: December 22, 2023 North News is an enterprise of:

# This 'King of Clubs' wanted all young men to be kings

By David Pierini, Editor

Andre McNeal, a tireless youth mentor and a show promoter affectionately known as Debonair, died in a car accident on Nov. 5. He was 53.

News of his passing ripped holes in the hearts of countless friends, loved ones and the youth with whom he worked. Social media was flooded with messages of grief, thanks, love and treasured photos of the man wearing a salt-and-pepper beard and emanating a genial spirit.

"Losing a person like this will change a village and he was definitely a village man," Tamiko Charmaine wrote on Facebook. "He was Community."

As a show promoter, he was known as the Kina of Clubs. He loved travel, good cigars and moving through crowded rooms with ease and a genuine interest in people.

He is best known for being the founder and executive director of the Doorstep Foundation, created in 2015 with the motto "vowing to never leave the problems of our people on anyone else's doorstep." His wife, Dr. Zakia Robbins-McNeal, is COO. She survives him and said Doorstep Foundation will continue his work.

The mentoring programs work with boys and young men, ages 8-18, with emotional support needs. McNeal did that by pairing youth with adult male role models. Doorstep holds twice-monthly character building to financial literacy.

McNeal's group feeds kids, arranges field trips and serves as an educational One of his last posts on Facebook was

posted the day before he died. He took a selfie as he was eating pizza with four kids in Saint Paul. He wrote: "Saturday team building session w/four of my St. Paul Den Brothers. Something special is happening

Andre McNeal photographed himself the day before he died eating pizza with youth he was mentoring in Saint Paul. Facebook photo

show on KMOI radio. Listeners would call in asking for resources, such as school supplies or coats for the winter.

He would, as he told independent journalist Georgia Fort during one interview, connect the dots for people. He was miffed by the complicated criteria to get kids enrolled in programs. He wanted families to more easily access help and

As a kid growing up in Chicago, he said he was blessed to have mentors to keep him out of mischief. He carried their voices forward and made sure to give back.

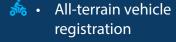
"If a family is asking for help, how do group meetings, teaching everything from you say no?" he told Fort in an interview she posted on Facebook. "I would love for folks to get involved somehow, some way in their community.

"If a family is asking for help, how do you say no?" he told independent journalist George Fort in an interview she posted on Facebook. "I would love for folks to get involved somehow, someway in their community. A single mom on your block who is raising a couple of kids? Help her out. Take the boy with you when you're

McNeal got the idea to start the doing something as simple as getting gas. Doorstep Foundation while hosting a Show him how to pump the gas, show him how to open a car door for a lady, show him how to change the oil, show him how to cut grass and give that single mom a break. Adopted elderly family on your block. If there's an older gentleman shoveling snow that shouldn't be, make sure that their walkway and their driveway are straight There's ways to get involved. And all you have to do is step out on your block and look around."

#### **New services** at North Minneapolis Service Center:

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# Northsiders sue the city over inequitable enforcement of rental housing codes

**NEWS** 

By David Pierini, Editor

On paper, Minneapolis renters are protected with clearly worded ordinances to discourage neglectful or predatory landlords.

But a lawsuit filed by North Minneapolis residents in October alleges that the city's enforcement of rental housing codes prioritizes white, more-affluent areas. The plaintiffs say complaints go unresolved, allowing landlords to shirk maintenance requests and leave tenants in deplorable conditions.

Two homeowners who are part of the lawsuit say absent landlords with blighted properties on their blocks contribute to crime and undermine property values.

"We see a real disconnect between the way the city is handling housing inspections on the Northside versus everywhere else," said attorney Ben Kappelman, who is representing the 10 Northsiders named as plaintiffs. "The city assigns housing inspectors evenly and doesn't take into account where the complaints are actually arising."

The city has a team of 30 inspectors that are assigned by population, according to Kappelman. This means there are roughly seven inspectors for the more than 67,500 residents in Wards 4 and 5, where the largest concentration of complaints exists and more than 70 percent of the occupied rental units in both wards are BIPOC.

