



**Bismarck Human Relations
Committee Annual Report**



**January 2019 to
December 2019**

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MISSION OF COMMITTEE

The mission of the Bismarck Human Relations Committee is to create an atmosphere of inclusion, equality and accessibility through education and outreach to recognize the value of a diverse community.

GOALS OF COMMITTEE

The Bismarck Human Relations Committee has the following goals and objectives as defined in its strategic plan:

1. To exhibit leadership in the areas of civil and human rights:
 - a. The committee will be comprised of individuals that represent and are knowledgeable of diverse populations.
 - b. The committee members will practice and model action that exemplify nondiscrimination, acceptance, and respect of diversity.

2. To educate the public about civil and human rights:
 - a. The committee will implement a public education plan to identify and address issues.
 - b. The committee will actively plan, sponsor, and participate in events that promote and celebrate diversity.

3. To identify issues of principle concern in the area of civil and human rights:
 - a. The committee will provide access for public input.
 - b. The committee will prioritize issues based on input received.

4. To recommend priorities and objectives about issues of community concern to the City Commission:
 - a. The committee will serve as a liaison in issues of civil and human rights between the community and the City Commissioners.

5. To advocate for compliance with federal and state laws regarding civil and human rights, including North Dakota Century Code Chapters 14-02.4 (Human Rights) and 14-02.5 (Housing):
 - a. The committee will provide information about current laws through multiple formats.
 - b. The committee will maintain data regarding civil and human rights issues.

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE

Bismarck Ordinance 5208 created the Bismarck Human Relations Committee and received final passage on October 8, 2002. The committee's purpose is to promote acceptance and respect for diversity through educational programs and activities and to discourage all forms of discrimination including protected class discrimination, ADA violations, or other statutory or constitutional violations (Chapter 2-11).

APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEE

The committee consists of nine members who serve without pay. Member appointment is by the President of the Board of City Commissioners, and subject to confirmation by the Board of City Commissioners. Appointees serve three-year terms.

COMMITTEE MEETING TIMES AND LOCATION

The Bismarck Human Relations Committee meets on the third Monday of each month (except on holidays) at 5:15 pm in the First Floor Conference Room 221 of the City/County Office Building, North 5th Street in downtown Bismarck. Meetings are open to the public and accept public comment.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND CURRENT TERMS

- **Chair** - Krista Rausch (term expires Jan. 2022)
- **Vice Chair** - Shae Helling (term expires Jan. 2020)
- Darcy Andahl (term expires Jan. 2021)
- Brandi Jude (term expires Jan. 2022)
- Manisha Sawhney (term expires Jan. 2021)
- Sr. Hannah Vanorny (term expires Jan. 2021)
- Trevor Vannett (term expires Jan. 2023)

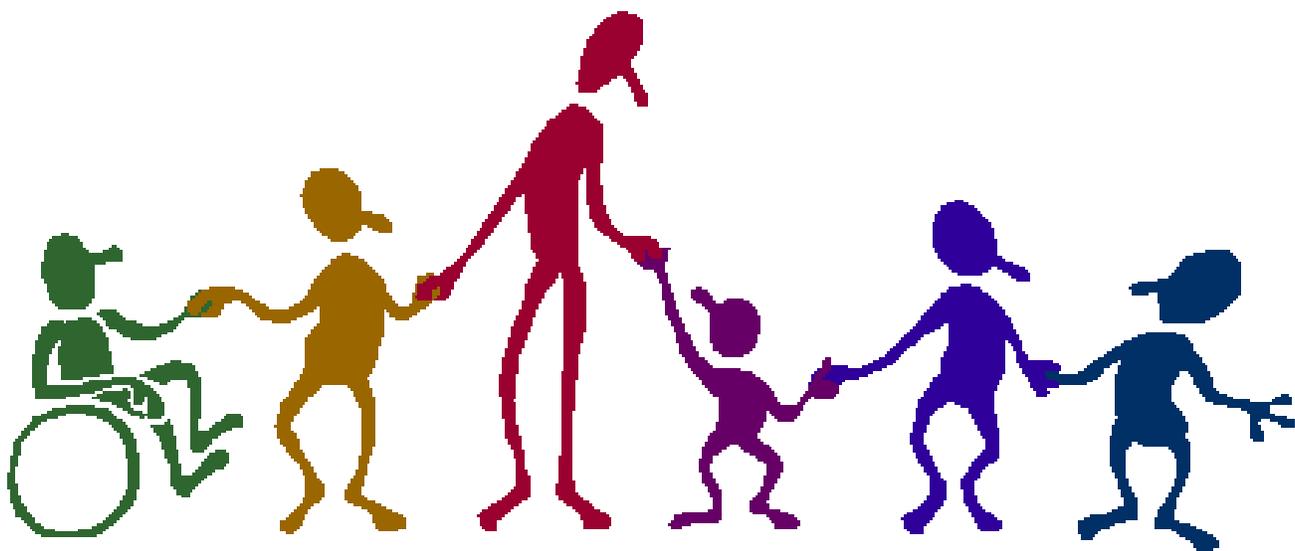
PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION

