

ASIAN KALEIDOSCOPE

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MN BIZ VISION



**How One Woman's
Immigrant Story
Became a Wellness
Legacy**

**Calling America
HOME Series: To
Be Heard Is to Be
Healed**

**How Surreal AI
Short Films Are
Becoming an
Unexpected
Wellness Trend on
YouTube**



This monthly e-Magazine is published by Asian Media Access and Multi Cultural Community Alliance to highlight the accomplishments of Asian American and Pacific Islanders' (AAPI) small businesses in MN.

Table of Contents

01~02	Introduction
03~06	AAPI Business Profile - Christine Ly
07~09	Calling America HOME
10~13	Center for Wellness Technology
14~16	What's News in IT
17~20	AAPI Community Updates
21~22	Business and Workforce Development Resources
23~24	Upcoming Training Events
25	Contact



Bridging Cultures, Building Futures: Minnesota's AAPI Business & Workforce Magazine

Welcome to **MN Biz Vision: Asian Kaleidoscope**, a monthly e-magazine dedicated to empowering Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities across Minnesota. More than a publication, this platform uplifts AAPI entrepreneurs while advancing workforce pathways through the **Center for Wellness Technology** - a visionary hub that integrates Agricultural Technology, Multimedia Technology, and Wellness Technology into culturally grounded IT career opportunities.

AAPI Entrepreneurship & the Need for New Pathways

AAPI entrepreneurs are vital to Minnesota's diverse business landscape, operating successful restaurants, grocery stores, salons, healthcare practices, consulting firms, and manufacturing businesses, etc.. While AAPIs comprise 6% of Minnesota's population, Asian-owned businesses represent only 3% of the state's small businesses—revealing persistent barriers to entrepreneurship. Yet these 15,500+ Asian-owned firms account for 35% of all minority-owned businesses in Minnesota, demonstrating the community's outsized economic impact and resilience. Targeted workforce development in specialized IT sectors can help bridge this entrepreneurship gap and create new pathways for community economic mobility and innovation.

The Center for Wellness Technology: Our Dual Mission

At the heart of MN Biz Vision stands the Center for Wellness Technology, which unifies three high-impact technology tracks designed for AAPI youth, families, and entrepreneurs:

- **Agricultural Technology (AgTech):** Blending modern engineering with ancestral agricultural knowledge, learners explore aeroponics, aquaponics, vertical farming, and sustainable food systems that support food sovereignty and sustainability.
- **Multimedia Technology:** Youth and creatives gain experience in game design, AR/VR development, digital storytelling, and AI-assisted media production—tools that amplify AAPI voices and ensure cultural stories are represented in the digital future.
- **Wellness Technology:** Integrating traditional healing practices with modern innovations, the Center supports healing with telehealth systems, VR calming room designs, and culturally informed wearable devices, advancing non-invasive and holistic care models.

Together, these tracks demonstrate why IT matters: technology becomes a vehicle for economic mobility, cultural preservation, and community innovation.

What You'll Discover Each Month

Every issue of MN Biz Vision highlights AAPI business owners across diverse sectors, celebrates immigrant and refugee success stories, and shares practical resources on financing, marketing, digital tools, and entrepreneurship. Workforce development features dive into emerging IT opportunities within AgTech, Multimedia, and Wellness Technology, supported by training programs and employer partnerships.

Building Economic Opportunity & Cultural Resilience

Whether you are strengthening a family business, exploring a career transition, entering tech fields, or launching a new venture, MN Biz Vision: Asian Kaleidoscope connects you to the networks, knowledge, and inspiration needed to thrive. Join us each month as we celebrate AAPI excellence - honoring cultural traditions while embracing the technological innovations shaping Minnesota's future.





Christine Ly

By Christine Ly, Founder & Owner of ZENSAI SPA – Richfield, Minnesota

There are businesses built for profit, and then there are businesses built from purpose. ZENSAI SPA, nestled in Richfield, Minnesota, belongs firmly in the second category. Founded by Christine Ly – esthetician, educator, single mother, and daughter of immigrants – ZENSAI is not just a spa. It is a living testament to resilience, cultural pride, and the belief that beauty and wellness belong to everyone, regardless of where they come from.