"North Minneapolis represents 45 percent of complaints but is assigned only 23 percent of inspectors for an area that constitutes 16 percent of city population," the lawsuit reads. "These renters often lack the power and resources to address the deplorable housing conditions. Landlords capitalize on this imbalance of power to avoid remedying the many issues with the



This Northside property is one example listed in a lawsuit filed by Northsiders against the City of Minneapolis for not enforcing rental housing codes. Photo by David Pierini

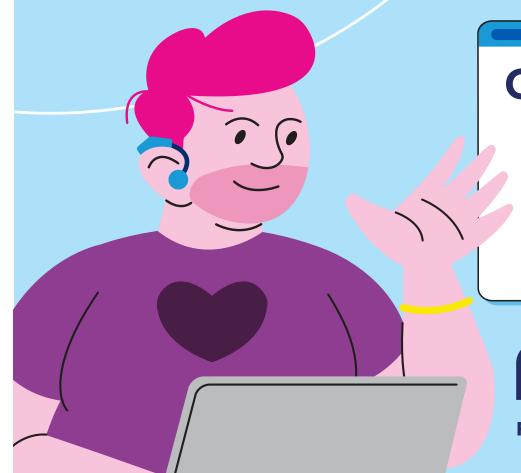
properties they own."

In a statement released to North News, the city denies it discriminates against BIPOC renters.

"The City works cooperatively with

landlords to try to remedy issues on rental properties in order to protect tenants,

Continued on page 15



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# JJ Legacy School happy in new home

By Azhae'la Hanson, Reporter

education rich in resilience, justice, and self 2201 Girard Ave. N.

Avenue North. A children's march ensued boxes." to demand accountability from the church,

health issues with exposed asbestos.

Immediately following the march, the served Now that JJ Legacy has settled into school scrambled to find a new location. to a group of their new location, the school is determined 
Two weeks before the year started, they students. She's to continue their pursuit in providing an secured space at Family Baptist Church, happy to note

"The night of the open house was troubles so far. In July, the Montessori school was chaotic, but we made it happen," Angie forced to move to their new location after Deleon, director of Enrichment and working cooler," a rental dispute with their landlord, Our Engagement, said. "We told the teachers if Rhine laughed. Lady of Victory Catholic Church on Fremont we made it this long you can pick up some At the previous

Staff say the move has been an commercial walkwhich school leaders said failed to fix adjustment, but they are settling in and glad in cooler went out maintenance problems that shut down to be in a building where they feel welcomed and was never entire classrooms and posed potential by their landlord. Sharmeen Rhine, Director fixed.

that there are no

"We have a building,



Staff at JJ legacy hang the posters from their children's march in their lobby and on their hallway walls. They say their story is not secret, and that they encourage students to fight for what is right. Photo By Azhae'la Hanson

Nyree Ramzy was among the students who attended the children's march in lulv. She remembers disliking not being able to access rooms at their old location because of the conditions. As she enters the fifth grade in the new building, she and her friend Jamila have made it a mission to peek their heads in every nook and cranny.

"If you don't [speak up], then people are not gonna know what's wrong, but if you do speak up, then people are gonna hear you," Nyree said.

Speaking up proved to have positive and negative consequences for the school, where some staff feel the school was portrayed more as a payment-refusing tenant than a school that needed better conditions for their students.

"Standing up for what you believe in isn't easy, but it's what we do," said secondgrade teacher Kandice Childs.

II's enrollment also took a hit from the move. School leaders did not have room for its Toddler House and some families, wary of the neighborhood, enrolled their kids

"We could be doing this out of someone's garage," Childs reassured. "Our work is not gonna change. We can show them (that) wherever we are, it's home for them and a safe space for them."

With the challenge of moving behind them, and the year underway, the school is hoping to push past the past and showcase a positive narrative.

"If you don't believe what we stand for is real, If you don't believe what we're doing is real, I invite anybody to come and see everyday life here," Childs said.

During the class's scheduled relaxation time, Childs twists the hair of her student Carvion, who would rave about wanting to look like his brother. Carvion smiled when we asked him what he likes about Ms. K [Childs].