A copy of the Human Relations Committee Ordinance, Strategic Plan, Annual Report, complaint filing forms, and other information may be accessed online at www.bismarcknd.gov or by mailing:

Bismarck Human Relations Committee
City of Bismarck
PO Box 5503
221 N 5 Street
Bismarck, ND 58506-5503

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

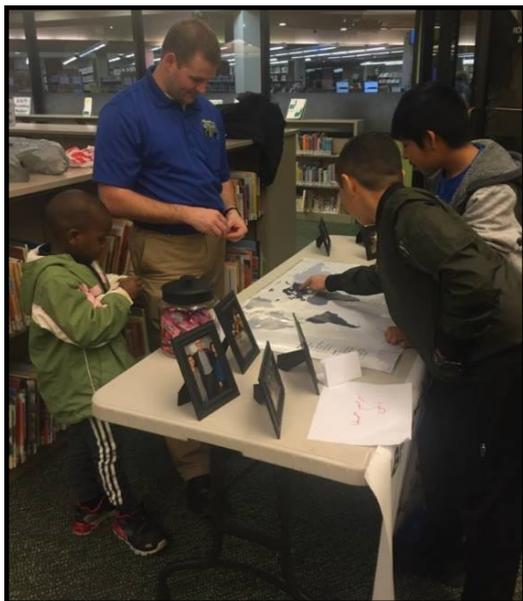
Bismarck Human Relations Committee
City of Bismarck
PO Box 5503
221 N 5th Street
Bismarck, ND 58506-5503
www.bismarcknd.gov



FAMILIES AROUND THE WORLD

—January 14, 2019 at the Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library, 6:00-8:00 pm—

Families of all origins were invited and encouraged to attend this evening of celebrating diversity. The Human Relations Committee set up a booth that featured a map game. Both children and adults had fun testing their geographical knowledge. The event, sponsored by the Bismarck Public Library, was held in partnership with Bismarck Public Schools and North Dakota Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy.



Committee member Shae Helling interacts with children as they try to identify correct countries around the world

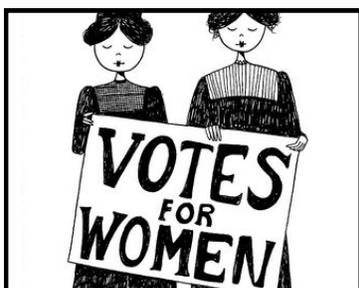
SUFFRAGETTE MOVIE SCREENING

—March 30, 2019 at the North Dakota Heritage Center, 10:30 am, 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm, a free event—

This free film screening, in honor of Women's History Month, was sponsored by the Human Relations Committee, the North Dakota Woman Suffrage Centennial Committee, and the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

The movie, starring Helena Bonham Carter and Meryl Streep, traces the Women's Suffrage Movement and explores the passion and heartbreak of those who risked all they had for women's right to vote.

Dr. Barbara Handy-Marchello, a historian and writer, led a general discussion with the audience following the 10:30 am screening.



BAND NIGHT PARADE

—May 9, 2019 in Bismarck (started and ended in the State Capitol area), 6:30 pm—

Two Human Relations Committee members marched in this annual parade carrying the Committee banner and wearing their matching t-shirts. The Committee receives great public exposure with its participation in this event each year. Three children were also recruited to hand out candy as part of the Human Relations parade brigade.



Committee members
Hannah
Vanorny and
Amy Ingersoll-
Johnson



Candy!

HUMAN RIGHTS POETRY/ESSAY CONTEST: 4TH-5TH GRADE AND 6TH-8TH GRADE

—May 2018—

In May, the Human Relations Committee bestowed awards on two students who submitted entries to the Human Rights Poetry/Essay Contest. Awards were presented to the students in the presence of their parents, guests, classmates, teachers, and Committee members. Mayor Steve Bakken congratulated and recognized the students for their outstanding achievements. The winners were: Naman Soni, a fourth grade student at Centennial Elementary School for his essay titled “Human Rights: Malala Yousafzai,” and Navisha Soni, a seventh grade student at Horizon Middle School for her essay titled “Concept of Leadership in Human Rights.” After the award presentations the recipients celebrated their achievements with pizza parties.

