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ASIAN KALEIDOSCOPE

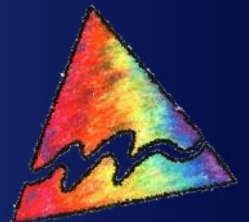
MN BIZ VISION



**From Behind the Lens
to Building a Legacy:
The Story of
Koobmeej Vang**

**Calling America
HOME Series with
Mrs. Julie Trang Le**

**How Much of Your
Workday Is Spent
on Tasks That
Could Run Without
You??**



Asian Media Access

This monthly e-Magazine is published by Asian Media Access and Multi Cultural Community Alliance to highlight the accomplishments of Asian American and Pacific Islanders' (AAPI) small businesses in MN.

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Bridging Cultures, Building Futures: Minnesota's AAPI Business & Workforce Magazine

Welcome to **MN Biz Vision: Asian Kaleidoscope**, a monthly e-magazine dedicated to empowering Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities across Minnesota. More than a publication, this platform uplifts AAPI entrepreneurs while advancing workforce pathways through the **Center for Wellness Technology** - a visionary hub that integrates Agricultural Technology, Multimedia Technology, and Wellness Technology into culturally grounded IT career opportunities.

AAPI Entrepreneurship & the Need for New Pathways

AAPI entrepreneurs are vital to Minnesota's diverse business landscape, operating successful restaurants, grocery stores, salons, healthcare practices, consulting firms, and manufacturing businesses, etc.. While AAPIs comprise 6% of Minnesota's population, Asian-owned businesses represent only 3% of the state's small businesses—revealing persistent barriers to entrepreneurship. Yet these 15,500+ Asian-owned firms account for 35% of all minority-owned businesses in Minnesota, demonstrating the community's outsized economic impact and resilience. Targeted workforce development in specialized IT sectors can help bridge this entrepreneurship gap and create new pathways for community economic mobility and innovation.

The Center for Wellness Technology: Our Dual Mission

At the heart of MN Biz Vision stands the Center for Wellness Technology, which unifies three high-impact technology tracks designed for AAPI youth, families, and entrepreneurs:

- **Agricultural Technology (AgTech):** Blending modern engineering with ancestral agricultural knowledge, learners explore aeroponics, aquaponics, vertical farming, and sustainable food systems that support food sovereignty and sustainability.
- **Multimedia Technology:** Youth and creatives gain experience in game design, AR/VR development, digital storytelling, and AI-assisted media production—tools that amplify AAPI voices and ensure cultural stories are represented in the digital future.
- **Wellness Technology:** Integrating traditional healing practices with modern innovations, the Center supports healing with telehealth systems, VR calming room designs, and culturally informed wearable devices, advancing non-invasive and holistic care models.

Together, these tracks demonstrate why IT matters: technology becomes a vehicle for economic mobility, cultural preservation, and community innovation.

What You'll Discover Each Month

Every issue of MN Biz Vision highlights AAPI business owners across diverse sectors, celebrates immigrant and refugee success stories, and shares practical resources on financing, marketing, digital tools, and entrepreneurship. Workforce development features dive into emerging IT opportunities within AgTech, Multimedia, and Wellness Technology, supported by training programs and employer partnerships.

Building Economic Opportunity & Cultural Resilience

Whether you are strengthening a family business, exploring a career transition, entering tech fields, or launching a new venture, MN Biz Vision: Asian Kaleidoscope connects you to the networks, knowledge, and inspiration needed to thrive. Join us each month as we celebrate AAPI excellence - honoring cultural traditions while embracing the technological innovations shaping Minnesota's future.





Koobmeej Vang



Preface: For Koobmeej Vang, photography was never just a career — it was a lifeline. Based in the Twin Cities, Minnesota, Koobmeej has spent 12 years capturing honest moments and turning real life into lasting visual stories. Specializing in family portraits, weddings, and small events, he went full time in 2021 and has built a business rooted in authenticity, connection, and purpose.

FROM BEHIND THE LENS TO BUILDING A LEGACY: THE STORY OF KOOBMEEJ VANG

A Camera That Changed Everything

Koobmeej was born in the United States, but his story is deeply tied to the immigrant experience. His parents journeyed to America in pursuit of a better life, and that sacrifice became his motivation.

"Knowing that my parents are immigrants who journeyed here to pursue a better life definitely gave me the motivation to meet their standards and my own."

He picked up a camera one day and never put it down. During some of the darker chapters of his life — years marked by depression and uncertainty — it was the joy found in his clients' moments that kept him going. *"The small happy moments from my sessions and wedding days gave me happiness I didn't have in my own personal life."*

The Leap of Faith

Going full time meant quitting his job without a backup plan. *"The only thing I could do was push forward — to get as many clients as I can and get my name out there."* That determination paid off. Over time, hard work and word of mouth grew his business into one of the most trusted names in Twin Cities wedding and family photography.

Culture as a Compass

Koobmeej's Hmong heritage is woven into everything he does. Growing up in a culture that values family, respect, and the preservation of memories shaped how he approaches every session.

"Culture taught me that moments aren't just moments – they're history, legacy, and connection."