"She's nice," he smiled and nodded when asked if she gets cool points for twisting his hair.

Students in her class answer to her call and response that consists of phrases from their favorite music artists. Children point to a Black doll that sits on her desk and say it is beautiful. One flips through the pages of a book and points to the characters that look like him.

A loud outburst is met with a soothing reminder. She responds to "I can't" with "Not yet". And Joy is not mistaken for disruption.

It's those moments, when Childs can twist her students' hair, give words of affirmation, and instill confidence in her class, that the true legacy of JJ Montessori School is found.

Before Childs taught at JJ Legacy, she left a public school teaching job and vowed never to return. Thirteen years later, she



enrolled her son at JJ Legacy during distance learning and entered the building for the first time in 2021.

She saw the staff photo on the wall and her jaw dropped at the majority of Black teachers staring back at her. She filled out the application to teach at || legacy that night.

"I've never seen a school like this. I've never seen teachers like this. I've never seen students being handled like this," Childs said."I remember just having this feeling when I left the building like I need to be here."

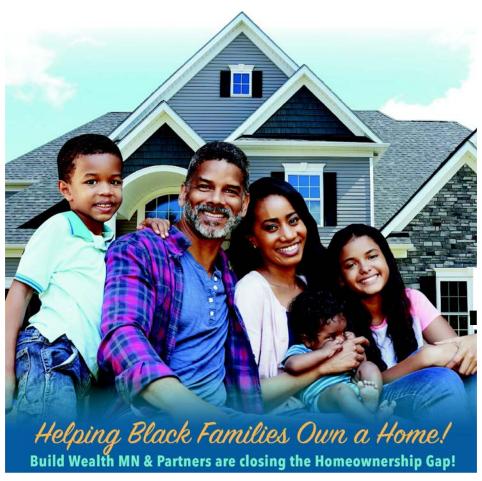
She grew up with teachers who didn't look like her, live like her, or act like her. A lack of cultural understanding that typically exists within the white populated majority of teachers, and is at the expense of students of color, completely disconnected her from her teachers. She wants to give her





Good friends Nyree Ramzy and Jamila Reed share a laugh as they try to create the perfect heart Continued on page 15 with their hands to symbolize their friendship. Photo by Azhae'la Hanson





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# **Coach Adams the author reads** from his memoir

By Azhae'la Hanson, Reporter

**NEWS** 

Former Minneapolis police officer Charles Adams, wrote a memoir titled "Twin Cities," detailing his experience as a Black cop and as the head varsity coach of Minneapolis North football.

In early November, Strive Publishing invited Adams to read the intro of his book in their bookstore to an audience in their downtown Minneapolis storefront. He began with a pregame chant the Polars have adopted called the Huskers prayer.

The following pages set the scene of police violence and mistrust of MPD that boiled over in 2020, navigating the loss of his players in the Northside community and ultimately, his decision to leave the police force.

An intro paragraph reads:

"In the Northside of Minneapolis, more people are shot there than anywhere else 
Charles Adams discussing his book with in the state. You might think that it would make the toughest part of town to be a Photo By Azhae'la Hanson

cop, but for me it was home."

Adams says he hopes readers takeaway how important it is to be a

"From my perspective of being a coach and being in law enforcement I realized how important it was to identify how much we need these kids," Adams said. "I hope readers understand that too."



an audience at Strive Publishing.



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### Black Business Week closes in colorful fashion

A fashion show took place in the old Family Dollar building on West Broadway as a part of the West Broadway Coalitions Black Business Week at the end of October. Photos by Azhae'la Hanson



The show, titled "Evolving with Coco", brought West Broadway's Black Business Week to a fabulous conclusion. Designs pictured on the runway are by Crystal Baker of Cherlone Wear.



Fashion Show host Melanie Savage, right, celebrates the end of the show with models and fashion designers.