HOW ONE WOMAN'S IMMIGRANT STORY BECAME A WELLNESS LEGACY

A Foundation Built on Survival

Christine's story does not begin in a spa – it begins in survival. Her father was an orphan who served as a lieutenant in the Secret War. Her mother lost her own mother at just 14 years old while fleeing war and persecution, never having had someone to teach her beauty rituals or even the basics of self-care. These are not just backstories, they are bedrocks for ZENSAI.

Growing up in New York exposed Christine to a rich tapestry of cultures, fashion, and beauty traditions. Though she describes herself as a tomboy, beauty captivated her early – perhaps because it represented something her own family had never had access to. At the age of 11, her stepmother introduced her to skincare, and something clicked. She began saving her own money to buy products, giving skin analyses to friends, and treating their breakouts from her bedroom. A passion – and a calling – had been born.

That calling carried her through more than two decades in the beauty industry, working with companies like Sephora and Massage Envy, earning a Bachelor of Science in Business Management from St. Catherine University, pursuing graduate studies in Organizational Leadership, and ultimately becoming an instructor and

mentor at Lavish Beauty School. Christine Ly did not stumble into expertise — she built it, brick by brick, through years of dedication.



ZENSAI: Born in a Pandemic, Built to Last

In November 2019, while completing her master's program, Christine decided to test her entrepreneurial vision by creating ZENSAI — initially as a class project. Weeks later, the world shut down. The pandemic arrived and upended everything. But rather than shelving her dream, Christine leaned into it. What had started as an academic exercise became a lifeline — a way to support her family and her community during one of the most uncertain periods in modern history.

The road was anything but smooth. Christine faced limited financial resources, difficulty accessing traditional business loans, the challenge of finding the right location, civil unrest, economic downturns, and the painful process of restructuring her company after a business partnership with a family member ended. Each obstacle, she says, taught her something new about resilience. Rather than waiting for perfect circumstances, she learned to adapt, rebuild, and continue moving forward one step at a time.

But perhaps the biggest challenge of all was internal. "My biggest challenge was believing in myself," Christine admits. Growing up in poverty, navigating foster care, and carrying the weight of an immigrant family's unspoken fears left marks that did not disappear when she became an adult. Overcoming those fears — showing up anyway, building anyway, dreaming anyway — is the quiet victory at the heart of everything ZENSAI represents.

Culture as the Core of ZENSAI

Walk into ZENSAI and you walk into something intentional. Every ingredient, every treatment ritual, every design choice is rooted in a philosophy that honors beauty traditions from cultures around the world — with a particular reverence for Christine's own Hmong heritage.

The name ZENSAI itself is inspired by Xiang Xai, a heroic figure in Hmong history and folklore who symbolizes courage, protection, and hope. Those are not just marketing words. They are the values Christine has woven into the fabric of her business — from the way her team treats clients to the way she mentors future beauty professionals.

Christine describes ZENSAI as a bridge between Eastern and Western philosophies — a place where traditional healing practices and modern skincare science complement each other rather than compete. Her diverse team, drawn from many different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, reflects her commitment to making every community member feel seen, respected, and represented. That responsibility, she says, is something she values deeply.



What She Is Most Proud Of

Ask Christine about her proudest achievement, and she does not mention a sales milestone or a business award. She talks about not giving up. About being transparent with her struggles. About teaching the next generation of beauty professionals and showing her two daughters — every single day — that resilience is stronger than fear.

"If they learn that it's okay to fall down as long as you keep getting back up," she says of her daughters, "then I've succeeded." It is a simple statement, but it carries the weight of generations — of a mother who fled war, of a father who was an orphan, of a little girl in New York who fell in love with skincare magazines and dared to believe that love could become something real.

What's Next for ZENSAI

ZENSAI recently relocated to Richfield, Minnesota, and the momentum is building. Christine is launching Wellness Wednesdays — a community-focused initiative offering accessible wellness services at pricing designed to make self-care available to more people, not just those who can afford luxury. Beginning in August, Wellness Wednesday Workshops will add an educational and experiential layer, combining mindful movement, holistic wellness, and community connection.