He leads his business with humility and patience, making sure every client feels seen and respected. *"I don't just show up to document an event – I show up to understand it."*



Recognition and Vision

In 2023, Koobmeej earned the Couples' Choice Award from WeddingWire and was named Best of Weddings by The Knot – honors driven entirely by client experiences. Looking ahead, his dream extends beyond the camera. He envisions owning a wedding venue where couples can access photography, videography, and a fully curated celebration experience all in one place – a space that also uplifts local creatives and inspires other immigrants to dream bigger.



What's New

This year, Koobmeej launched a referral program rewarding both the referrer and new clients with discounts and gift card credits. He is also sending a personalized Wedding Welcome Guide magazine to new bookings as a thank-you and step-by-step resource for what to expect.

Advice for the Next Dreamer

"Start before you feel ready. Your background is not a limitation – it's an advantage. Your story, perspective, and work ethic are things no one else can replicate. Take the first step even if it's a small one. Momentum comes from movement."



To learn more or inquire about booking, reach out to Koobmeej Vang through his website or social media.

Website: <https://www.koobmeejvang.com/>

Social Media:

<https://www.facebook.com/KVphotosvideos>



Mrs. Julie Trang Le

Series Preface: Asian Media Access proudly presents “Calling America HOME” Series, which is inspired by the resilience and hope shared by immigrants and refugees from all corners of the world who have rebuilt their lives in Minnesota. Through these stories, we invite readers to witness a legacy of survival, determination, and hope against impossible odds.

In this edition, we proudly feature **Mrs. Julie Trang Le – A Legacy of Integrity, A Life of Service.**

Q1. Thank you for speaking with AMA. Can you begin by introducing yourself and describing your journey to Minnesota?

My name is **Julie Trang Le**. I am a Vietnamese refugee, a mother, an attorney, and a candidate for the United States Congress in Minnesota’s 5th District. But before any of those titles, I was a child sleeping in the back seat of a car on a freezing Iowa night, waiting for a spot in a homeless shelter to open up.

My family’s story begins with my grandfather, **Trần Đình Nghị**. He served in U.S.-allied law enforcement during the Vietnam War, and after the fall of Saigon in 1975, he was imprisoned for that service. He died in the Kim Sơn detention camp. For nearly twenty years, my family worked to retrieve his remains so we could finally lay him to rest. That long search for closure shaped how I see the world. I learned early that justice can be delayed for a generation – but that does not mean you stop fighting for it.

My own journey to America began in poverty in Vietnam, followed by eight months in the **Bataan Refugee Camp** in the Philippines. I arrived in the United States at fourteen, not speaking the language



“My grandfather’s story reminds me that justice may be delayed, but we must never stop fighting for it.” – Julie Trang Le



and quickly learning that the “land of opportunity” did not shine equally for everyone. By tenth grade, my life broke open. I became a runaway. I slept in a car through Iowa winters. I drank water to fill my stomach when there was nothing to eat. What saved me was a program called the **Bridge Project**, which got me a bed at the YWCA homeless shelter. From there I moved into a shared apartment with another runaway, at half rent for kids like us. Eventually I saved enough to get my own place. I have been independent ever since.

I graduated high school a year early because I could not afford to be a full-time student and a part-time worker – I needed to work full-time. From there, I put myself through community college for my associate’s degree, then earned my bachelor’s, then a master’s, and finally my law degree. Every step was juggled between school, work, and family. America gave me the chance, and I took it.

I moved to Minnesota to build a legal career around the people I had once been: workers, immigrants, families in crisis, and people whose voices were drowned out by systems they did not understand. My practice has spanned **workers’ compensation, immigration, criminal, and family law**. I went on to serve as an Assistant Chief Counsel at the Department of Homeland Security. Then, on January 5, 2026, I went on detail as a **Special Assistant United States Attorney with the Department of Justice, handling habeas corpus cases**. Along the way, I have served on the **Minnesota Board of School Administrators**, the **Asian Pacific Advisory Board for the Minnesota Office of Ombudsperson for Families**, and the **Board of Advisors for the Vietnamese Community in Minnesota**. I am also a volunteer mediator, a youth leader, and a choir director in my church.

I do not see those roles as separate. They are one continuous answer to the same question my grandfather’s life asked me: what will you do with the freedom others paid for?

Q2. Please share more with us – How did your own cultural identity evolve while working in supporting others? How has that work shaped your sense of belonging in both Vietnamese and American cultures?

My cultural identity has evolved from survival to stewardship. When I first arrived, my identity was shaped by what I lacked – language, money, a stable home. But over years of work – as a general laborer, a Vietnamese translator, a realtor, an independent insurance agent, and a restaurant owner – I came to understand my heritage differently. It was not a barrier to overcome. It was a bridge I could walk across, in both directions.

