



**HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
2019 ANNUAL REPORT AND  
2020 WORK PLAN**

# 2019 Human Rights Members

## 2019 Human Rights Commissioners

Chair, Chris Mitchell (elected June 2018)

Vice-Chair, Carrie Yeager (elected June 2018)

Jonathan Burris

Teresa Martin

Gloria Peck

Maurice Harris

Leah Persky

Eve Clarkson, Student

Destiny Nathan, Student

## City Staff

Kirsten Santelices, Human Resources Director

Maria Cisneros, City Attorney

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## 2019 Overview

The Golden Valley Human Rights Commission led several initiatives in 2019. Not only did the Commission focus on some of its annual events and programs, they explored opportunities to engage with community members through new programming, events, and activities.

### Budget

For 2019, the City Council approved a budget of \$3,500.

The Commission spent \$2,466.85 (70 percent) of its budget for professional fees for speaker honorariums; cash prize for the 2019 MLK Literary contest winner; promotional stickers and bookmarks; hosting a booth at GV Pride festival; and tickets to sponsor two tables at the 2020 Martin Luther King, Jr Holiday Breakfast.

### Meetings

The HRC held eleven regular meetings, one special meeting in January, and had an option to attend the joint Board/Commission/City Council meeting in January.

### 2019 Work Plan Accomplishments

Beyond setting a work plan of specific activities and events, the Commission set specific goals for the year:

- Partner with other City human rights commissions and community service organizations on educational or outreach opportunities.
  - Explore opportunities to educate the community on voting rights.
- Update and enhance communication strategies (including providing resources through the City website).

The Commission successfully achieved all of these goals in 2019.

## Quarter 1: Jan-Mar

### 29th Annual MLK Holiday Breakfast

The Commission purchased one table (10 tickets) for the General Mills Foundation 29th Annual MLK Holiday Breakfast, and all 10 tickets were distributed.

### Sweet Potato Comfort Pie

The Commission sponsored three speakers at the Annual Sweet Potato Comfort Pies event held at Brookview Jan 20, 2019. Several Commissioners also volunteered at the event as well. The winner of the 2019 MLK Literary Contest presented her submission.

### Hopkins High School Sophomore Wins HRC Literary Contest

POSTED 01-23-2019

The winner of the Golden Valley's second annual Martin Luther King Jr Literary Contest is Brynn Hirsch, a student at Hopkins High School.

Sponsored by the Golden Valley Human Rights Commission (HRC), the contest is meant to honor the birthday and legacy of Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.

Students in grade 6–12 in Hopkins, Robbinsdale Area, Perpich, and Breck Schools entered written or audio/video work answering questions on the theme "Taking A Stand."

Hirsch, an active participant in the Hopkins High School Theater Department and a volunteer at the Hopkins Library, took first place for her essay on political protests despite doubting herself and her piece.

"I had kind of convinced myself it wouldn't be me," she said. "But I was honestly so surprised and so happy and honored," she said.

When deciding to write the essay, Hirsch said it wasn't very hard to choose between the two prompts.

"I was more drawn to the second one, about participating in political protests because I already had some level of experience with it," Hirsch said. "I could draw from personal experience and the experiences of others I know, to try to convey how I feel when I speak up for change."

In addition to her prize, Hirsch also won tickets to the Jan 21 Minneapolis MLK Day Celebration and was invited to present her piece at the Jan 20 Martin Luther King celebration at Brookview.



Brynn Hirsch

*Interview with Brynn Hirsch, winner of the MLK Literary Contest*

### HRC Promotional Materials

The Commission worked closely with the City's communications team to develop a new promotional item. Together they came up with a design and ordered equAllity stickers for Commissioners to distribute at events and programs.



## Quarter 2: Apr-Jun

### Golden Valley Pride Festival

The HRC participated in the Golden Valley Pride Festival held June 9, 2019. At the booth, Commissioners distributed the newly-designed Golden Valley human rights EquALLity stickers, magnets, Human Rights Day quote bookmarks, and the HRC brochure.



*Commissioners Mitchell (L) and Peck (R) conversing with a festival attendee*

### Golden Valley Historical Society Museum Tour

The Human Rights Commission had the opportunity to host its June 25 meeting at the Golden Valley Historical Society Museum, starting with a tour of the facility.