Her long-term vision is expansive: a full-service wellness destination that includes a luxury spa, a bathhouse, an education center, and a community gathering space — a place where people from every background can experience wellness traditions from different cultures and feel genuinely welcomed. It is an ambitious dream. But then again, so was ZENSAI.

A Message to Fellow Dreamers

For other immigrants and first-generation entrepreneurs who feel afraid to take the first step, Christine has a message rooted in hard-won wisdom: "Your biggest obstacle is often your own mind. Fear will always tell you why you can't. Faith reminds you why you can."

She is candid about the systemic barriers that make entrepreneurship harder for immigrant communities — the lack of access to traditional lending, mentorship, networks, and resources that others take for granted. But she is equally clear that those barriers, real as they are, do not have the final word. Resilience, she believes, can carry you farther than perfect circumstances ever could.

And perhaps most powerfully of all: *"ZENSAI isn't just the business I built — it's the legacy I'm creating for my daughters and for future generations who deserve to see their culture, resilience, and dreams reflected in what's possible."*

As ZENSAI SPA continues to grow in Richfield, the team welcomes new and returning guests to experience its unique blend of beauty, wellness, education, and cultural appreciation.

ZENSAI SPA - 6317 Penn Ave S Richfield, MN 55423

Website: zensai.simplybook.me | Email: zensaibeauty@gmail.com | Facebook: facebook.com/zensaispa

Visit the website or follow ZENSAI SPA on Facebook to stay informed about Wellness Wednesdays, educational workshops, seasonal events, and community programs.



Series Preface: Asian Media Access proudly presents “Calling America HOME” Series, inspired by the resilience and hope of immigrants and refugees from across the Asian diaspora who have rebuilt their lives in Minnesota. Through these stories, we invite readers to witness a legacy of survival, determination, and hope forged against impossible odds.

In this edition, we feature groundbreaking research by the Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota (LACM), highlighting Asian Pacific Islander (API) immigrant women’s experiences navigating the American healthcare system.

To Be Heard Is to Be Healed

What API Immigrant Women Are Teaching Us About Healthcare

For many Asian and Pacific Islander (API) women who have made Minnesota their home, arriving in America did not mean arriving in safety. It meant entering a healthcare system that often did not speak their language, did not recognize their healing traditions, and did not treat them as full partners in their own care. The journey from Laos, from Vietnam, from Cambodia, from the Karen hills of Myanmar, from the Philippines and Thailand and dozens of Pacific Islands is hard enough. Finding your footing in a new medical culture – while carrying the weight of displacement and starting over – can make the simple act of seeing a doctor feel like crossing another border.

Domain	Patient Findings	Provider Findings	Opportunity
Communication	Most important factor influencing care experiences	Providers less confident that patients feel comfortable asking questions	Strengthen patient engagement and teach-back techniques
Trust	Built through listening, empathy, and respect	Providers generally confident patients feel respected	Increase opportunities for shared decision-making
Interpreter Access	Continued concerns regarding language barriers and translated materials	Interpreter services available but Lao-language resources remain limited	Expand translated materials and awareness of interpreter services
Alternative Medicine	Frequent use of herbs, traditional healing, and other cultural remedies	Providers interested in learning more about traditional practices	Increase provider awareness of traditional practices
Equity	Concerns about discrimination, gender bias, and cultural understanding	Equity trainings available, but concerns persist among patients	Move beyond training toward practical implementation strategies

That experience – invisible in aggregate health statistics, invisible in waiting rooms that treat “the Asian community” as if it were one community – is now being named. A new assessment by the Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota (LACM), funded by the Minnesota Department of Health, has done something healthcare systems rarely do: it listened.