As a translator, I sat with families navigating the healthcare system and the Social Security Administration. I watched elders try to advocate for themselves through forms written in a language they could not read, and clerks who had no time to slow down. I was the voice in the room when there otherwise would not have been one. **As a realtor**, I helped first-generation families buy their first homes. **As a restaurant owner**, I learned that food is the easiest language for strangers to share. People who would never sit down to talk about politics will sit down for a couple of homemade egg rolls (chả giò), a Vietnamese sandwich (bánh mì), or a bowl of phở. Each of those jobs taught me the same thing: Vietnamese-American identity is defined by what I think of as **entrepreneurial resilience** – the instinct to build something out of almost nothing, and to do it with your family beside you.



In my Vietnamese heritage, I feel most rooted when I am translating for an elder at a doctor’s appointment, or mentoring youth at church, or sitting on a community board. That is where my values of hard work, sacrifice, and respect for elders came from, and giving back is how I honor my grandfather’s legacy. **In my American identity**, I feel most rooted in freedom and justice – when I help a family navigate a public system, or stand up for a worker whose rights have been ignored. That is my way of saying thank you to the country that gave me a second chance.

I no longer feel caught between two worlds. **I am a bridge between them.** Belonging is not about choosing one side. It is about using your lived experience to make sure every family can thrive from here.

Q3. How do you balance cultural authenticity while making your work accessible to others who may not be familiar with your cultural traditions?

I have never believed authenticity and accessibility are at odds. As a refugee, I learned early that while traditions differ, the desire underneath them does not. Every family I have ever met – Vietnamese, Somali, Hmong, white, Black, immigrant or fifth-generation – wants the same things: a safe home, healthy children, and a fair shot.



“I don’t ask people to leave their culture at the door. I ask them to bring the best of their traditions to the table so we can build a stronger, more vibrant Minnesota together.” – Julie Trang Le

A few things I have learned about how to build that bridge:

- **Lead with values, not just traditions.** When I tell my grandfather's story, I am sharing a Vietnamese family history – but I am also speaking to a universal American value: standing up for what is right, even when it costs you. People from any background can find themselves in that story.
- **Interpreting is more than just language translation.** My work translating for the healthcare and Social Security systems taught me that real accessibility means breaking down complicated American institutions for newcomers and helping those institutions understand the cultural realities their clients are living through. It runs both ways.
- **Food and small business are doorways.** Running a restaurant was one of the most effective bridges I ever built. When you invite someone to sit at your table, the walls come down on their own.
- **Faith and discipline keep me whole.** As a choir director and youth leader, I try to model what bicultural healthy living looks like – the discipline and respect for elders from Vietnamese culture, combined with the American emphasis on individual agency and liberty. Both, not either.

Q4. You have accomplished so much – from arriving in the States to becoming a cultural bearer. What were some of the pivotal challenges you faced in building your life in America?

The hardest moments in my life have not been the ones people read about. The hardest moments were the quiet ones – a freezing night in a car, a long shift after class, a phone call about my grandfather. But there is one recent moment I want to share, because it explains why I am running for Congress.

On **February 3, 2026**, I attended a contempt hearing in federal court in Minnesota on behalf of the Department of Justice. I had volunteered to help the U.S. Attorney's Office respond to a flood of habeas petitions during **Operation Metro Surge** – the immigration crackdown that swept across the Twin Cities. At one point I was personally assigned to more than eighty-five cases.

I walked into that hearing intending to explain to the judge how hard I had been working on every file in his order to show cause. I had been working days and nights. I had no intention of defying the court. The problem was not me. The problem was that I could not get my own client – **Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)** – to comply with the judge's orders.

And then the judge questioned my integrity. That broke me. Integrity is the one thing my family carried out of Vietnam. It is the one thing my grandfather died protecting. I

could not stand in that courtroom and let it be doubted – not when I had been pulling myself apart trying to do the right thing inside a system that would not let me.



“The price of freedom and fairness was written in the blood and tears of those who came before me. I carry their resolve, and my own lived experience, to make sure no one in our district has to face the cold alone.” — Julie Trang Le

So I told the truth. I told the judge how impossible the position was. I said the system was broken and the job was breaking the people inside it. I believed then, and I believe now, that I owed the court candor. Within hours, I was removed from the detail and returned to Department of Homeland Security. Not long after, my government service ended.

I do not regret a single word of it. That day was the moment my life as a refugee, my life as a lawyer, and my future as a candidate finally met in one place. I had spent my career trying to fix a broken system. I learned, in that courtroom, that some systems cannot be fixed from the inside. They have to be fixed at the policy level.

That is why I am running for the United States Congress in Minnesota’s 5th District. I see the struggles I once lived through reflected in our community every day – families torn apart by detention, neighbors without housing, elders falling through the cracks of healthcare and Social Security, children whose schools are stretched too thin. I have slept in a car. I have skipped meals. I have walked into rooms where no one expected someone like me to be heard. I do not just understand these struggles. **I have felt them in my bones.**

Q5. Love your statement “Art and technology should not replace human identity, but amplify it.” Reflecting on that journey, what impacts do you hope having on the next generation?

When I say those words, I am thinking of three people. I am thinking of my grandfather, who paid for freedom with his life. I am thinking of the fourteen-year-old refugee who got off the plane not speaking English. And I am thinking of the tenth-grader curled up in the back seat of a car on an Iowa night.

