

June 2025



Congratulations Class of 2025!

On June 4th, 58 graduates walked across the stage to receive their diploma. A special thank you to our three Commencement Address speakers, Yazenía Lopez, Thongdang Kama, and Hieu Lo.

Dear Graduates,

Congratulations on reaching this significant milestone! The staff at GAP School are immensely proud of each and every one of you.

You have all demonstrated incredible determination, perseverance, resilience, and a commitment to success that has brought you to this moment. Your journey may have taken unique paths, but it is your individuality and strength that have shaped you into the remarkable individuals you are today.

As you embark on the next chapter of your lives, remember that the education and experiences you gained at GAP have equipped you with the skills and knowledge necessary to face any challenges that come your way.

Embrace the opportunities that lie ahead. Follow your passions, continue to learn, be strong, laugh, and make a positive impact in your communities.

Congratulations once again, Class of 2025!

Fourth Quarter Program Highlights

Peer Mentoring Program

This quarter, we celebrated students who completed our YouthBuild Peer Mentoring Program! This program was led by David Pearson. Fifteen students were trained as peer mentors that will work at GAP School, as well as with a community partner as peer mentors for other students ages 9-15. Way to go everyone!



Cinco de Mayo

GAP School has been a part of St. Paul's West Side Cinco de Mayo parade for many years. Our staff and students march in the parade and carry the puppets. The dragon (pictured, top right) is called the "quetzalcoatl" and is from Aztec culture. It's also known as the feathered serpent. The two skeleton puppets are known as Catrinas associated with the Days of the Dead celebration in Mexico. Each year additions or touch ups are made to the puppets by GAP School Art Teacher, Rene Lopez, along with students.



University of Minnesota Campus Visit

Our 9th and 10th graders got to attend the Goldy's Pass Tour at the University of Minnesota. They heard from college students and learned some great details about the UofM, and colleges and universities in general. They walked around campus and got to eat lunch in a dining hall.



Construction Pathway Updates

- The construction crew was busy at the end of the school year mudding and taping the inside of the house and putting up siding outside.
- A group of construction students worked with the city of St. Paul to plant a beautiful flower garden on the Wabasha Bridge.



Healthcare Pathway Updates

GAP School's Healthcare Pathway volunteered at Living Well Disability Service's Family Fun Day at Como Park!

It was also announced that GAP School was named Living Well's 2025 Community Partner Dreammaker Award Winner! The award honors an individual or organization whose work in the community has made a significant difference in the lives of the people Living Well serves. GAP School Healthcare Pathway Manager, Erika Thurston, will accept the award at Living Well's annual gala in August.



Prom

GAP School's prom celebration was held on May 16th on the Padelford River Boat, which cruises the Mississippi River off of Harriet Island Regional Park. Many students showed up dressed in their best and danced the night away!



End of Year Picnic!

To celebrate the end of another great school year, students and GAP School staff had a picnic at Kaposia Park. The weather was beautiful and it was great to celebrate the hard work of our students!



New Student Lounge

A huge thank you to [YouthBuild Global](#) and [Burlington's](#) in-store fundraising campaign. We were awarded a portion of the funds raised and GAP School was able to add a new student lounge at school. This is a space where our students can come to both study and socialize, and recharge during the school day. Thank you again to YouthBuild and Burlington for joining hands with young people as they transform their lives and communities!



First Page Street House Project Earns LEED Platinum Certification

The first Page Street house project has officially achieved LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Platinum certification, the highest level awarded by the [U.S. Green Building Council \(USGBC\)](#).

With the house designed by [MSR Design](#) and constructed by GAP School's [YouthBuild Global](#) Construction Pathway students, this certification showcases the project's commitment to sustainability. It is the only single-family affordable housing project in the nation to receive the LEED Platinum certification and it is the only Minnesota residential project to have achieved this as well!



NEW! Solar Jobs Pathway

GAP School's YouthBuild St. Paul Westside has been selected as one of 17 YouthBuild programs nationwide to launch a new solar workforce training initiative through YouthBuild Global, backed by funding from Invest in Our Future. The program will provide hands-on, industry-aligned training in solar panel installation for our YouthBuild program participants to be able to pursue careers in energy infrastructure.

2025 Graduation Scholarship Recipients

This year, five scholarships were awarded to highly-motivated students showing exemplary performance in school over the past year. The scholarships can be used towards higher education costs or pathway trainings. Congratulations to these students!

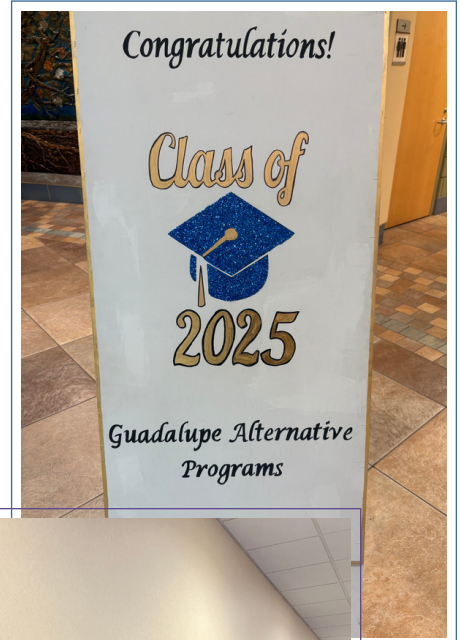
Gilbert de la O Scholarship: Yazenia Lopez

Sister Giovanni Scholarship: Abulmelik Beriso

Thompson Family Scholarship: David Mushegeto

Richard Mammen Scholarship: David Asunge

James Nelson Scholarship: Zin Zin Phyo



Important Dates:

- June 11-July 18th: Summer School
 - No Class July 3-4
- August 27th: Back-to-School Student Registration (10am - 2pm)

GAP SCHOOL'S MISSION STATEMENT

GAP School's mission is to empower communities challenged by transition and poverty through education and enrichment opportunities, social and emotional support, and training that leads to employment.

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