

Youth-Led Virtual Reality Exhibit Highlights Rondo Neighborhood's Past and Present

ST. PAUL, MN, UNITED STATES, June 4, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Join for a meaningful day of programming featuring music, culture, technology, and storytelling at Project HOPE, a vibrant celebration honoring the legacy of the Rondo neighborhood through immersive virtual reality. The event will be hosted at Union Depot on Saturday, July 26, from 2 PM to 9 PM. This free, public gathering highlights the intersection of art and technology while reflecting on community resilience.

Project HOPE Live at Union Depot: A Community-Based Exhibition

Project HOPE is more than just an exhibition—it's an experience. This family-friendly festival will feature live music, food vendors, local arts and cultural showcases, resource booths, and a groundbreaking virtual reality exhibition. The event offers opportunities for community members to engage with local creatives, organizations, and emerging technologies.

Led by Asian Media Access (AMA), in partnership with the Asian American Business Resilience Network, the Frogtown Rondo Black Church Alliance, and other local partners, Project HOPE is a unique fusion of technology and social justice. The initiative includes a workforce training program that equips 18 youth from Frogtown and Rondo with emerging media skills such as Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Preserving Community Memory: A Focus on Rondo's History

At the heart of Project HOPE is a commitment to remembering and uplifting Rondo—a historically Black neighborhood in St. Paul that was profoundly impacted by the construction of I-94 in the 1960s. Over 700 homes and businesses were lost, and the community's cultural fabric was disrupted. Project HOPE seeks to amplify community stories and experiences through digital



PROJECT HOPE
RONDO VIRTUAL REALITY EXHIBITION
AND MUSIC FESTIVAL
Live Music Entertainment, Food, Arts & Culture, Resource Booths and more.

DATE & TIME:
JULY 26 2025
2PM TO 9PM

LOCATION:
UNION DEPOT
214 4TH STREET EAST
ST. PAUL, MN 55101

Sponsors: AARP, Asian Media Access, Minnesota Humanities Center, Asian Artist Alliance, AABRN, youthprise, ELUMINANS ERA LLC, Frogtown Rondo Black Church Alliance.

Contact: <https://searsstpaul.info> | searsstpaul@gmail.com | 612-376-7715

Flyer of the Project HOPE event

media as a form of restorative engagement.

The event's main attraction is a VR journey through Rondo's history, created in collaboration with artist Vivek Raman and young adults from the community. From colorful recreations of 1960s Rondo using AI to stark portrayals of demolition and today's efforts toward community healing, the immersive experience invites participants to step into the shoes of those who lived through this transformation.

Art and Technology in Dialogue: Multimedia Storytelling at Project HOPE

Complementing the VR experience will be AR Story Banners by artist Kao Lee Thao, highlighting personal narratives and historic moments from the Rondo community. This multimedia approach creates space for reflection on issues such as equity, displacement, and inclusive urban planning.

Following its Union Depot debut, the Project HOPE VR exhibition will also be showcased at the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center—a cornerstone of Rondo since 1929. The installation will remain open to the public for those interested in learning more about the neighborhood's history and ongoing legacy.

About Project HOPE

Project HOPE centers history, healing, and community dialogue—inviting public engagement with past injustices while envisioning a more inclusive future. Through art, technology, and community partnerships, the project brings Rondo's legacy into focus. It highlights the importance of inclusive redevelopment practices that reflect and prioritize the voices of historically impacted communities.

For more information, please contact AMA at 612-376-7715 or amamedia@amamedia.org. Follow AMA on Facebook or subscribe to the AMA newsletter for updates and event details.

Ange Hwang
Asian Media Access
+1 8889072284

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