My hope for the next generation is that they inherit the freedom we fought for and the resolve to protect it.

I want young people – especially young people who feel invisible, or behind, or like the system was not built for them – to see my story and recognize themselves in it. I was a runaway. I worked through high school. I finished school early because I had to. I went through community college, a four-year degree, a master's, and then law school, one shift at a time. The Bridge Project gave me a bed when I had nothing. The YWCA gave me shelter. A second-chance apartment at half rent gave me a foothold. Every step was someone else extending a hand, and then me reaching forward to extend mine.

That is what I want to leave behind. Not just policies, though policies matter. I want to leave behind a generation that knows their hardship is not their identity. It is the soil their character grows out of.



"I want the next generation to look at my story and realize they don't have to be defined by what they lacked. They can be defined by what they give back. My grandfather's legacy was my lighthouse. I hope to be a lighthouse for them." – Julie Trang Le

I also want them to know that freedom is not a spectator sport. Through my work with the Minnesota Board of School Administrators, as a youth mentor and choir director, and now through this campaign, I want young people to take their seats at the table. Their cultural heritage is a strength. Their stories matter. And they have a responsibility – the same one I inherited from my grandfather – to be the voice for the unheard in their own time.

Q6. Any final words for our readers?

If I could leave your readers with one message, it would be this: **no one’s journey is truly solitary. Everything I have achieved – from surviving the refugee camps to serving as a federal attorney – happened because of faith, community, and the chances this country gave me.**

Just as it took my family twenty years to bring my grandfather home, I want all of us to understand that justice takes patience and unwavering commitment. Take pride in your journey. Be grateful for the liberty America provides. Be dedicated to shaping your community and nation by putting forth the best of yourself

My journey began in the back seat of a car in an Iowa winter. It does not end there. It ends – God willing – with us building a future where every family in District 5 has a seat at the table. If readers want to learn more about my story, my platform, or how to get involved, I invite them to visit julietle4congress.com.



“Justice may be delayed, but we must never stop fighting for it. I am ready to take that fight to Washington for you.” – Julie Trang Le

Communities Julie Will Serve

MN-5 includes a rich mix of urban neighborhoods, inner-ring suburbs, and tight-knit communities. Click a county to explore.

- Anoka County +
- Hennepin County +
- Ramsey County +

3
Counties

14+
Cities & Towns

MN-5
Congressional District

Information from julietle4congress.com

2026 Congressional Campaign • MN District 5

A Voice for Every Family

Inspire Unity

Former Assistant Chief Counsel at the Department of Homeland Security and former Special Assistant United States Attorney at the United States Attorney’s Office, Julie T. Le has witnessed firsthand the failures of our broken immigration system. Now she’s running for Congress to fight for comprehensive immigration reform, quality education, accessible healthcare, and fair taxation that supports Main Street families.

Join the Movement

See the Issues

★ Julie T. Le

Democrat

Information from julietle4congress.com



ANCIENT WISDOM & MODERN MODALITIES INSIDE THE CENTER FOR WELLNESS TECHNOLOGY

What if the most effective tools for longevity aren't new at all?

Housed on the lower level of the 19 Exchange Street Building in downtown St. Paul, the Center for Wellness Technology (Healing Hub) is an integrated preventive and restorative wellness center designed to serve the whole person – body, mind, culture, and community. This is not a gym. It is not a spa. It is a carefully designed healing environment where evidence-based modern modalities and centuries-old traditional practices work together in a single, accessible, culturally grounded space.

The Synergy of Ancient and Modern

This Healing Hub offers a continuum of care anchored in two complementary approaches:

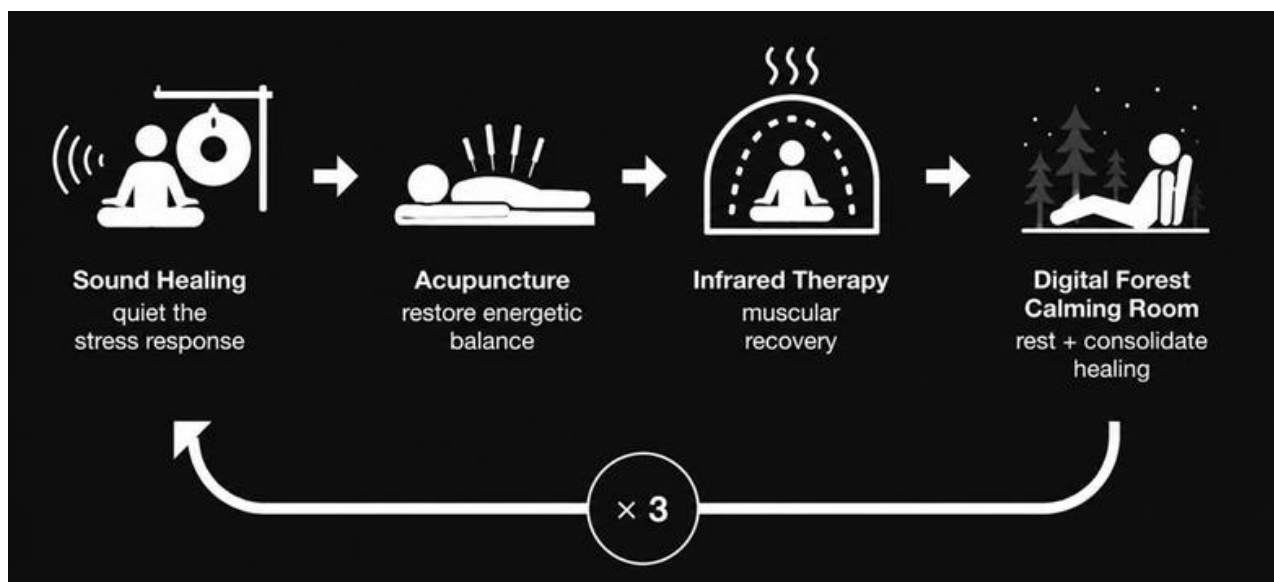
Modern Wellness Modalities harness the latest advances in therapeutic technology – infrared light therapy for deep tissue recovery and inflammation reduction, cryotherapy and ice chamber immersion to trigger the body's natural repair responses, oxygen therapy to support cellular regeneration, halotherapy (salt room) for respiratory health and immune function, and