89 Women. Nine Communities. One Urgent Question.

The Culture of Care Assessment asked: What does a positive healthcare experience look like for API women? LACM heard from 89 women representing nine distinct communities – Lao, Hmong, Karen, Vietnamese, Chinese, Cambodian, Thai, Filipino, and other Pacific Islander backgrounds – as well as eight healthcare providers. The diversity of those communities is itself the point. “Asian American” encompasses one of the most linguistically and historically varied populations on earth. A Hmong elder who survived the Secret War in Laos and a second-generation Filipino professional do not share a single healthcare experience simply because they are coded the same way in a demographic field. This assessment refused that flattening – and that refusal is what makes its findings matter.

What Women Said: Relationships, Not Just Access

Too often, conversations about healthcare focus only on access, insurance, or appointments. While those issues matter, we wanted to hear directly from women about their experiences, priorities, and the factors that help them feel respected, understood, and supported when seeking preventive care. Across communities and immigration histories, the findings converged. Women did not lead with insurance coverage or appointment availability. **They led with relationships. The most important factors in a positive healthcare visit were clear communication, feeling genuinely cared for, trust, fair treatment, and respect for cultural health practices.**

Many women described how family, faith, traditional healing practices, and cultural values guide their health decisions – and how rarely their providers acknowledged this. Nearly half of all respondents reported using one or more traditional healing approaches: herbal and food-based remedies, movement and bodywork, spiritual and faith-based practices, traditional healers, and meditation. These are not fringe choices. They are the living health cultures that immigrant women carried across oceans and international borders, and they matter to how these women understand their own bodies and wellbeing.

Barriers, when women named them, were layered and intersecting. Language access remained inconsistent – interpreter availability varied dramatically by community, family members were regularly pressed into service as medical interpreters (a practice with documented health risks), and translated materials were rare. Women described feeling rushed through appointments, unable to ask questions, dismissed when they raised concerns. Some named outright racial and ethnic discrimination. Others described the quiet indignity of modesty concerns going unaddressed, or of being treated as if their bodies were problems to be processed rather than people to be cared for.

It is a Community-wide Story

When API women say they want providers who listen, explain clearly, and treat them as partners – they are describing what virtually every patient wants, in every ZIP code in Minnesota. The barriers these women face – rushed appointments, poor communication, cultural dismissal, distrust born from discrimination – are systemic failures. Immigrant communities, and especially immigrant women of color, experience those failures most acutely, because they have the least institutional power to push back. But the failures exist for everyone.

Response Option	Count (N = 88)	% of Respondents
Clear communication from the healthcare provider	68	77.3%
Feeling cared for	57	64.8%
Trust	42	47.7%
Being treated fairly and without discrimination	40	45.5%
Respect for cultural or traditional health practices	31	35.2%
Access to interpreter services	17	19.3%

Healthcare providers, for their part, expressed genuine interest in doing better: they recognized the importance of trust, cultural responsiveness, and traditional healing practices, and wanted more tools to serve the communities they see. The

assessment's findings will directly inform future provider training, community education resources, and practical tools – a bridge between what patients need and what providers are ready to learn.

Coming Home to Care

Calling America home is an act of hope – and for many immigrant women, an act of ongoing courage. Healthcare is one of the most intimate arenas where that courage is tested. To walk into a clinic and trust that you will be seen, heard, and cared for across lines of language and culture – that is not a small thing. For many API women in Minnesota, it is still not a given.

The Culture of Care Assessment is a step toward changing that – not only for Lao women, or Hmong women, or Karen women, but for the full, irreducible spectrum of Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities who have made Minnesota their home. Their voices deserve to be heard. And their wisdom about what it means to be genuinely cared for deserves to reshape a system that has too long asked them to simply adapt.

To learn more about the Culture of Care Assessment and LACM's Women's Health Program, visit <https://www.laocenter.org/womens-health>

Calling America HOME series is published by Asian Media Access. For story inquiries, contact AMA at info@amamedia.org.



AI, WELLNESS & THE MOVING IMAGE

When the Screen Becomes a Sanctuary - How Surreal AI Short Films Are Becoming an Unexpected Wellness Trend on YouTube

There is a new kind of film entering people's lives quietly. No box office, no festival premiere. It arrives on a phone screen at the end of a difficult day, lasts three or four minutes, and features dreamlike lands with imagery creatures, bodies wearing elaborated costumes, floating oversized objectives, panning through luminous landscapes, movement that defies physics but honors emotion. And when it ends, the people who watched it feel measurably better.