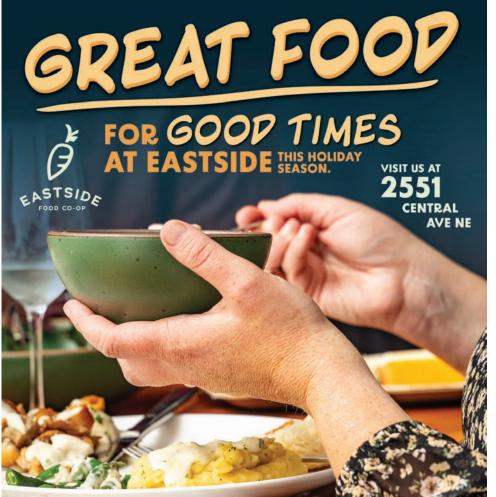


straight for their closeup at a 360 photo booth.



Afterwards, models exited the runway and went The audience was glued to the runway. This pair gave frequent standing ovations to their favorite outfits.







By **David Pierini**, Editor

Something about the beauty industry called her, but Nubiah Taylor knew she lacked a knack for styling hair.

Learning the business of skin was in, Taylor enrolled in cosmetology school, where she realized she was the only Black woman in her program. And most of the course work wasn't about the unique care for Black skin.

It was only a short time after she started working in her own studio when she decided to open a school training Black and Brown people about waxing, skin care and the meticulous craft of applying eyelash

Taylor opened Taylor'd Cosmetology this past August at 1501 Lowry Ave. N. Here, a mostly Black group of students spend 600 hours to be certified estheticians.

A recent change in Minnesota law opened the door for separate training for lash technicians. A 14-hour course has students trained and ready to test for state certification (Disclosure: Pillsbury United Communities, which owns and operates North News has a partnership with the Taylor'd Cosmetology lash technician

Enrollment for esthetician training is twice a year and currently, there are eight students in training. For lash techs, Taylor has a new student each week.

"There are so many cosmetology schools in Minnesota with different niches," Taylor said. "There was not a place that was specific for Black hair, skin and nails. Being Minnesota is predominantly a white state, there is still a huge African American community, so I wanted to jump right in and bridge that gap.

The consulting firm McKinsey & Company recently conducted a study on Black and Brown peoples' experience with the beauty industry and found "multiple friction points."

While the study focuses primarily on beauty products and the lack of Black and





Under the careful eye of instructor Nia Jenkins, lash technician student Ariana Loscheider preps the eyelids of Goddess Negus to apply a classic eyelash. Photo by David Pierini





Students of the Taylor'd esthetician program will train for 600 hours to get ready for their state certification test. Photo by David Pierini





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Youth Club: St. Olaf Lutheran Church, 2901 Emerson Ave. N. grades 6-12. Wednesdays aat 6:30 p.m. Transportation available. To enroll. call 612-529-7726

North Commons Park and Northeast Arena during the months of November through February. All equipment is provided and the cost is minimal. Register and get more information at North Commons Park, 612-370-4921.

**Safe Station:** Struggling with substance abuse? Start your recovery journey at Minneapolis Fire Station 14, 2002 Lowry Ave. N., where a firefighter or recovery coach can help get you a variety of services. Open 24 hours. No judgment or shame. Safe Station is a partnership with the Twin Cities Recovery Project and the Minneapolis Fire Department.

Yard waste collection in the City of Minneapolis will end for the year during the week of Nov. 27.

Free legal advice: Legal Aid takes on civil cases, such as housing, family, consumer tax, immigration and public benefits. The non-profit organization now has a clinic in the office of the Harrison Neighborhood Association, 1501 Glenwood Ave. Services are free for those who qualify. Must be 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines or age 60-plus. Hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.. Walk-ins welcome, but appointments are preferred. Call 612-746-3611 to make an appointment.

Homework help: Sumner Library, which is closed for the next year for renovation, has a temporary site on at UROC, 2001 Plymouth Ave. N. Limited service includes homework help, computer access, on-site technology assistance and printing and copying. Free tutoring and help with homework runs each Monday and Thursday from 4-7 p.m.