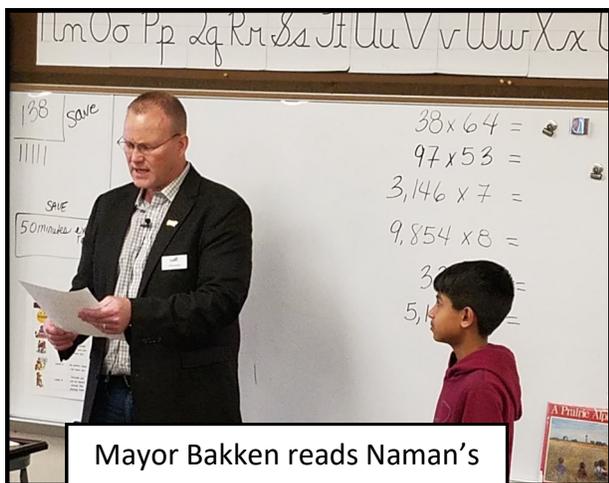


Naman Soni with the Mayor, his parents, his
teacher, and Committee members

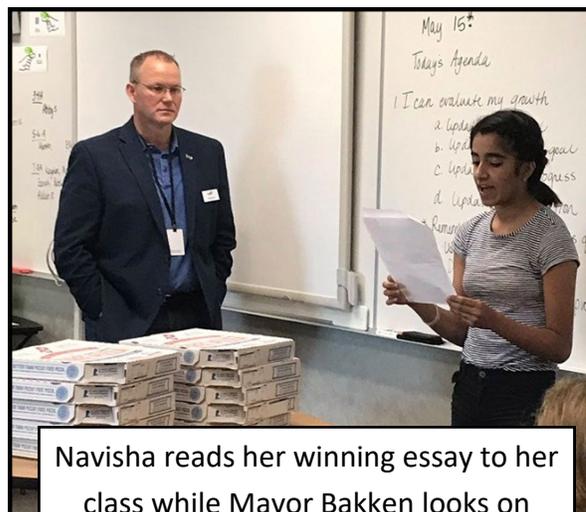


Navisha Soni with the Mayor, her parents,
and Committee members

HUMAN RIGHTS POETRY/ESSAY CONTEST (CONTINUED)



Mayor Bakken reads Naman's winning essay to his class



Navisha reads her winning essay to her class while Mayor Bakken looks on

Human Rights: Malala Yousafzai

We live in a world where we believe in equality, but the truth is, that in some parts of the world, there still is inequality in education. In countries like Nigeria, Pakistan and Ethiopia, a large number of girls are not allowed to go to schools. In Nigeria, there are almost 5 and a half million girls not going to school; in Pakistan over 3 million, and in Ethiopia almost one million. School is important for people because it helps them be responsible citizens of the community.

My human rights hero is Malala Yousafzai. Malala is the youngest girl to receive the Nobel Peace prize. I choose Malala because she made a difference in the world by making girls have the same rights as boys. Strong girls and women fight every day for equal rights. Malala Yousafzai is one of these girls. In Pakistan, once a girl grows up they make her marry a husband and rely on him. But Malala refused, she saw a terrorist not letting girls go to school. What did she do? She protested and went so far as getting shot in the head.

After two weeks in a coma, Malala woke up and saw all the cards, and get well soon letters that everyone had given her. Then, she learned how to talk, walk, and do all the other things she knew before. Malala became a stronger person ever since that day.

After Malala got better, she went to school to do what she fought for. Learn. Malala established the Malala fund, a charity to give every girl an opportunity to achieve a future she chooses. For doing that, she won the Nobel Peace prize in 2014. (Malala was the youngest girl to ever receive a Nobel Peace prize.)

Now, Malala is studying philosophy, politics and economics at the University of Oxford. Malala travels to many countries to meet girls fighting insufficiency, child marriage, and gender discrimination that holds them back from going to school.

Malala Yousafzai is my human rights leader. Who is yours?

Naman Soni, 4th grade, Centennial Elementary

Naman's Essay



Navisha's Essay

Concept of Leadership in Human Rights
By: Navisha Soni
7th Grade, Horizon Middle School

What is a leader? Is a leader a person who parts the sea to let their people come through? Or is a leader a person who will stand up for what is right, no matter what? In my perspective a leader is both...

Just like Malala Yousafzai, a teenage girl in Pakistan who was denied the right to go to school, I believe that everyone, regardless of age, can stand up for human rights if they just put their heart and soul into it. Human rights play a big role in our everyday life, but not everyone realizes it.

Everybody has heard of human rights, but many people do not know the true meaning. Human rights is the ability to work wherever you want, putting aside race, gender, or ethnicity. Human rights gives you the freedom to love anyone you want, have your own speech or opinion, and give you the right to a good life with liberty and happiness. Human rights give you the competence to make mistakes, laugh, love, and make your own decisions.

But what does leadership have to do with human rights? Everything. If the people in our world did not step up and speak out loud, many humans would not have rights like we have today. Malala Yousafzai went so far as getting shot in the head for girl's rights. What did she get out of it though? Malala said that a new person was brought to life in her the same day as she got shot. Malala went on to be an advocate for education for all women and children, and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014. What I have learned from following Malala as a human rights leader, is that you do not have to wait to be a grownup to advocate for human rights. Malala Yousafzai is a true leader.