*Commissioners on a guided tour of the Golden Valley Historical Society Museum*

## Special Recognition of Sylvia Kaplan

The Commission was approached by Council Member Joanie Clausen, who shared some history about the formation of the then Civil Rights Commission, which is now the Human Rights Commission, including details on its founders. Sylvia Kaplan, an original member of the Commission, was invited to the June 25 HRC meeting, where the Commission had the opportunity to learn about her involvement in the advancement of human rights and her passion that continues today. The Commission presented Kaplan with a certificate of appreciation for her work.



# Quarter 3: Jul-Sep

## Week of Service

The Commission chose to promote a “week of service” donation collection for Prism during the week of Sept 11. Donation boxes were set up at City Hall, Brookview, and the Public Safety building for the week. It was promoted on social media and through CCX media.

Several Commissioners also volunteered to do park clean up at Sochacki Park on Saturday, Sept 7, 2019. Several Commissioners worked for four hours cleaning up and removing buckthorn from one of the City’s parks.



## Antisemitism, Xenophobia, and Hate: Local and Global Challenges Event

The Commission worked with World Without Genocide to host a program at Brookview on critical human rights issues and provide suggestions on how individuals and cities can respond. The program also reviewed current data on hate crimes, episodes of violence, and hate speech, with a focus on how to address multiple forms of hate.



HRC Community Outreach



### ANTISEMITISM, XENOPHOBIA, AND HATE: LOCAL AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

*Prepared by Ellen J Kennedy, PhD,  
World Without Genocide Executive Director*

The Antisemitism, Xenophobia, and Hate: Local and Global Challenges program is meant to inform and educate commissioners and the general public about critical human rights issues today and to suggest individual and city-wide responses.

The program will review recent data suggesting a rise in hate crimes, highlight recent episodes of violence, teach about conditions that influence hate-speech and violence, create steps to address multiple forms of hate, and much more.

World Without Genocide works to help people around the world prevent genocide by fighting racism and prejudice, advocate for the prosecution of perpetrators, and honor those whose lives have been altered by violence and injustice.

**Wed, Sept 25, 7-9 pm**

Brookview Golden Valley  
316 Brookview Parkway S, Golden Valley, MN

Sponsored by: Golden Valley Human Rights Commission

## Quarter 4: Oct-Dec

### Why Treaties Matter Exhibit

The Commission hosted the Why Treaties Matter exhibit at Brookview during the month of October. The exhibit, presented by the Minnesotan Indian Affairs Council, Minnesota Humanities Center, and the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, features stories and voices of Dakota and Ojibwe Nations. It emphasizes American Indian independence as an ongoing continental reality and highlights the innovative ways the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations self-govern, create community, build sustainable systems, and relate to one another.

**the project**

Why Treaties Matter began when the partnership of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, Minnesota Humanities Center, and the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian was approved by tribes residing in Minnesota.

The exhibit was created through a community-based approach. Since its inception, the knowledge, insight and perspective of tribal members have been the exhibit's foundation.

From this foundation emerged a vehicle for authentic Dakota and Ojibwe voices upon which these communities tell their own stories of sovereignty, adaptability, and sustainability.

*It is a such a wonderful exhibit for non-Native Americans to be exposed to Native American's history, cultural values of the land, people and relationship. "Worship Earth, and why treaties matter in today's American society."*  
—Rose Xing, Chief Diversity Officer, Minnesota State Community & Technical College

For many visitors, both American Indian and those from other backgrounds, Why Treaties Matter was their first entry point into beginning to learn about the history of treaties in Minnesota.  
—Native American Community Development Institute, Minneapolis

I learned a lot about the Dakota and Ojibwe past and how they were impacted by the settlers coming here, not just how the settlers were impacted by them. I also learned about Dakota and Ojibwe people's traditions and culture, and how they interpret the world.  
—Dee Graham, student, Eden Prairie High School, Eden Prairie

**did you know?**

**What is a treaty?**  
Treaties are agreements between self-governing or sovereign, historic Native Nations existed long before the formation of the United States. European powers recognized the sovereignty of Native Nations when they made treaties with us, as did the United States. Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.  
Kevin Loney, Box File Box of Ojibwe Clamps, Anishinabe Nation, Upper Sioux Community