Surreal AI short film is emerging as an unexpected wellness medium — and it is happening organically, faster than either the tech industry or the mental health community has noticed. On YouTube, a growing number of channels are building quiet but devoted audiences around this format: slow, hypnotic, photorealistic-but-impossible visuals rendered by generative AI tools, set to original music, centered on dignity and beauty rather than conflict or spectacle. The comments under these videos read less like film reviews and more like letters to a therapist who arrived unexpectedly and helped.



"People have always turned to beauty as medicine. What's changed is that beauty is now arriving without friction — directly to whoever needs it, exactly when they need it."

The Case Study: "Elderly Fashion Dance • We Are The Late Light"

One film has become a small touchstone for this genre: [*"Elderly Fashion Dance • We Are The Late Light"*](#) by Surreal AI Music — a surreal AI short featuring older performers in elaborate, nature-inspired costuming moving through hyperreal floral landscapes to original music built from deeply personal lyrics. Made using Midjourney and Nano Banana Pro for imagery, Veo 3 for cinematic motion, and Suno for original music, the film's comment section tells a story that has nothing to do with its technology and everything to do with what it does to the people who watch it.

Viewers from Russia, China, the United States, and elsewhere arrived independently at the same words: *beautiful, peaceful, alive*. A Russian-language viewer, a Chinese-language viewer, and an English speaker watching the same piece described identical experiences. The surreal visual language - bodies and nature in impossible proportion, movement freed from gravity - appears to communicate emotionally across cultures and languages in a way that realistic film often cannot.



Three Wellness Registers — What Viewers Actually Experience

When viewers describe what surreal AI films do for them, they don't mention artificial intelligence. They describe what happened inside them. Three distinct wellness functions emerge consistently:

1. **EMOTIONAL REFUGE** — The impossible scale and soft luminosity create a perceptibly safe environment that asks nothing of the viewer. For someone carrying stress, grief, or exhaustion, this unconditional visual welcome is itself therapeutic.

"I've been having a rough week. This video arrived at the right moment, soothing me and helping me de-stress — a loving, kind environment, a hidden secret refuge. It reminded me to trust a little more." — Viewer, following a difficult week

2. **VICARIOUS EMBODIMENT** — Watching bodies in motion produces physical resonance. Neuroscience calls this mirror neuron activation: the brain's motor systems engage when observing purposeful movement, producing something that shares real properties with physical experience. Dance therapy has worked this way for decades. AI film delivers it without a studio, a therapist, or a body that must move in any particular way.

"I watched it twice. The first time I absorbed the visuals and music. The second time I put on a flowing skirt and moved along with the dancers — letting the oldness flow out into beauty." — Viewer who danced with the film

"I've loved dance my whole life. Physical injury has taken away my ability to move as freely now, but I danced vicariously through this piece. Thank you for the joy." — Viewer, near 80 years old

3. **BEAUTY AS RESTORATION (THE AWE EFFECT)** — Research by Dacher Keltner at UC Berkeley documents a specific neurological state triggered by encounters with beauty or scale that exceeds ordinary expectation. Awe reduces self-focused rumination, increases prosocial feeling, and produces a meaningful reduction in inflammatory markers. The surreal scale of AI film — oversized flowers, luminous impossible environments — reliably triggers it.

"They did not seek out a wellness program. They watched a short film. And yet what happened maps almost exactly onto the benefits of guided relaxation, music therapy, and art-based mental health intervention."