immersive VR and digital environment experiences that engage the neurological dimensions of healing. These are not luxury amenities. They are clinically supported interventions, made accessible to a community that has too rarely had access to them.

Traditional and Noninvasive Healing Practices draw from the deep wells of ancestral medicine that the communities of Frogtown and Rondo carry with them: therapeutic massage including Thai, Swedish, and culturally specific bodywork traditions; sound healing using instruments and frequencies drawn from Indigenous, Asian, and African musical traditions; acupuncture and energy meridian work rooted in Chinese and Southeast Asian medicine; and herbal medicine consultations honoring the botanical healing knowledge of Chinese, African, Indigenous, and immigrant communities across Minnesota.

Together, these offerings are designed to be experienced in sequence – each modality preparing the body and nervous system for deeper benefit from the next. A visitor might open with sound healing to quiet the stress response, receive acupuncture to restore energetic balance, move through infrared therapy for muscular recovery, and rest in the Digital Forest Calming Room as their system consolidates the day's healing. This is integrative wellness as it was always meant to work: layered, intentional, and rooted in the understanding that the body heals most completely when mind, culture, and environment are part of the prescription – through non-invasive means.



Ancient Practices Represent Sophisticated Technologies

Traditional Thai massage, for example, blends assisted stretching, rhythmic compression, and joint mobilization. Research confirms it improves circulation, expands range of motion, and regulates the nervous system – shifting the body out

of stress mode and into repair. Rooted in centuries of practice and now backed by modern science, it represents exactly what the Healing Hub is built on: ancestral wisdom, rigorously validated, made available to everyone.



Photo Courtesy: Thai Massage from the Holy Heritage Therapy



Acupuncture is another example, which rooted in over 2,500 years of Chinese medical tradition. It stimulates specific points along the body's meridian system to restore the flow of qi – vital life energy – while reducing inflammation, regulating the nervous system, and relieving chronic pain. Contemporary clinical research has validated acupuncture for conditions ranging from anxiety and insomnia to musculoskeletal injury and immune dysregulation. For BIPOC communities in Frogtown and Rondo who have historically faced barriers to both conventional and integrative care, access to licensed acupuncture practitioners at the Center represents a meaningful reclamation: healing that honors cultural heritage while meeting the highest standards of clinical evidence.

Traditional Herbal Medicine would be a good example, which draws from nature's pharmacy. Every major healing tradition in the world - Chinese, Ayurvedic, African, Indigenous, Southeast Asian - developed sophisticated systems of plant-based medicine long before pharmaceutical patents existed. These traditions identified anti-inflammatory compounds, adaptogens, digestive aids, and immune modulators that modern biochemistry is only now fully characterizing. The Healing Hub integrates traditional herbal medicine consultations as a core offering, honoring the specific traditions of the communities we serve: Chinese herbal formulations,



African healing botanicals, Indigenous plant medicines, and Southeast Asian remedies carried by Minnesota's immigrant populations. Practitioners work with clients to develop individualized protocols that complement both modern modalities and conventional medical care.



Photo Courtesy: Jinyun



Healing as Cultural Reclamation

What makes the Healing Hub distinctive is not that it offers traditional healing or modern technology - it is that both are designed to work together. Acupuncture's regulation of the autonomic nervous system prepares the body for deeper benefit from heat and cold therapies. Herbal adaptogens taken before a session amplify stress recovery. Immersive nature environments following physical modalities extend the parasympathetic window that healing requires. Each element compounds the next.

For communities whose ancestral healing knowledge was systematically devalued - through colonization, medical racism, and the displacement of immigrant and refugee populations - the presence of traditional medicine practitioners in a well-resourced, respected facility is itself an act of restoration. When a Hmong elder receives herbal consultation in a framework she recognizes, when a Black community member accesses bodywork rooted in African healing traditions, when a young person sees their culture's medicine treated as sophisticated and worthy of investment - **that is the Healing Hub fulfilling its deepest purpose - Ancient practice. Modern validation. Community-centered access.** This is what longevity looks like when it belongs to everyone.