**I don't understand why American Indians have rights different from anyone else. Do treaties grant "special rights"?**  
Treaties affirmed in court, have not given but reserved for native people the right to hunt, fish, and gather in their lands for hundreds of years. These rights are often called usufructuary rights, which is just a legal term for the right to use something.  
You can sell a piece of land, but retain the right to use the stock. You can have an easement put in place where two neighbors share the same driveway. This concept was written right into the treaties between native tribes and the U.S. government.  
Dr. Aron Tsiak, Professor of Ojibwe, Bemidji State University

**What's the benefit of learning about these treaties?**  
The history of American Indian treaties is the history of all Americans and all Americans. Even now, states, Native Nations, and the federal government continue to engage on a government-to-government basis every day, making it affect new treaties, building upon those that have already been made.  
We cannot have a complete understanding of what it means to be American without knowing about these relationships, whether we are Native American or not.  
Aron Tsiak, Deputy, Interpretator, National Museum of the American Indian

**How are treaties exercised now?**  
For Native Americans, treaties regulate the basis upon which their sovereignty rests. The right of their tribes to have their own governments is very much laid out in treaties that define their lands and their history of interactions with the U.S. government.  
Dr. Aron Tsiak, Professor of Ojibwe, Bemidji State University

**Indians were already given reservations, and all this occurred a long time ago. Why are you still talking about this?**  
This is a misunderstanding. The Dakota (and Ojibwe) were not given anything. I always try to explain it like this: What do you do when you want to buy a room at a hotel? You make a reservation for it and it's reserved for you.  
Well, the Dakota did win in the treaty-making process. They were able to reserve some portions of land for themselves, albeit probably not the best for their existence, but it was still reserved by the Dakota for their purpose.  
It was never given. How could the U.S. government give something that they did not own to a people that was already giving up so much? Reservations weren't given to Indian people. They were reserved by Indian people for themselves.  
Dorcas Ross, Upper Sioux Community

**Why Treaties Matter**  
Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations

**VISITOR'S GUIDE** treatiesmatter.org

Why Treaties Matter Visitors Guide Brochure

The HRC partnered with the Hennepin County Library in Golden Valley to promote the exhibit and highlight the topic of Native American treaties.

### Bill Hobbs Award

The Commission received two nominations. After discussion at the November meeting, the Commission selected both nominees as winners for the 2019 award. Ruth Paradise was nominated for her work to preserve and create affordable housing in the City. Paradise chairs the Golden Valley Affordable Housing Coalition and is a member of the Rising TIDES Task Force. Gloria Peck was nominated for her frequent volunteer efforts with PRISM, her leadership with Spirit of Hope Church, and her work as an original organizer of the Golden Valley PRIDE festival. Peck also served on the Human Rights Commission for just over six years, where she led several committees on topics like sex trafficking, LGBTQIA+ rights, mental illness, voting rights, and more. Both Peck and Paradise were presented the award at the City Council meeting Dec 17, 2019.



Winners of the Bill Hobbs Award, Ruth Paradise (L) and Gloria Peck (R)

## Third Annual MLK Day Literary Contest

The HRC advertised a literary contest for students in grades 7-12 who live in Golden Valley or attend a school within the Golden valley school districts. Students were asked to submit written work (essay, song, or poetry) responding to one of two writing prompts under the theme of "Injustice Anywhere."

Unfortunately, the Commission did not receive any submissions for the contest this year.



HRC Community Outreach

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# DR MARTIN LUTHER KING JR

## LITERARY CONTEST



*"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere ... Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly"*  
– Dr Martin Luther King Jr

In honor of the birthday and legacy of Dr Martin Luther King Jr, the Golden Valley Human Rights Commission presents the second annual Dr Martin Luther King Jr Literary Contest.

The contest is open to students in grades 7-12 who live in Golden Valley, attend a school in Golden Valley, or attend a Robbinsdale Area District or Hopkins District school.

Winners will be announced Jan 10, 2020. They will receive a \$50 cash prize and will be asked to present their piece at the Martin Luther King Jr Day celebration Sun, Jan 19, 2020, at Brookview Golden Valley (316 Brookview Pkwy). Winners will also receive tickets to the General Mills/Minneapolis MLK breakfast Mon, Jan 20, 2020.