Elders at the Center — A Quiet Cultural Statement

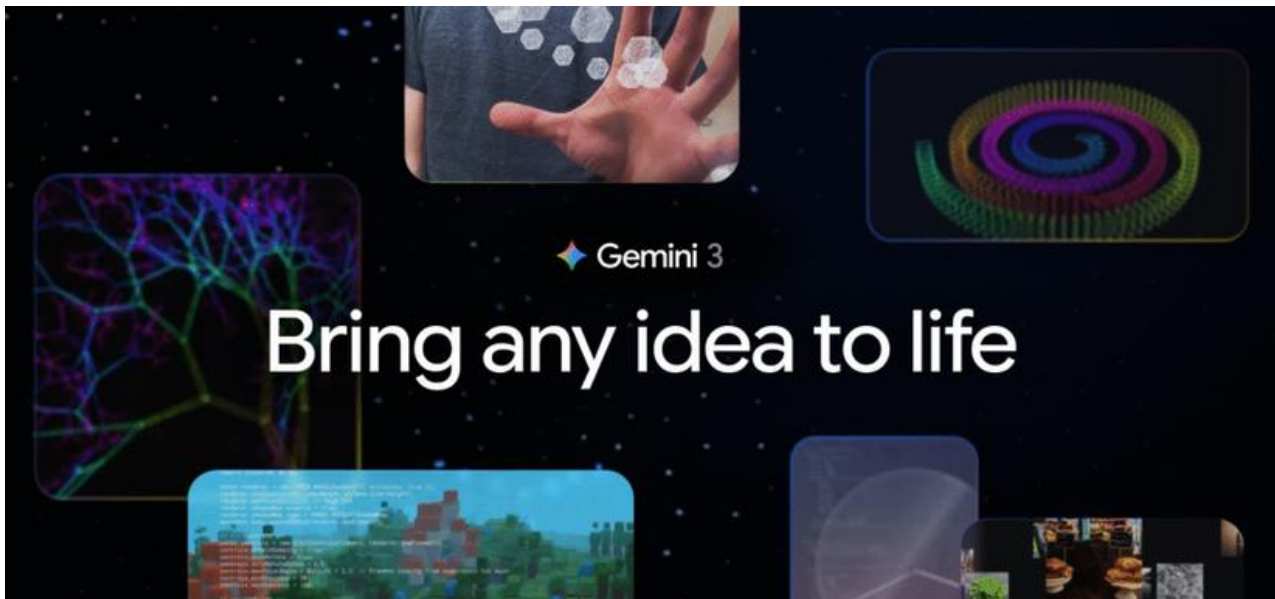
Among the most striking features of this emerging genre is its centering of older performers — not as objects of nostalgia, but as primary bearers of beauty, movement, and aliveness. In a visual culture that equates youth with vitality, the surreal AI film that lights an elder's face from within and lets her move through impossible flowers at her own pace is making a therapeutic argument: beauty and joy do not have an expiration date. Viewers respond to this powerfully, and across generations - one elder near 80 who danced vicariously, the younger viewer at the end of a hard week who felt something about dignity and continuity she could not have named before the film gave it to her.

The YouTube Trend — A Genre Finding Its Audience

Surreal AI short film is growing rapidly as a YouTube genre, driven not by major studios but by individual creators with generative AI tools that did not exist three years ago — Midjourney, Veo 3, Suno, Runway — and a genuine emotional investment in their subject. The format is distinctive: 3–6 minutes, slow hypnotic pacing, original music designed to release the viewer's attention rather than capture it, and visual environments that are photorealistic in detail but impossible in scale. Channels in this space are accumulating tens of thousands of loyal subscribers whose comment sections function less as feedback and more as community testimony — people finding each other around a shared experience of unexpected restoration.

This is the wellness media of the next decade: not an app, not a clinical program, but a four-minute film made by one person with a laptop, distributed for free, received by someone thousands of miles away who needed exactly that thing at exactly that moment and found it without trying. For older adults with limited mobility, for people managing chronic illness, for immigrants whose cultural memories mainstream media never reflects back to them - for anyone who cannot afford a museum ticket, a therapy session, or a flight to anywhere beautiful - the screen, for a few minutes, becomes a sanctuary.

"The comment sections under the most resonant AI wellness films read less like film reviews and more like letters to a therapist who arrived unexpectedly and helped."