The Healing Hub will open on the lower level of the [Center for Wellness Technology](#), 19 Exchange Street East, St. Paul, this fall. All wellness services are available to the community on a sliding-scale basis.



HOW MUCH OF YOUR WORKDAY IS SPENT ON TASKS THAT COULD RUN WITHOUT YOU??

Columnist - Vivek Ekarat

Notion's new Custom Agents feature promises to automate the repetitive parts of your team's workday here's what it does, how it works, and what to consider before you start.

What Are Notion Custom Agents?

Notion's Co-founder Akshay Kothari recently announced the public launch of Custom Agents a new feature that lets teams build automated tools to handle recurring tasks on their own, without being prompted every single time.

Think of them as background workers. You set them up once, define what triggers them, and they quietly get on with the job monitoring activity, answering common questions, routing requests, and pulling together updates from connected apps.

What Can These Agents Actually Do?

Custom Agents are built to handle the kind of coordination work that quietly consumes a large chunk of most people's days. Here's what they're capable of:

- Monitor activity across your tools and respond to triggers automatically
- Answer frequently asked questions without human input
- Route requests to the right person or team
- Compile updates and summaries across connected apps
- Run on a schedule or react to specific events no prompting needed

What Tools Do They Connect With?

Custom Agents integrate with the tools most teams already use:

- Notion (documents, databases, pages)
- Slack (messages, channels, notifications)
- Gmail and Google Calendar
- Figma and Linear
- Custom MCP servers for teams with their own internal tools

How Do You Set One Up?

You don't need a technical background to get started. The setup process begins with a plain-language description of what you need the agent to do. From there, it figures out its own instructions and connects the right tools automatically.

In short: Describe the task in plain English → the agent handles the rest.

Real Teams, Real Results

The numbers from early testing are hard to ignore. Over 21,000 agents were built before the public launch. Here's what a few companies have achieved:

- Ramp runs more than 300 agents including one that answers daily product roadmap questions without any human involvement
- Remote replaced their entire IT help desk with a single agent, saving around 20 hours per week
- Braintrust and Clay have also embedded agents into their core team workflows

Twenty hours saved per week, at one company, with one agent. That's the scale of impact on offer.



What About Security and Privacy?

Notion is upfront about the risks, which is worth noting. Prompt injection where malicious content tricks an agent into doing something it shouldn't is flagged as a

real concern. Their advice:

- Limit what each agent has access to
- Be deliberate about what content agents are exposed to
- Detection guardrails are being built, but they're not fully in place yet

On the privacy side, Notion does not train on your content. Enterprise plans come with zero data retention, which matters if your agents are touching sensitive business data.

How Does Admin and Oversight Work?

Admins get a full set of controls to keep things manageable:

- Usage dashboards to see what agents are doing
- Logged runs for every action taken
- Detailed permissions so you control what each agent can access
- Reversible actions where possible
- Auto-pause when credits are running low

What Does It Cost?

Custom Agents are free to use through May 3, 2026 for Business and Enterprise plan users. After that, a usage-based credit model kicks in starting May 4, 2026.

Good news: Current seat pricing stays the same, and all other Notion AI features remain included agents are an add-on layer, not a replacement for existing plans.

The Bigger Question Worth Asking

Regardless of whether Notion is your tool of choice, this announcement surfaces something most teams haven't sat down to figure out yet:

Which parts of your workflow genuinely need a human and which parts just have one by default because nobody ever questioned it?

There's a difference between work that requires your judgment and work that simply has you in the loop out of habit. Routing a support ticket doesn't need you. Compiling a weekly status update probably doesn't either. But navigating a sensitive client situation? Making a call on a product direction? Those do.

Automation tools like Custom Agents are most valuable when teams use them as a prompt to have that conversation not just as a way to save time, but as a reason to get clearer about where human attention actually belongs.

The real work isn't building the agents. It's deciding what to automate in the first place.

May 18~28

SHOWCASING CAAPB AREA DEVELOPMENT

Asian Media Access, in partnership with the Multi Cultural Community Alliance (MCCA) and 3D Wellness Endowment, have conducted few outreach and community engagement activities to gather input from downtown residents, workers, entrepreneurs, artists, and community stakeholders regarding future small business and economic development opportunities at the former Sears Redevelopment Site and the 19 Exchange Street building.



May 21~24

KICKOFF TO SUMMER AT THE FAIR

Hmong American Partnership helped showcase diverse local businesses at the Minnesota State Fair Kickoff to Summer event, creating opportunities for entrepreneurs to connect with new audiences and expand their reach. The event highlighted cultural entrepreneurship, community engagement, and the vibrant small business community across Minnesota. Photo Courtesy: Jannie Vang



May 28

ASIAN VILLAGE

The Asia Village Mall Located at 301 Northtown Drive NE, Blaine, MN, Asia Village at Northtown Mall is a destination for food, shopping, and entertainment. This vibrant center offers an exciting opportunity of authentic Asian cuisine, with a variety of restaurants serving everything from Korean BBQ to noodles, and a range of international flavors in between.