**2020 Theme**  
Building on Dr King's passion and leadership, students are asked to creatively respond to one of the following questions based on the theme "Injustice Anywhere":

- How does our country's treatment of refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers impact our various communities?**
- How does the denial of voting rights or voter suppression efforts impact our various communities?**

**Submissions**  
**Written (essays, poetry, song, etc):** Submit on standard 8-1/2" x 11" paper, double spaced, not to exceed 900 words.  
**Audio and Video:** Submit through YouTube or other multi-media platforms, accompanied by a transcribed version.

Submissions will be judged on inspiration, clarity, creativity, and content applicable to the theme. Entries must include:

- students name, address, phone/email, and grade level
- parent name, phone/email
- school name and teacher contact information

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**Deadline: Fri, Jan 3, 2020, 4 pm**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Email</b><br/>ksantelices@goldenvalleymn.gov</p> | <p><b>Mail/Drop-Off</b><br/>Kirsten Santelices, 7800 Golden Valley Rd, Golden Valley, MN 55427</p> |
|--|--|

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**Sponsored by: Golden Valley Human Rights Commission**

*Literary Contest Flyer*

## Conversion Therapy Ban

In November the HRC brought the topic of conversion therapy ban to the City Council with a recommendation that the Council consider researching this topic as part of its 2020 goals session. The City Council listed this topic as an item to consider at its 2020 goals session Wednesday, Jan 29, 2020.

# 2019 Sampling of Media Coverage

## Week of Service

**City of Golden Valley, MN - Local Government**  
August 2 · 🌐

The Golden Valley Human Rights Commission holds an annual Day of Service as a part of the National Day of Service and Remembrance on Sept 11. This year the Day of Service is being expanded to a Week of Service, Sept 9-13.  
<https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/.../human-rights-commission-t.../>



**HRC Community Outreach**

👍 You and 2 others

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share

**City of Golden Valley, MN - Local Government**  
August 27 · 🌐

The Golden Valley Human Rights Commission's Week of Service is Sept 9-13, and residents are encouraged to take part.  
<https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/.../human-rights-commission-w.../>



👍 You and 3 others    1 Share

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share

## Antisemitism, Xenophobia, and Hate: Local and Global Challenges

**City of Golden Valley, MN - Local Government**  
September 17 · 🌐

Attend the Golden Valley Human Rights Commission's a community outreach program titled Antisemitism, Xenophobia, and Hate: Local and Global Challenges Wed, Sept 25, 7-9 pm, at Brookview.  
<https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/.../attend-the-hrcs-community.../>

GOLDENVALLEYMN.GOV

**City of Golden Valley, MN: Attend The HRC's Community Outreach Event Sept 25, 7 PM**

The Golden Valley Human Rights Commission (HRC) is hosting a community outreach program titled Antisemitism, Xenophobia, and Hate:...

👍 You, Maria Cisneros and 1 other

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share

**City of Golden Valley, MN - Local Government**  
September 23 · 🌐

Don't forget this Wed, Sept 25, the Golden Valley Human Rights Commission is hosting a community outreach event titled Antisemitism, Xenophobia, and Hate: Local and Global Challenges. Presenters will discuss critical human rights issues today and suggest individual and city-wide responses.  
Learn more > <https://loom.ly/wf2VEk8>



👍 You and 5 others

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share

**City of Golden Valley, MN - Local Government**  
August 13 · 🌐

The Golden Valley Human Rights Commission will host a community outreach program titled Antisemitism, Xenophobia, and Hate: Local and Global Challenges Wed, Sept 25, 7-9 pm at Brookview. The program will inform and educate the public on critical human rights issues provide suggestions for both individual and city-wide responses.  
<https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/.../golden-valley-human-right.../>



**HRC Community Outreach**

👍 You and 7 others    2 Shares

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share

## Why Treaties Matter Exhibit (Oct 1-30)



City of Golden Valley, MN - Local Government  
October 1 · 🌐

The Why Treaties Matter exhibit is now up at Brookview through the end of October.