GEMINI 3 RAISES THE BAR FOR AI, BUT THE REAL TEST STARTS NOW

Columnist - Vivek Ekarat

Google has officially unveiled **Gemini 3**, its most advanced artificial intelligence model to date, marking a major milestone in the company's AI roadmap. The announcement was made on The Keyword by Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google and Alphabet, alongside Demis Hassabis, CEO of Google DeepMind, and Koray Kavukcuoglu, CTO of Google DeepMind. This release represents the culmination of nearly two years of research and development since the original Gemini model was introduced, reflecting Google's sustained investment in next-generation AI systems.

Google reports that adoption of its AI ecosystem has accelerated rapidly over the past year. The Gemini app now reaches more than 650 million monthly active users, while AI Overviews integrated directly into Google Search serve approximately 2 billion people each month. With Gemini 3, Google aims to move beyond incremental upgrades and deliver a system that meaningfully advances reasoning, understanding, and autonomy in AI. The model is designed to combine stronger logical reasoning, richer multimodal comprehension across text, images, audio, and video, and more agent-like behavior that enables it to take initiative rather than simply respond to prompts.

What sets Gemini 3 apart

Google positions Gemini 3 as a step change rather than a routine iteration. One of its defining goals is the ability to handle **multi-step reasoning**, allowing the model to work through complex problems that require planning, inference, and decision-making across multiple stages. This is particularly important for real-world tasks,

where solutions rarely involve a single, straightforward answer.

Another major focus area is **long-context understanding**. Gemini 3 is tested on significantly longer inputs to evaluate whether it can maintain coherence, recall earlier details, and adapt responses over extended interactions. This capability is essential for use cases such as research analysis, long-form writing, and ongoing project support.

Google has also placed emphasis on how the model performs when information is **incomplete, ambiguous, or uncertain**. Rather than relying on perfectly framed prompts, Gemini 3 is evaluated on its ability to reason through gaps in information, ask clarifying questions when needed, and avoid overconfident or misleading responses. In addition, some assessments specifically measure the model's ability to **explain its reasoning**, offering transparency into how conclusions are reached instead of simply presenting final outputs.

Behind the scenes, Google notes increased collaboration across research and engineering teams to develop **more consistent and rigorous evaluation standards**. This reflects a broader industry challenge: as AI systems grow more capable, traditional benchmarks struggle to capture real-world performance accurately.



From benchmarks to real-world use

While Gemini 3's benchmark results are impressive, Google acknowledges that such metrics are generated under controlled conditions. Real-world usage is far messier. User requests are often vague, tasks span multiple domains, and many problems do not fit neatly into predefined test categories. Performance in everyday scenarios where context shifts, goals evolve, and constraints are unclear will ultimately matter more than leaderboard rankings.

To demonstrate practical potential, Google shared examples that highlight Gemini 3's

versatility. These include translating handwritten family recipes into usable digital formats, analyzing sports videos to provide personalized technique feedback, and transforming dense academic research papers into interactive study guides. Such examples showcase how multimodal understanding can unlock value in both personal and professional contexts.

Google also introduced **Google Antigravity**, a new initiative focused on autonomous AI agents. Under this framework, Gemini-powered agents can plan projects, write and debug code, and independently check their own work. This points toward a future where AI systems are not just assistants, but collaborators capable of managing entire workflows with minimal human oversight.

Safety, trust, and realistic expectations

Ahead of release, Gemini 3 underwent extensive safety evaluations conducted by Google's internal teams as well as external organizations, including the UK's AI Safety Institute (AIS) and Apollo. These reviews aim to identify risks related to misuse, reliability, and unintended behavior. While such testing is a critical step, Google acknowledges that early demonstrations often reflect ideal conditions rather than average, everyday performance.

What comes next

Ultimately, Gemini 3's real impact will be determined not by announcements or demos, but by how people actually use it. Google is clearly betting on deeper reasoning, stronger contextual understanding, and agent-based systems that can handle end-to-end tasks rather than isolated questions. If successful, this approach could significantly change how users interact with AI shifting from prompt-based exchanges to ongoing, goal-oriented collaboration.

