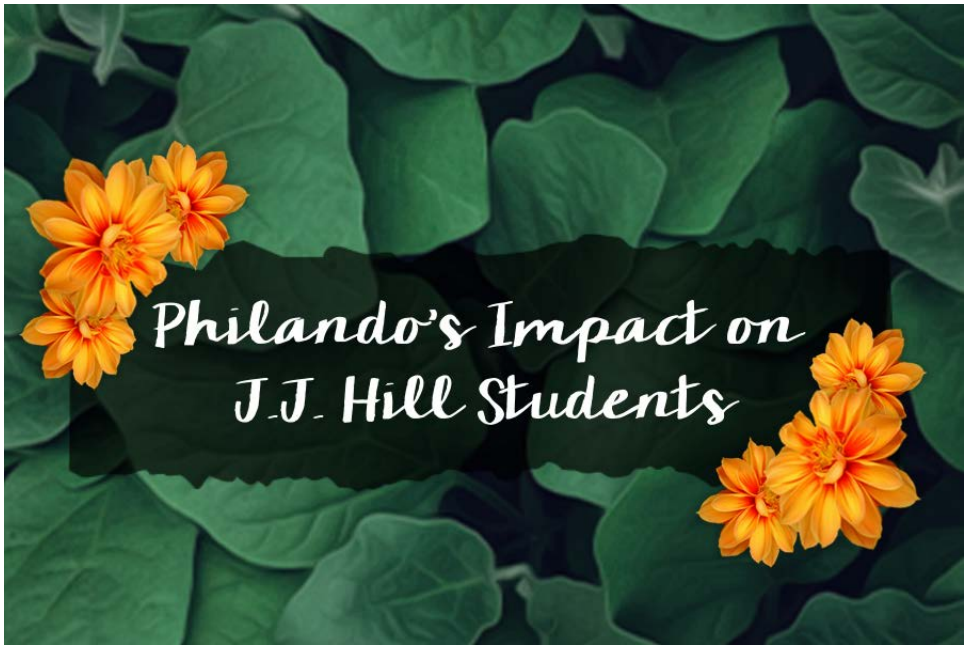


An invitation to bring healing and community change in response to tragedy

Making the Dream a Reality



Philando's Impact on J.J. Hill Students

While working as a nutrition supervisor, repaying the lunch debts of kids at J.J. Hill Montessori School is one of the many things Philando Castile is remembered for today. This wasn't technically allowed, but Philando did it anyway. He wanted to make sure each student got a chance to eat, because what if school lunch was the only nutritious meal a student ate every day?

Philando was loved by students and colleagues alike at J.J. Hill. Students described him as popular, caring, and authentic. He genuinely cared about students, and they could tell. Their interactions weren't just, "'Hey, how are you doing today?' He would know, 'Oh, you don't want the mashed potatoes, right?'"

Not only was Philando close with all the students and staff; he had goals of moving up. Mary Smith, the nutrition services coordinator at St. Paul Public schools, said that when he applied for the first position, he came to work in a jacket and tie and told everyone his goal was to sit on the other side of the table. Philando was quick to help others and calm and collected during a crisis.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Philando was a role model. He was the only male who was a supervisor. He was young, Black, and “the face of so many kids that he served.” After he was killed, kids made signs with messages about Philando. “One read, ‘Phil gave me a hug when I was feeling down.’ Another card said, ‘You had the biggest heart ever. I really miss you.’ (Jackson, 2016)

Visit the Peace Garden!

Keep Philando in your memory by visiting the Peace Garden. Now that the weather is warmer, it’s a beautiful spot for reflection, inspiration, or even just to eat lunch, catch up with a friend, or to read a good book. The garden has come a long way since the start of the campaign, and it’s more fit for visitors than ever before!







Ramsey Middle School's New Name

Ramsey Middle School has been renamed as “Hidden River” for the aquifer beneath the school. The name “Philando Castile” was the second runner up. Philando attended Ramsey Middle School as a student. Even though his name was not selected, the fact that students nominated his name is a meaningful gesture to keep Philando’s memory alive.

The push for the change came from the student council in January 2020. The middle school was originally named after Alexander Ramsey—Minnesota’s first territorial governor who played a huge role in removing Indigenous peoples from their homelands. The school’s name had a negative impact on students. Their desire to rename the school is admirable and shows a dedication by

younger generations to honor real heroes.

The other possible new names (from most votes to fewest):

- Philando Castile
- Summit – then name of the avenue next to the school and a noun that evokes high achievement
- Grand Summit – a nod to the school's nearby streets
- Hanwi – the moon goddess in Dakota mythology



Recently, the Philando Castile Peace Garden received two generous grants. The Northwest Area Foundation—whose work advances self-determination by building the power of people and communities to liberate themselves from policies, practices, and beliefs designed to disadvantage them—provided a $10,000 grant to support the Peace Garden. The Northwest Area Foundation program director, Karla Miller, wrote, "We recognize that we will be joining a group of our peers in recognizing Philando Castile's support of food justice and an acknowledgement that racial justice is long overdue in this country."

Second, the Trust for Public Land provided a $10,000 grant through the support of the Trust's Black History and Cultural Fund. Their support will include $10,000 for project and site improvements, which includes website, educational materials, art interpretation, and events. Additionally, TPL is providing staff support for fundraising, strategic planning, and marketing.

And we'd like to extend another thank you to our donors who give monthly, and everyone who has ever donated to the Philando Castile Peace Garden. Your support is what keeps Seeds of Peace going. Help us renew support for the Peace Garden this spring by continuing to encourage your friends and family to donate, too.



Want to volunteer for Seeds of Peace? Fill out this form and let us know what you'd like to help with. We will need help with garden clean-up after the long winter and fundraising. Thank you to all of our volunteers! Your hard work keeps the garden blooming.

DONATE NOW

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