In addition the Asia Village also features a diverse selection of shops, providing a unique shopping experience for visitors. Whether you're looking for specialty gifts, clothing, or home goods, you're sure to find something that you expected.



May 30

2026 ASIAN FAIR

The Twin Cities West Metro Asian Fair brought together communities from across the region to celebrate the rich diversity of Asian cultures through traditional performances, cultural showcases, food, art, and family-friendly activities. The event provided an opportunity for people of all backgrounds to experience and appreciate the traditions, creativity, and heritage that contribute to Minnesota's vibrant multicultural community. Photo Courtesy: Chen Zhou



June 4

METRO STATE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY AND EMPLOYER BREAKFAST

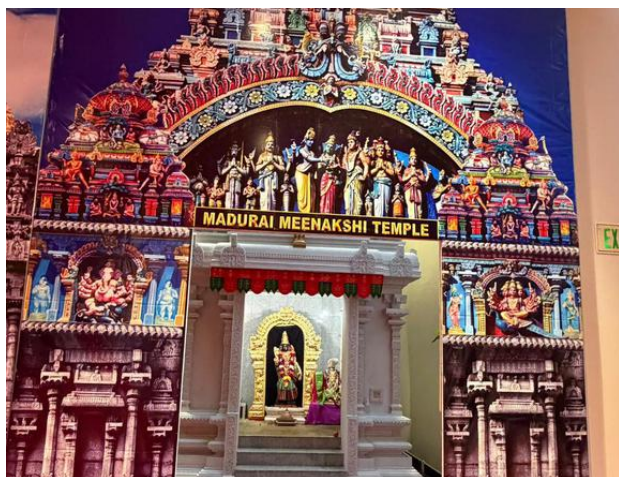
Asian Media Access joined Metro State University in celebrating the strong partnerships between the university and employers from diverse industries. The event brought together more than 200 attendees to recognize the value of collaboration in creating opportunities for students, strengthening workforce development, and supporting future career pathways across our communities.



June 11~14

DEVI VAIBHAVOTSAVAM 2026

Devi Vaibhavotsavam 2026 at the Hindu Temple of Minnesota brought the spiritual essence of three sacred Devi temples to the community through detailed temple recreations, devotional preparation, and cultural celebration. The event invited attendees to experience sacred spaces, participate in pujas, and celebrate devotion, culture, and community together. Photo Courtesy: Hindu Society of Minnesota



\$10K grants are now open!

It's easier than ever to apply for **\$10K grants**

Digital Ready grants are back. **Apply for \$10,000 grants, part of over \$1M in total funding this year.** You only have to apply once to be considered all year for a \$10K grant, giving you more time to submit an application and take advantage of our courses and events.

VERIZON SMALL BUSINESS DIGITAL READY \$10,000 NATIONAL GRANT

Digital Ready grants are back. Apply for \$10,000 grants, part of over \$1M in total funding this year. You only have to apply once to be considered all year for a \$10K grant, giving you more time to submit an application and take advantage of our courses and events.

Who can apply?

Owners of for-profit small businesses based in the United States, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands who are 18 or older may apply. Owners of multiple businesses may apply for one business only. See national grant FAQs for more information.

How do I apply?

Register and complete any combination of two eligible courses or events anytime in 2026 to unlock the grant application. Apply once to remain eligible for \$10,000 grants awarded throughout the year.

When will I hear back?

Applications will be reviewed monthly from June through December 2026. Each month, 10 small businesses will be selected for grants. If you are not selected in a given month, your application will remain under consideration for the remainder of 2026. All applicants will receive a final decision by January 12, 2027.

[Apply Today >>](#)



We can help you find your focus

Building a budget that actually works. Growing your network organically. Mastering work/life balance. All this and more with Digital Ready. What will your focus be?

Check it out



BUDGETING TIPS AND NETWORKING KNOW-HOW

Struggling with budgeting, networking, or work-life balance? Digital Ready can help you find your focus and achieve your goals. Discover expert insights and practical tools to streamline your success at:

https://link.digitalready.verizonwireless.com/OTk2LUtXQy0zNzcAAAGZKn5A0-kz96GrTzwrOAAOnZ_2TNNWrU_BQXIGWbjvQHw_pjs1hSTgctExNiFQleIF4R3PHE=

Find the event that fits your goals:

<https://digitalready.verizonwireless.com/category/events>



Event · Ask the Expert

Google AI training for small business owners

Jun 29, 11 AM CT



Event · Ask the Expert

The calm offer formula

Jun 29, 2 PM CT



Event · Ask the Expert

Building an online store

Jul 9, 2 PM CT

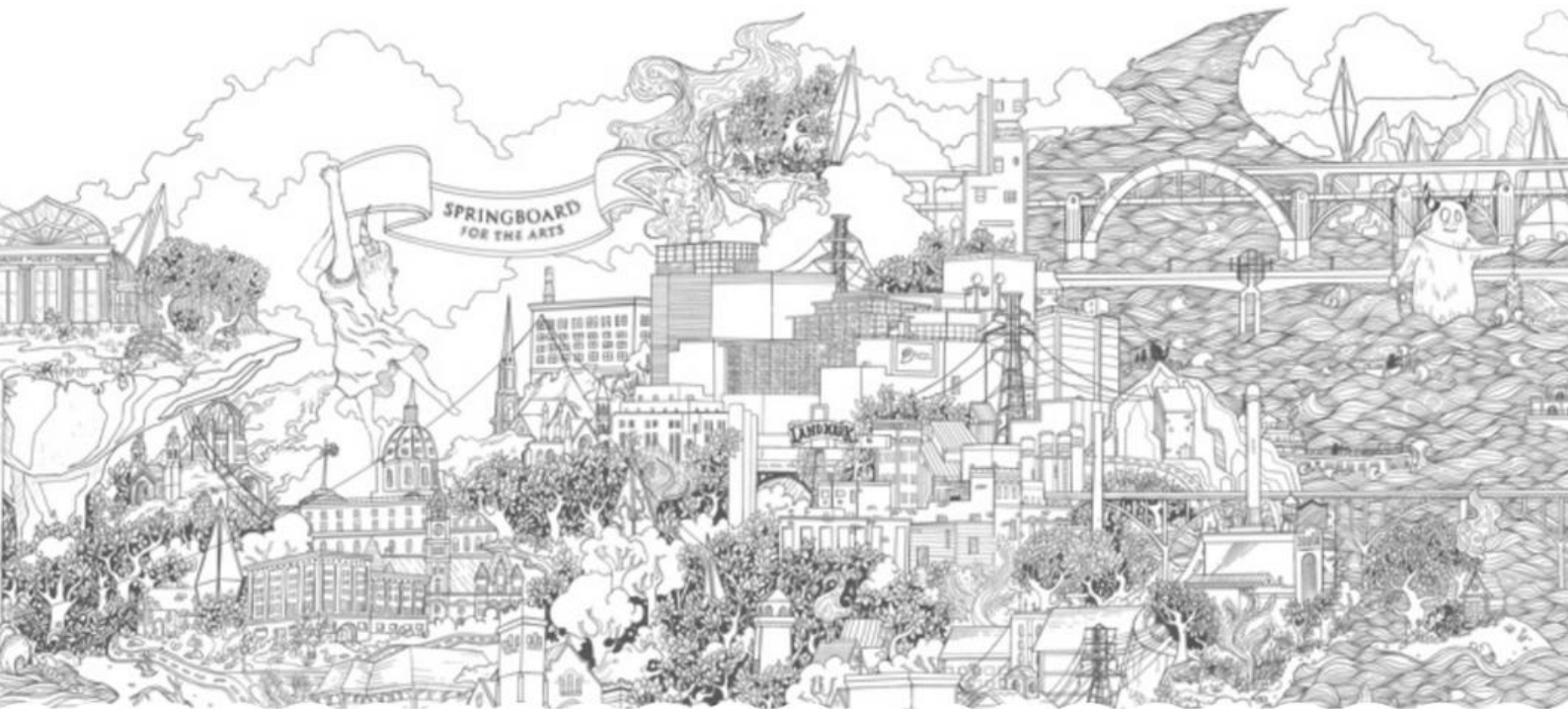


Event · Ask the Expert

The power of digital storytelling: Crafting narratives that connect

Jul 13, 11 AM CT





Springboard for the Arts Calendar of Events - Professional Development

- June 25, 2026 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM - The Pitch That Fits: How to Pitch Your Non-Fiction Work to Agents and Editors
- July 17, 2026 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM - Creative Community Coffee Club

Learn more and register at: <https://springboardforthearts.org/events/>

Additional Resources

- Get connected to Artist Career Consultants here:
<https://springboardforthearts.org/professional-growth/career-consultations/artist-career-consultants/>
- Work of Art Toolkit: <https://springboardforthearts.org/woa>
- Handbook for Artists Working in Community:
<https://springboardforthearts.org/artists-working-in-community/>

Tax Tips from the IRS



- [Here's what taxpayers need to know about business related travel deductions](#)
- [Companies who promise to eliminate tax debt sometimes leave taxpayers high and dry](#)
- [Get an Identity Protection PIN.](#)
- [Tax Resources for Members of the Military](#)



Jun
24
2pm~3pm

FINANCIAL SYSTEMS AND CASH FLOW MANAGEMENT FOR SMBs

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

Jun
25
1pm~2pm

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY FOR VENTURE-BACKABLE FOUNDERS

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

Jun
30
1pm~2pm

FROM MODEL TO MARKET: BUSINESS PLANNING MEETS MARKETING STRATEGY

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

July
1
1pm~2pm

SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND LAUNCH FOR SMBs

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)



July

2

2pm~3pm

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND LAUNCH FOR SMBs

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

July

7

12pm~1pm

THE POWER OF THE PULL: WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT CUSTOMER DEMAND TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL STARTUP

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

July

9

11am~1230pm

INTERNATIONAL GO-TO-MARKET BOOTCAMP

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

July

22

2pm~3pm

FINDING THE FUN IN FUNDRAISING

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

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