

## Aurora event for young Latinas goes global

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### Body

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With public gatherings banned, an Aurora event aimed at inspiring young Latinas earlier this month went virtual — drawing its largest audience in four years. Aurora's annual Young Latina Day attracted 30,000 people and garnered nearly 13,000 Facebook views in six hours from 13 countries. Fifty Latina speakers shared their stories to help empower the next generation of Hispanic girls and women and celebrate their achievements. "It was historic," said Jacqueline Camacho-Ruiz of North Aurora, creator of the nonprofit Fig Factor Foundation, which launched the event in 2017. "We are trying to make this day recognized globally by the United Nations in 2021. It's a big aspirational goal."

The foundation's mission is to provide educational leadership platforms, mentorship and empowering activities to Latinas ages 12 to 25. Some of its initiatives have shifted to the virtual realm, including a self-care Zoom video conference on Sundays for its 157 graduates, board members and mentors. "We are also getting some grants so we can provide them financial support during this difficult time," Camacho-Ruiz said. Addressing bullying: Naperville Unit District 203 is working on addressing cyberbullying after anecdotal reports of incidents targeting Asian American students, school board member Janet Yang said. Yang said her 10-year-old daughter and 7-year-old son, as well as Chinese American community members, have reported students calling the COVID-19 pandemic a "Chinese virus" before schools closed due to the stay-at-home order. With students spending more time online, Yang is concerned about such harassment shifting to those platforms. District 203 teachers have been emphasizing "how to be a good online citizen" as part of the social-emotional learning curriculum, she added. Naperville has a high Asian American population — 18 percent — including people of Chinese and Korean descent and from other East Asian countries. "This is a good chance to reflect on what true diversity and inclusion means ... to have our students truly understand what it means to have someone who looks different and have that sense of empathy for them," Yang said. Naperville race relations: Naperville city leaders could create a commission to improve race relations after reports of recent racist attacks against Asian Americans. Resident Nancy Chen introduced a resolution before the council Wednesday urging leaders to establish such a commission. It was motivated by the reported March 21 attack of a 60-year-old Chinese American man jogging on a Naperville trail and offensive remarks made by a speaker during the April 7 virtual council meeting. Bill Liu, chairman of Chinese community outreach appointed by the late Mayor George Pradel, also asked the council to denounce actions that unfairly stereotype and single out Asian Americans. "Derogatory and insulting comments should not be part of the public discourse," Liu said. City Manager Doug Krieger said officials plan to roll out a broader diversity and inclusion plan in the works since two high-profile incidents last fall — a multiracial group of 18 was asked to move at Buffalo Wild Wings because two white customers did not want to sit nearby and a 14-year-old white student posted an ad online showing a photo of a black classmate with the words "Slave for Sale (NAPERVILLE)." "We want this to be broader than simply just a proclamation," Krieger said. He expects to present the plan before the city council in May.

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Ramadan food baskets: While suburban mosques are closed, many are finding ways to help community members in need during the COVID-19 lockdown. The Mecca Center in Willowbrook will be cooking food in its communal kitchen for pickup twice weekly during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, which began Friday. For information about pickup times visit [meccacenter.org](http://meccacenter.org). The center's Faith in Action initiative also will be delivering food baskets during Ramadan to community members irrespective of faith, said Imam Hassan Aly. "Our goal is to distribute 2,000 food baskets to our neighbors," said Aly, a Hinsdale Community Service board member. Aly is inviting clients of the food pantry at nearby Anne Jeans Elementary School to drop by the center on Sundays for food pickup. "We will continue to do that for the month of Ramadan and maybe even after as long as there is need," Aly said. \* Share stories from the suburban mosaic with Madhu Krishnamurthy at [mkrishnamurthy@dailyherald.com](mailto:mkrishnamurthy@dailyherald.com)

## Graphic

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Janet Yang Rohr Janet Yang Rohr Janet Yang Janet Yang Janet Yang Rohr Nancy Chen Nancy Chen Courtesy of Jackie Camacho-Ruiz Jackie Camacho-Ruiz converted her North Aurora home into a state-of-the-art TV studio for the global webcast. Courtesy of Jackie Camacho-Ruiz Jackie Camacho-Ruiz converted her North Aurora home into a state-of-the-art TV studio for the first Young Latina Day global webcast. Jackie Camacho-Ruiz converted her North Aurora home into a state-of-the-art TV studio for the global webcast. Courtesy of The Mecca Center The Mecca Center in Willowbrook has launched a Faith in Action initiative to deliver food baskets during Ramadan to community members irrespective of faith, Imam Hassan Aly said. "Our goal is to distribute 2,000 food baskets to our neighbors," said Aly, a Hinsdale Community Service board member. Courtesy of The Mecca Center The Mecca Center in Willowbrook has launched a Faith in Action initiative to deliver food baskets during Ramadan to community members irrespective of faith, Imam Hassan Aly said. "Our goal is to distribute 2,000 food baskets to our neighbors," said Aly, a Hinsdale Community Service board member. The Mecca Center in Willowbrook has launched a Faith in Action initiative to deliver food baskets during Ramadan to community members irrespective of faith, said Imam Hassan Aly. "Our goal is to distribute 2,000 food baskets to our neighbors," said Aly, a Hinsdale Community Service board member.

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