

# Simpson Street Free Press

## Achievement in Wisconsin

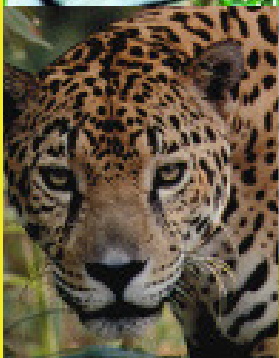
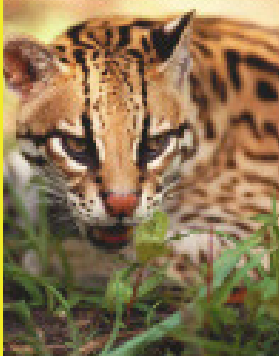
Dane County Kids Lead the Way



Science.....	A
Language Arts.....	A
Math.....	A
History.....	A
The Arts.....	A

College Ready





**Research and evidence drive programs.  
We innovate, measure, collaborate, and replicate.  
Curriculum is designed to support the school day.**

Writing, skill acquisition, and academic confidence are central to SSFP pedagogy. Students write across the curriculum, investigating core academic subjects throughout the writing process. We focus on productive writing habits, workplace skills, confidence and curiosity. We preach clear and concise writing. Lesson plans include invention strategies, close reading, drafting methods, word choice and revision techniques. SSFP methods nurture imagination. Assignments and activities grow in complexity with age and ability. We believe learning happens, in large measure, during the revision process. Multiple rounds of revision are required during each assignment.

Instruction and training is preparatory. Because SSFP students write about core subject areas (science, geography, history, books) content area understanding improves quickly. We teach a multi-step writing process that students understand. They master it quickly. These skills are practical and transferable, and work in any classroom. SSFP students learn to apply their skills. School grades and school-day attendance improve quickly.

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***Never hand in your first draft!***

### **The multi-mission approach of SSFP:**

**Mission #1:** Deliver rigorous academic instruction in after-school settings. SSFP methods support the school day and bridge achievement gaps.

**Mission #2:** Spread a positive message of youth achievement, academic success, and community service throughout Wisconsin.

Biodiversity and genetic diversity are important science concepts and part of the fascinating place we call Planet Earth. Do you know the difference between biodiversity and genetic diversity? Scientists do. So do our student reporters.

Learn about these two different but related terms and learn about your world at [www.simpsonstreetfreepress.org](http://www.simpsonstreetfreepress.org)

# Innovation at Work



**Our key strategy is integrated core curriculum deftly applied in after-school settings. The SSFP project-based learning model supports the classroom, but does not replicate the classroom. Students encounter predictable connections to the school day.**

“Teaching a kid to read is a laudable and necessary service to the community. Teaching a kid to write is to empower an individual to compete in any field on any stage.”

- Vince O'Hern, Publisher of *Isthmus*

**Work Readiness:** We use an apprenticeship model. Students apply to “work” for SSFP publications. All SSFP newsrooms follow this tried and true formula. Students fill out a “job” application, schedule an interview, and supply recent report cards. Parents sit in on interviews and describe their student’s academic goals. Once hired, students have business cards and real assignments. Kids know our brand is rigor, but working for a SSFP publication is “cool.” Newsroom skills are very practical, easily transferred to school or work. There are waiting lists at all SSFP publications.

**STEM, Language Arts and Common Core:** New academic standards are coming to Wisconsin. Whatever we call these new standards, they will be more rigorous. And they will emphasize writing proficiency, literacy, and STEM. SSFP lesson plans are excellent examples of integrated curriculum applied in after-school settings. We teach productive use of out-of-school time and an organized approach to academic work. Students study the core subject areas and then write about their research. They use technology to edit, check facts, and publish.

**Youth Leadership – Skilled Staff:** We develop young leaders using an innovative “pipeline” staffing formula. The SSFP farm system trains new after-school instructors. We constantly grow our own. At all levels of SSFP programs young people are promoted through the newsroom ranks. Our editors are SSFP grads, now in college. These dedicated young leaders work with the same schools and in the same neighborhoods where they grew up. Many SSFP staff members are bilingual. SSFP has assembled a staff that is impressively credentialed. They are dedicated to the cause of academic achievement and well-versed in core subject, across-the-curriculum instructional practices.

“Simpson Street Free Press is one of the best achievement gap closers we’ve got going. With even more attention focused on education in our state, on disparities and achievement gaps, and on strategies like out-of-school-time or after-school programs, the Simpson Street Free Press model and curriculum is going to increasingly be held up as an example of success.”

