

Focus

# City Voices.

Photos and interviews by Stephanie Glaros

## When you were in school, what was your favorite subject or class, and why?



### Barbara Hodne, Minneapolis ▲

I'd say I started to figure that out in about junior high, 'cuz the one class I did my homework in was English. Things were happening in the world when I was a teenager that were shocking and horrific. I was 12 years old in 1962, I was 13 in 1963. Living in Minneapolis, seeing civil rights confrontations on television, I asked my mother about 'em. She gave me books by James Baldwin, Richard Wright. She gave me "Black Like Me." And so I read. And I read my way into understanding things that I couldn't possibly understand. Read my way into being a part of conversations that I never would have been a part of. That stuck with me all my life. So, even in college my favorite classes were English classes. This is basically how I became an English teacher. I just kept goin'.

### Tommie Tillmon, Minneapolis ►

My favorite class and subject in school was detention. Basically because I wasn't interested. A lot of people knew that I was a pretty bright person, but couldn't nobody hold my interest. ... Most of the stuff that they were teaching was, like, common sense stuff. I would have the answer, and they would still be teaching, and I'd just get bored with it. And I didn't know how to express myself. So I just kind of walked away... My behavior was great. I just didn't do the work. I probably wasted 8 years doin' nothin,' just because they couldn't hold my interest.

#### What do you think they could have done in school that would have captured your attention?

Everything that's here today in the technology world. Those things that these kids have today? That would've kept my attention.



### Gabriel Timmreck, Minneapolis ▲

I did take a really interesting class about Mass Media and Democracy. That teacher brought a lot of historical elements and put it in modern context. Using the knowledge that we've acquired to assess our current living conditions, and what we're being fed. And making sure to look at everything through a critical lens. I guess that was a really important class for me.

#### Glaros: What was your biggest takeaway from that?

Just that we tend to settle for a lot, and history repeats itself. And to not settle because we may be falling into cyclical things. I remember hearing about some recent voting restrictions, and it all just sort of ties back into not knowing what our rights are necessarily. What we're taking for granted, and what we aren't taking for granted. I've been looking at this play that's based on Thurgood Marshall, and just sort of analyzing the Brown vs. Board of Education. All the trials, and tying that into things that are happening.