The Healing Place: The Healing Place is back at Zion Missionary Baptist Church, 621 Elwood Ave. N. It is committed to healing trauma in the Black community by helping to break the cycle of oppression. It is a safe space if you need a prayer, a conversation or just a place to sit. Every Wednesday from 1 to 5 p.m.

Food Distribution: Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church, 3355 4th Street N., will

distribute free fresh food on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month from 10 a.m.-noon. There are no pre-qualifications. Everyone is welcome.

Free Dinners: The Camden Collective and the Sanneh Foundation sponsor a weekly free food pickup at Salem Lutheran Church, 4150 Dupont Ave. N., each Saturday from Hockey for boys and girls ages 6-17: at 1-3 p.m. Call 612-521-3644 for more information. Walkups are welcome.

> Pet supplies: Are you in need of pet supplies or pet resources? The North Minneapolis Pet Resource Center, 1401 44th Ave. N., is open for curbside pickup Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5 p.m.-8 p.m. and Saturday 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Call 764-273-0710 to place an order and leave a voicemail.

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

Minneapolis Ward 4 contact info: If you live in Ward 4 and want to reach City Councilwoman LaTrisha Vetaw, contact Maggie Kohl via email: maggie.kohl@ minneapolismn.gov or cell: 612-258-3982. Contact Betsv Brock with other needs email: betsy.brock@minneapolismn. gov or cell: 612-257-5242. You can also reach Vetaw via email: latrisha.vetaw@ minneapolismn.gov or cell: 612-322-1143.

Minneapolis Ward 5 contact info: If you live in Ward 5 and want to reach City Councilman Jeremiah Ellison, call his office at 612-673-2205 or email him at ward5@ minneapolismn.gov. You can also contact his policy associate Bethny Turnwall at bethany.turnwall@minneapolismn.gov

Hennepin County District 2 contact info: To reach Hennepin County Commissioner Irene Fernando, call 612-348-7882 or email her at irene.fernando@hennepin.us. For constituent services contact policy aide Bill Emory at 612-348-3526 or at bill.emory@ hennepin.us

Minneapolis Public Schools, District 2: Sharon El-Amin is the Board of Education director representing North Minneapolis. She can be reached at 612-986-3281 or Sharon.El-Amin@mpls.k12.mn.us

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#### **Rental Housing** Continued from page 5

**NEWS** 

minimize the loss of low-income rental housing, and avoid displacing residents," the statement read.

Among the 10 plaintiffs listed are tenants of Progress Residential, a subsidiary of a New York hedge fund that owns about 200 properties on the Northside.

Over the last two years, tenants of Progress Residential organized to shed light on their unlivable conditions and unanswered requests for repairs. They filed hundreds of complaints with the city. withheld rent payments in escrow and showed up to bend the ears of the governor, the attorney general and anyone who would

None of that would have been necessary, the plaintiffs say, had the city enforced its own rules and deployed a proper number of inspectors to address the complaints, which included mold, leaky roofs and crumbling foundations.

In January, the city and Progress Residential entered an agreement to address the mounting code violations on some 200 homes or lose its rental license. Several of the homes are now vacant and

In a study by the insurance company, Lemonade, Minneapolis ranks 12th for renter rights among 50 of the most populous cities. As a state, Minnesota is highly regarded by housing groups for legislation that protects

"I would have had less of a struggle had the system of regulations and rules been enforced," said Arianna Anderson, the suit's lead plaintiff, who was in a dilapidated apartment on Colfax Avenue North before color. the landlord was forced to relocate her to a safer rental outside the city. "I want the city to be focused on the tenants and the people of the community."

The other plaintiffs are Shanika Henderson, Daron Holloway, Brianna Lofton, Chase McKay, a John Doe, Dennis and Debra Wagner, Julie Oden and Don

#### JJ Legacy **Continued from page 7**

students the education experience she didn't have. Of acceptance and understanding.

Education only 5.9% of teachers identify in the U.S. beauty industry – from salons, as people of color. Most people of color in retails and beauty houses – are Black.

school buildings are disciplinary staff.