- Neil Heinen, Channel 3 News



# Simpson Street Free Press

An Education Program and Community Newspaper for Dane County Teens



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Date: September 6, 2016

TO: Joe Parisi, Sheila Stubbs  
FROM: Simpson Street Free Press  
RE: Celebrating 25 Years of Literacy and Learning in Dane County

Simpson Street Free Press is one of Dane County's premier Out of School Time (OST) organizations. In 2017, we will celebrate 25 years of clear and measurable results. The board, parents, staff and students of SSFP request that Dane County commit \$25,000 in the 2017-18 budget to support continued success sparking youth literacy.

SSFP uses project-based learning models to bridge achievement gaps. Lesson plans support the school day, but do not replicate the classroom. Our approach to literacy instruction is research-based, sequential, and proven. SSFP is known for using data. We follow grades, school-day attendance, and written work published. Our anniversary-year projects will apply integrated core curriculum in authentic newsroom settings and then measure MAP reading scores.

College readiness is the SSFP brand; our programs prepare young people for success. About 85% of SSFP students are of color. We staff our newsrooms with SSFP grads, now attending college. They train new generations of young people. It's well known that SSFP grads enter higher education confident and prepared. But any college success formula also requires financial support. By supporting SSFP editors as they work with younger strivers, Dane County funds will provide meaningful employment for college students. This plan hires dedicated young leaders to operate programs using award-winning OST curriculum. We will help them afford college. They help us bridge achievement gaps.

Dane County funds will support this established local youth leadership formula. Key SSFP staff will organize news stories and features around SSFP's popular "Where in Dane County" theme. Student work will be published by dozens of media outlets, in Spanish and English, on various platforms.

SSFP curriculum has won many awards, including the national "Coming Up Taller" award in 2008. The President's Committee for the Arts and Humanities says, SSFP "is pioneering new and innovative ways to apply integrated curriculum in after-school settings." A consortium of UW-System scientists cites SSFP for "innovative approaches to science learning." SSFP staff members conduct workshops at Wisconsin education conventions, and were featured presenters at a recent After-school Alliance conference in Washington. *Madison Magazine* named SSFP to its 2015 "M-List" of social innovators. Tony Evers recognized SSFP as a 2016 "Wisconsin Friend of Education." Wherever we go we bring the same message: high-quality OST academics can quickly spark school-day success.

Research demonstrates that all students benefit from a carefully crafted, extended-learning OST approach. At SSFP young people from diverse Dane County neighborhoods come together to publish quality media products. They learn transferable academic skills and practical job readiness. They create tangible community assets. Students advance or are promoted within SSFP ranks, always preparing for the next step. Our formula fosters success in college *and* helps develop a cadre of youth leaders. Older students and SSFP graduates mentor younger peers. Local youth give back to the community.

Simpson Street Free Press is built on ideas, innovation, and curriculum. We are firmly rooted in our community. Now we seek a firm foundation of fiscal and human capital so our work will endure for another 25 years.

SSFP 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary projects will get the solid, measurable results our community needs. SSFP programs are designed to create concrete community assets. No SSFP program follows a 'one-and-done' model. Rather, students are promoted through the ranks. All along the way they encounter sequential curriculum and project-based learning models. This structure and this formula foster skilled OST instructors. Methods are backed by research and hit all modern benchmarks in the OST field. Thank you for considering our request.

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Deidre Green  
Managing Editor,  
Simpson Street Free Press

Kadi Mbanefo  
Network Technician,  
SunStar Technologies  
Technical Advisor, SSFP



# Simpson Street Free Press

## Where in Dane County is Simpson Street Free Press?

**Exploring Climate  
Science at the Aldo  
Leopold Nature Center**

by Tamiya Smith, age 12 and  
Andreanna Wright, age 13

It was a misty afternoon when we decided to venture out to the Aldo Leopold Nature Center. As we pulled up the long and winding road towards the Center, we were greeted by a couple of sandhill cranes. We could tell this was going to be a trip to remember!

Camille Zanoni, Vice President of Advancement at the Nature Center was kind enough to show us around. Beyond teaching us about wetlands, prairies, and woodlands, Zanoni walked us through a new exhibit space that informs visitors about drastic climate change and flooding that are negatively affecting the Earth.