Visit Brookview Golden Valley and learn about the new and innovative ways the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations self-govern, create community, build sustainable systems, and relate to one another.  
[goldenvalleymn.gov/b.../humanrights/hrc-community-outreach.php](https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/b.../humanrights/hrc-community-outreach.php)



👍❤️ 27

3 Comments 10 Shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

🔗 Share



City of Golden Valley, MN - Local Government  
October 23 · 🌐

Don't forget to stop by Brookview to learn about the Dakota and Ojibwe Nation's new and innovative ways to create community and more at the Why Treaties Matter exhibit, sponsored by the Golden Valley Human Rights Commission. The exhibit closes Oct 30.  
<https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/.../humanrights/hrc-community-...>



👍 Maria Cisneros and 19 others

3 Shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

🔗 Share

## Human Rights Day (Dec 10)



City of Golden Valley, MN - Local Government  
December 10 at 9:58 AM · 🌐

Today is World Humans Rights Day and the United Nations (UN) is celebrating with the theme is Youth Standing Up for Human Rights. The UN wants to make it known that no one is too young to make a positive impact on the world.

Keeping this year's them in mind, the Golden Valley Human Rights Commission wants to remind Golden Valley students in grades 7-12 to enter the 2020 Dr Martin Luther Kind Jr Literary Contest. Deadline is Jan 3, 2020, 4 pm.

Learn more > [goldenvalleymn.gov/boards/humanrights/mlk-day.php](https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/boards/humanrights/mlk-day.php)



United Nations Human Rights  
December 9 at 10:44 AM · 🌐

👍 Like Page

Let's empower #young people to better know & claim their #rights, and to be heard.

No one is too young to change the world.

#StandUp4HumanRights #HumanRightsDay

👍❤️ You, Maria Cisneros and 3 others

1 Share

## Bill Hobbs Award Promotion



City of Golden Valley, MN - Local Government  
September 26 · 🌐

There are four days left to nominate a Golden Valley community member for the 2019 Bill Hobbs Human Rights Award. Click the link below to learn how to nominate someone.

<https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/.../deadline-to-nominate-for-.../>

GOLDENVALLEYMN.GOV

**City of Golden Valley, MN: Deadline To Nominate For Bill Hobbs Award Is Sept 30, 4:30 PM**

The Golden Valley Human Rights Commission (HRC) is accepting nominations for the 2019 Bill Hobbs Human Rights Award. The award recognizes members in the Golden Valley community who work to build an...

1 Share

👍 Like

💬 Comment

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## Restrictive Covenants



City of Golden Valley, MN @GoldenValleyMN · Oct 15, 2019

The Golden Valley Human Rights Commission has started a new effort to provide Golden Valley residents with the tools and information needed to discharge racially restrictive covenants on their property deeds.  
[goldenvalleymn.gov/newsarchive/in...](https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/newsarchive/in...)



👍

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❤️ 1

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# 2020 Proposed Work Plan

The Golden Valley Human Rights Commission (HRC) proposes the following work plan for 2020.

Goals for this year include:

- Partner with other City human rights commissions and community service organizations on education or outreach opportunities.
  - Explore opportunities to educate the community.
- Further update and enhance communications strategies
  - Explore opportunities for community partnerships regarding human rights resources.
- Partner with Environmental Commission on environmental initiatives and the impact of climate change on Human Rights (potentially as a day of service initiative)

## Tentative Outline:

### Q1: Jan-Mar

- ✓ Work Plan discussion (Jan)
- Co-Sponsor League of Women Voter's Race in Our Neighborhoods (Feb)
- Golden Valley Pride planning (Mar)
- Consider continuation of annual MLK Day Contest (Mar)
- Restrictive Covenant Education and Discharge Next Steps planning (Mar)
- Equal Rights Amendment and 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women's Suffrage planning (Mar)
- Reevaluate ACLU Proposed Policies (Mar)

### Q2: Apr-Jun

- Human Rights Day planning/Human Rights City discussion (Apr)
- Day of Service planning
- Equal Rights Amendment and 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women's Suffrage planning
- Research land acknowledgment
- Golden Valley Pride booth (Jun)

### Q3: Jul-Sep

- Complete research and provide information to the City Council on land acknowledgments (Jul)
- Human Rights Day planning
- Bill Hobbs Award promotion
- Promote Equal Rights Amendment and 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women's Suffrage (Aug)
- Day of Service (on or around Sep 11)

### Q4: Oct-Dec

- Sweet Potato Comfort Pie planning
- Human Rights Day planning
- Dec 10 – Human Rights Day promotion
  - Bill Hobbs Award (in conjunction with Human Rights Day)
  - Partner with Golden Valley Library
- Purchase table for 2021 MLK breakfast