Fifth- and sixth-arade teacher Olutimilehin Olusanya remembered the first time he met students at the school. When students saw him, they lit up because he wasn't a disciplinarian, he was the teacher. In Minnesota, Black men are at an even greater disparity, making up only 0.5% of Black teachers. At JJ Legacy, 98% of staff including admin and teachers are people of

He says JJ legacy is not just a place where students can be themselves, but where he can also be unapologetically one tiny lash at a time.

know and experience to help our children," Olusanya said. "So it's not just 'ABC's, it's how to navigate this world as a person of

#### Taylor'd Cosmotology Continued from page 12

Brown brands in beauty stores, it revealed According to the MN Department of that just 4 to 5 percent of all employees

On a recent October morning, lash technician-in-trainina Araina Loscheider was working with her first client in a tiny room with an instructor looking over her shoulder in the doorway.

Loscheider carefully removed the eye makeup of Goddess Negus, who lay relaxed on a bed. She recited each step of the process, knowing her instructor, Nia Jenkins, was keeping a checklist.

The student spent some 45 minutes of prep before she placed a dab of glue on a smooth, polished stone and began applying

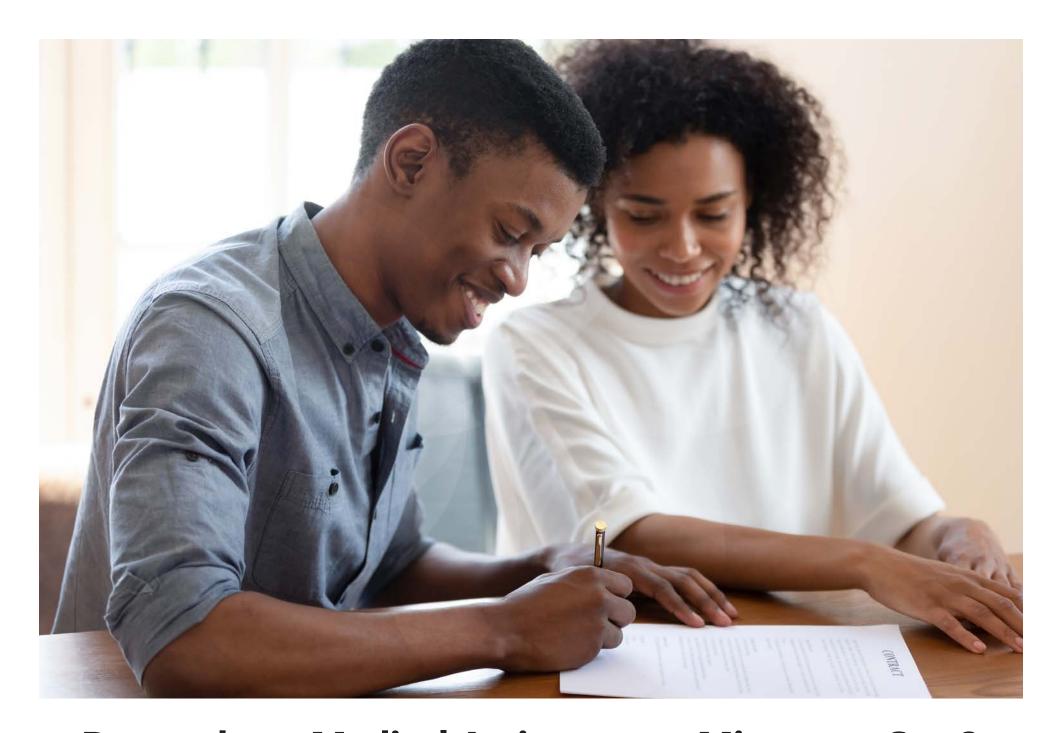
Negus offered reassuring feedback to "We are allowed to be ourselves as her lash technician, saying she felt relaxed educators and bring in everything we and how well Loscheider related to her

In a nearby classroom, aspiring estheticians study and make notes from textbooks. They are at a point in their training when they will soon work with

"There are a lot of schools where the focus of cosmetology is of European descent," student Daija Webb said. "We've never had a lot of privilege to get services like other people, but that's changing now."

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