The Climate Science Education Center was full of interactive exhibits, making all the information much easier to understand. One of our favorites was the Science on a Sphere exhibit. As our fellow *Free Press* reporter, Masha Vodyanyk, described it, "the exhibit provides visitors a unique way of viewing our planet." We also found learning about the rising sea levels of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans fascinating. One display in particular used small lights on a large map to illustrate the



potentially devastating effects on cities near the oceans if water levels keep rising.

The Nature Center's goals are to educate young people about the world around them and how to protect it. They also want to get them outside more, since studies show that kids only spend about 1% of their day outdoors. To fight this problem, the Nature Center has started nature-based camps for kids, offering outdoor activities, healthy food and various learning experiences about the

environment.

The Aldo Leopold Nature Center provides the community many opportunities to learn more about Madison's surroundings and to have fun doing it, all for a low price. A one-day pass at the center costs \$4; children under age three can explore the center for free. Located at 330 Femrite Drive, in Monona WI, the Aldo Leopold Nature Center offers an excellent learning experience, and we highly recommend it to all!

You can read more from our *Where in Dane County* series online at [www.simpsonstreetfreepress.org/where-in-dane-county](http://www.simpsonstreetfreepress.org/where-in-dane-county)



# Simpson Street Free Press

## Who Put the “Dane” in Dane County?

### ***Painting Takes a Long and Winding Road to its New Home in Wisconsin***

by Helen Zhang and Lucy Ji

We recently made a trip to downtown Madison. *Simpson Street Free Press* writers, Lucy Ji, Alex Lee, and Helen Zhang, visited the City-Council Building looking for another piece of local history. What we found was a little-known treasure that is both history and art.

You see, this treasure has quite a story behind it. Unknown to most Dane County residents, is the story of how our county got its name. Dane County is named after Nathan Dane, a Massachusetts representative in the Continental Congress. Dane also helped draft the Northwest Ordinance in 1787. This landmark legislation eventually led to the development of Wisconsin and other Midwestern states. Just a year after his passing, in 1836, Dane County was established.

But this story has many twists and turns. How did a painting of Nathan Dane end up hanging in a downtown Madison office building? Keep reading.

Tim Kiefer attended UW-Madison and graduated from Harvard Law School in 1998. Since 2012, Kiefer is also a member of the Dane County Board. While studying at the Harvard law school library, a painting of Nathan Dane piqued his interest. It turned out that Dane was also a Harvard attendee and made a significant donation to the university. Coincidentally, Kiefer also lived in the Dane Hall dormitory at Harvard, which was named in honor of Nathan Dane.

“I had been led to believe Dane County was named for Danish immigrants,” said Kiefer. It all

clicked together when he realized that the county he grew up in was also named after this man.

In 2011, the 175th anniversary of the founding of Dane County, Kiefer became interested in bringing the painting back to Madison. Regrettably, the painting was too fragile to travel. Determined to bring Nathan Dane back, Kiefer and the Harvard



Club of Wisconsin searched for a current Harvard student, with Dane County ties, to paint a new portrait of Nathan Dane. Finding a student who fit these requirements was not a simple task.

Finally, in 2012, Neng Thao, a 2011 graduate of Madison Memorial High School agreed to the task. Thao, sophomore at that time, was studying genetic engineering and was leaning toward medical school. Besides academics, he was also an avid artist. Unfortunately, Thao preferred pencil sketches over oil paintings. After further research on Nathan Dane, he was thoroughly impressed and ultimately agreed to paint the portrait.

After several months of work, the painting was completed. After months of drying and other prep work, Thao’s newly created masterpiece was ready to travel. It was the summer of 2013. The painting was officially unveiled in Madison this past winter during Thao’s holiday break from Harvard. Everyone involved wanted him to be present at the ceremony.

To visit this impressive painting, go to the second floor of the City-Council Building. It hangs outside a conference room near where city council and county board meetings take place. This painting is impressive, and well worth a trip to downtown Madison. Equally impressive is the story behind the painting.

[Source: *Wisconsin State Journal*]