Who are the best leaders? They are those who serve. Think of Abraham Lincoln. The United States's 16th president put everything at risk, and what for? Human rights. Abraham Lincoln fought for what was right, to end slavery forever. Lincoln believed that slavery should be ended, and everyone should be granted equal pay and treatment. Abraham Lincoln went so far as fighting in the Civil War, a war that took more than 620,000 lives, just for rights for everyone.

Even though these two leaders were born in different centuries, Malala Yousafzai and Abraham Lincoln are very closely related. What do these two humans have in common? They are leaders who fought for basic human rights like equality for all and education. They both are kind, courageous, smart, peaceful, and honest. These two leaders set the bar for everyone. Not only Malala and Abraham Lincoln are leaders, everyone else can be if they try.

As you can tell, a leader is a smart, honest, kind, and compassionate person who will do whatever it takes for what is right. A leader in human rights will stand up for people who they do not even know. Human rights will be a part in everyday life, though we might not recognize it. No one is better than anyone, and it is time for us to accept that. Some people may be richer, smarter, funnier, stronger, or more popular than you, but it is time for us to realize that everyone is equal. Some people have already realized. Some have not. Nothing should hold us back from being who we are. Leaders like Malala Yousafzai and Abraham can see that everyone is equal. So do I. What about you?

CAPITAL PRIDE 2019

—June 15, 2019 at the State Capitol grounds, 11:00 am-4:00 pm—

The Human Relations Committee had a booth at Pride on the Capitol Lawn—part of Capital Pride 2019, a week of events hosted by Dakota OutRight. Committee members talked with numerous people about what the Human Relations Committee is and what it does in the community, while handing out brochures and chocolate. The Committee banner was displayed along with pictures from a variety of Human Relations Committee events.



INTERCULTURAL FESTIVAL

—September 15, 2019 at the YMCA, 1:00 pm-6:00 pm—

The Human Relations Committee had a booth at this Intercultural Festival. Booth visitors put pins on a large map representing their home countries and then linked their journeys to Bismarck using colorful pieces of yarn. Visitors also got the chance to spin a wheel and answer international trivia questions for prizes. Committee member Hannah Vanorny handed out many Human Relations Committee brochures and talked about the impact of the group on the city of Bismarck. The Committee was proud to be a part of this day, which included international food, cultural dancing and singing, and much fun.



NORTH DAKOTA HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL

—November 1-2, 2019 at the North Dakota Heritage Center & State Museum, various times—

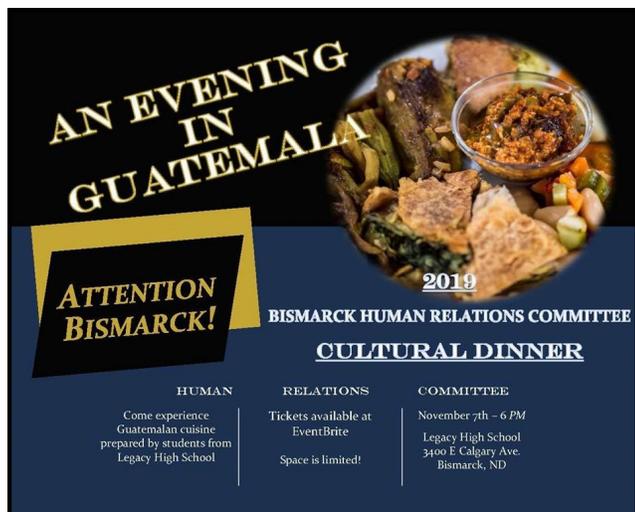
The Human Relations Committee volunteered to help out with the North Dakota Human Rights Film Festival sponsored by The Human Family, a statewide organization that promotes human rights and social justice through film and art. This film festival event is also held in Grand Forks, Fargo, and Minot. Human Relations Committee volunteers handed out programs, helped with tickets, and answered questions.



AN EVENING IN GUATEMALA

—November 7, 2019 at Legacy High School, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm—

This meal was sponsored by the Human Relations Committee in collaboration with Legacy High School. Committee member Krista Rausch worked closely with Sonia Ciavarella, a local resident originally from Guatemala, to plan the meal and evening. Sonia taught students from the Legacy High School Culinary Arts program about Guatemalan culture and how to prepare an authentic Guatemalan meal. The menu included a main course of pinchos de carne (steak kabobs), guacamole, white rice, and bunelos (a dessert made from fried dough covered in cinnamon sugar).



Mayor Steve Baaken with Legacy culinary students, their teacher Kim Hertz, and Sonia



Committee members Krista Rausch and Hannah Vanorny, with Sonia and some of our Filipino friends