

PYC Panther Press

PYC Arts and Tech High School, 2210 Oliver Avenue North,
Minneapolis, MN 55411 www.pyc-mpls.org 612-643-2000



Graduation!

By John Peterson, Director of Education

This past Friday, on June 9, 22 men and women graduated from PYC Arts & Technology High School. Congratulations to each one of you – for the hard work that you displayed over the years, for overcoming uncountable obstacles, and for persevering through thick and thin to reach this milestone. What a tremendous gift for you to give not only to yourself, but to your community as well.



As the time approached for graduation ceremonies to begin, I took the opportunity to sit down with a number of our soon-to-be-graduates. I asked each of them a series of questions and they each had different responses, with one exception. When I asked my first question, “What does it feel like to be a high school graduate?”, each and every one of the students smiled. For some, their smiles seemed to be hiding for a while, waiting for the right moment to appear. For others, their smiles were instantaneous, sort of in-your-face and distinctive.

Here are excerpts from the questions I asked of Starr McDonald, Princess Perkins, Promise Howard, Tavarey Morris, Teyon Gibson, and James Williams II.

JP: Who are the people that you’d like to thank for supporting you in your high school career?

Starr: My grandparents, for pushing me so hard.

Princess: Kiana and Crystal for encouraging me.

Promise: Ms. G for sure, Xee, and Kiana for always believing in me.

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PYC Students Reach New Heights

By Michael Reynolds



A group of 12 PYC students had the opportunity to experience the fun and thrill of rock climbing thanks to an exciting, new collaboration with Vertical Endeavors (VE), a local rock-climbing facility. Students spent the morning learning the basic climbing rules and then climbed the walls, and a few of the students really took an interest in the challenge!

Thanks to the generosity of VE this entire experience was free to our students. We hope to foster this relationship so more PYC scholars will have the opportunity to climb, and reap the benefits of this great sport.

Congratulations PYC Arts & Technology Class of 2017!



Row 1 from left to right: Megan Nurnberger, Promise Howard, Lacey Smith, Kariss Brigham, Moua Vang
Row 2: Starr McDonald, Deauja Burnett, Darius Scott, Danny Her, Princess Perkins, Christopher Davis
Row 3: James Williams II, Teyon Gibson, Jamel Davis, Tavarey Morris, Larry Weddington — Not pictured: Deja Cole, De’Janique Engle, Jose Lopez, Nyijaah Monn, Monae Williams, Antwauniqua Woodard



PYC students traveled to the Wilderness Canoe Base again this spring. Activities included an invigorating lesson in timing and teamwork aboard this 14-passenger voyageur canoe.

Mark Your Calendars!

Fall Enrollment

Are you planning to return to PYC in the fall? If so, be sure to attend our registration event.

Friday, August 25

Anytime between 10am and 12pm.

Questions? 612-643-2000.

First Day of School:

Monday, August 28

Past, Present, Future: A Change to Come, Northside Style

By Cynthia Gomez

Did you know that one of the most notorious Prohibition-era gangsters, Al Capone's right-hand-man Kid Cann, was a Latvian immigrant from North Minneapolis? Did you know there was once a lake where the Minneapolis Farmer's Market is now, and that around it was built the wealthiest neighborhood in the city? Did you know that Homewood, a 'gated community' built in 1915, was first envisioned as 'whites only'?



Meade Stademeyer

These are just a few of the myriad facts students unearthed during the course of their project, which culminated in a showcase and exhibit at the Capri on May 26th.

Students studied the past and present of North Minneapolis as seen through the lenses of four topics: Housing/Gentrification, Policing, Violence, and Mass Incarceration. Each of the four groups developed a blueprint for the future that envisions the Northside as healthy and thriving. They then wrote letters to various community stakeholders

asking for suggestions and help to bring their visions closer to fruition. This is a project that will continue in some form at PYC into next year. This is relevant, engaging curriculum that helps students build up their toolboxes of real-world skills.

Thinking in terms of solutions is a way to restore hope. Our students are learning that change is possible, and that more often than not, it is young people who lead the way.

Though led by two teachers (David Boehnke and me - plus a small crew of students who helped David plan!), this project was in many respects an all-school effort. It highlights one of the very best things about PYC: a collegial, improvement-oriented staff that works so hard to ensure success for our students.

Helpful Summer Resources

MENTAL HEALTH

- Hennepin County Adolescent Crisis: 612-348-2233
- Hennepin County Adult Crisis (COPE): 612-596-1223

FOOD SHELVES

- NorthPoint Health and Wellness, 1315 Penn Ave. N., 612-767-9175
Mon-Tues-Thurs: 9-3pm; Wed: 11am-6pm
- Minnesota Food Helpline: 1-888-711-1151

HEALTH

- NorthPoint Health and Wellness: 612-543-2500
- NORTHPOINT TEEN CLINIC AT PYC, 2210 OLIVER AVE. N., 612-643-2001
MON-THURS: 3-6PM

SUICIDE HOTLINE

- 612-873-2222

SHELTER

- Minnesota Day One Crises Hotline: 1-866-223-1111
- Metro Homeless Shelter Hotline: 1-888-234-1329

GENERAL INFORMATION: FOOD, SHELTER, AGENCIES, MORE

- United Way: Cell phone: 651-291-0211; Landline: 211

PYC SOCIAL WORK SUPPORT

- Asha Belk 612-643-2052: Tuesdays 6/20, 6/27, 10am-2pm.

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Tavarey: Rob and Sarah W. for giving me opportunities, and Cynthia and Chris, who I always gave a hard time to – but they knew I was just kidding.

Teyon: Everybody for their support!

James: The staff at PYC for their support, but especially Angula for helping me with the hard work.

JP: Why do you think you succeeded at PYC?

Starr: The smaller setting, and the staff for helping me not be so mad at myself.

Princess: I was so angry when I started, but the staff helped me get over it and now I'm happy!

Tavarey: The opportunities that PYC provided like D3 and Summer School. But what really helped was the staff knew me, understood me, and helped me realize that I had to grow up, and that we make mistakes and that's ok.

James: At first I felt like an outcast because nobody knew me. That changed over time, just knowing that I was accepted.

JP: What are you doing next?

Starr: I'm going to continue my career at TCF Bank, working as a teller.

Princess: I'm going to go to St. Paul College next fall to study cosmetology.

Tavarey: I may continue on at MCTC, but I don't really know right now. I'm just going to soak in this feeling right now.

James: I don't really know, but I'm going to miss this school, the teachers, and the staff.

As these and all of our graduates know, this is just the beginning, not the end, of their lives. Whether they pursue a college degree, or attend a trade school, or get a job, they know that life is just beginning for them.

Be proud, graduates, for you deserve all of the kind words that people will offer you. And remember, once a PYC-er, always a PYC-er! I wish you well.

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