# Simpson Street Free Press

## Free Press Reporters Visit Local Technology Start-Up

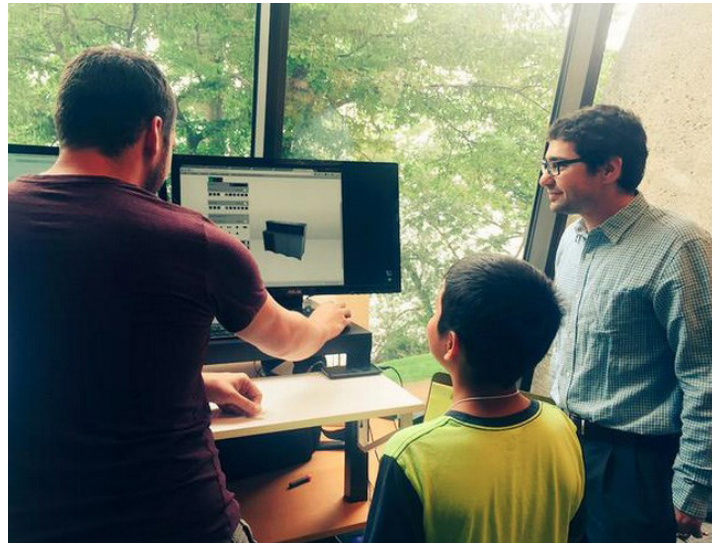
### *Hardin Design and Development is Not Your Average Workplace*

by Dija Manly, age 14

Have you ever wondered what the inside of a technology company looks like and what goes on there? Recently, Simpson Street Free Press student reporters had the opportunity to visit Hardin Design and Development (HDD), a Madison software and application firm founded in 2008. Vice President and Co-founder of HDD Scott Resnick and HDD employee Anouson Bounket led us on a tour of the start-up company. We also had the chance to sit down with them and ask questions about what it's like to work in the tech industry.

Hardin Design and Development is essentially a for-hire app and website developing company. Corporations and individuals come to the company with ideas for apps or websites, and HDD makes these visions a reality. Today, HDD employees spend their time advising over 150 clients throughout the United States. HDD's clients have included companies like Culver's, Mercedes Benz, Red Card, and The New Yorker. The Culver's app created by HDD, for example, sends app-users an alert when a local Culver's has their favorite custard flavor. When we asked Resnick about the most interesting project his company has ever tackled, he said that HDD was once hired to create an app for 100,000 different crock-pot recipes.

While on our tour, we noticed that HDD is not your typical office. Before we arrived, we thought the company would have a sterile, standard office kind of feel. Instead, HDD has a no-cubicle, open space design. There were many fun items lying around the office like NERF guns and chessboards. The employees even had a game room with video games, a mini basketball hoop, a pool table, and a ping-pong table. Resnick said HDD is designed like this because studies show that employees are most produc-



tive when they are happy in their work environments and have many creative outlets available to them.

When we asked about HDD's employees, Resnick indicated that the company hires all kinds of employees with different educational backgrounds, as long as they are capable of computer coding or tech design. He said that of the company's current employees, many self-taught themselves to code with guidance from programming classes and the internet. Resnick also mentioned that HDD occasionally hires college and high school-aged interns.

A few of the company's employees also provided us with career advice. Tom Juszczuk, the company's youngest employee, said that students should remember to work hard in school but also pursue their own personal interests. Resnick added that students should remember there is no rulebook for people to follow: there are multiple ways to achieve every goal. It is important for young people to work to figure things out on their own, Resnick said.

HDD may not be the typical cubical-style office, but the company's methods really seem to work. We enjoyed our visit to HDD—it was so interesting to learn about the inner-workings of a tech company. We hope that we can work at such a fun and productive place one day!



# Simpson Street Free Press

## New Madison College Scholarships Will Help Students Access Health Care Careers

by *Andréanna Wright, age 15*

For many lower income students, going to college might seem like an unreachable dream. Thankfully, a \$50,000 donation from UW Health and Unity Health Insurance to Madison College will provide scholarships to under-represented youth to help them get on the right path toward a health care career.

High school students who complete the Health Occupations and Professions Exploration (HOPE), a one-day program held twice a year, followed by a summer internship at UW Health will be eligible. In the program, high school students are paired with undergraduate mentors who lead the students through research of health careers. During the internship some activities include participating in panels conducted by health care professionals, using sonography equipment, looking at histology slides, and attempting CPR procedures on patient simulators. Job shadowing, meeting with professionals and receiving advice on their academic and career goals are also part of this opportunity.

HOPE students come from a variety of organizations including AVID/TOPS, Boys and Girls Club, UW People Program, Information Technology Academy (ITA) and Centro Hispano. Other participating organizations include: Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin, Middle College, the Urban League of Greater Madison and Mann Scholars.

Since 2013, HOPE has had more than 900 high school students and mentors combined, and in 2015, 60 students completed an internship working in clinical health care areas.

Thanks to Madison College, UW Health/Unity Health Insurance, and HOPE, students pursuing health care will have the opportunity to attend higher education.

[Source: [hopemadisonwi.org](http://hopemadisonwi.org)]