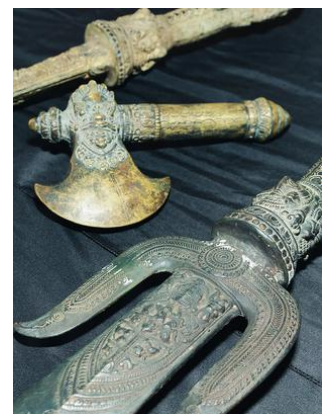
However, experience suggests caution. The gap between polished launch demos and tools that users trust with important work is often wider than it initially appears. Whether Gemini 3 delivers meaningful, dependable improvements or whether simpler, more predictable AI tools remain the preferred choice will only become clear through sustained, real-world use. Over time, users will decide whether Gemini 3 truly addresses long-standing challenges or whether its ambitions outpace its practical value.



May 03

CAMBODIAN DAY

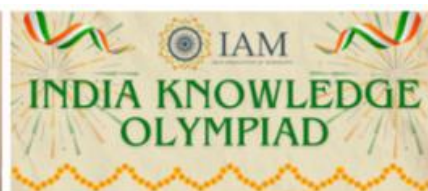
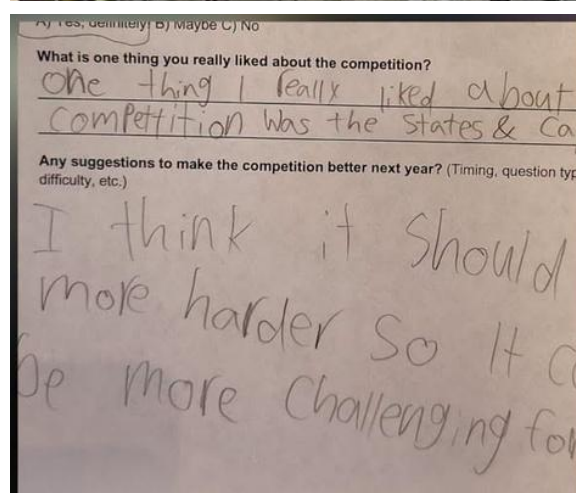
Hosted by the Cambodian American Partnership of Minnesota, Cambodian Day at the St. Paul Landmark Center celebrated Cambodian culture through traditional music, dance, crafts, cuisine, and interactive activities. The event welcomed community members of all ages to experience Cambodia's rich cultural heritage while promoting cultural appreciation and cross-cultural connections.



June 07

2026 YOUTH COMPETITION

Hosted by the India Association of Minnesota, the 2026 Youth Competition brought together students from elementary through high school to showcase their knowledge of India's history, culture, geography, and traditions. The event encouraged learning, cultural appreciation, and youth engagement while helping participants strengthen their connection to their heritage. Photo Courtesy: India Association of Minnesota



June 12~13

PHILIPPINE CHILDREN CAMP 2026

Hosted by the Cultural Society of Filipino Americans - Minnesota, the Philippine Children's Camp provided children with an overnight cultural experience where they learned about Filipino traditions, language, games, music, food, and values. The camp encouraged cultural appreciation, friendship, and community while helping the next generation connect with their Filipino heritage. Photo Courtesy: Cultural Society of Filipino Americans - Minnesota



July 10~11

FOLLOWING THE SERPENT'S VEIL: PREAH THONG NEANG NEAK

Hosted by the Wattanak Dance Troupe, Following the Serpent's Veil: Preah Thong & Neang Neak brought Cambodia's founding legend to life through dance, music, and theatrical performance. Inspired by the story of Preah Thong and Neang Neak, the production celebrated Khmer history, cultural identity, and artistic traditions while sharing Cambodia's rich cultural heritage with the broader community. Photo Courtesy: Sophia Neou and Wattanak Dance Troupe



\$10K grants are now open!

It's easier than ever to apply for **\$10K grants**

Digital Ready grants are back. **Apply for \$10,000 grants, part of over \$1M in total funding this year.** You only have to apply once to be considered all year for a \$10K grant, giving you more time to submit an application and take advantage of our courses and events.

VERIZON SMALL BUSINESS DIGITAL READY \$10,000 NATIONAL GRANT

Digital Ready grants are back. Apply for \$10,000 grants, part of over \$1M in total funding this year. You only have to apply once to be considered all year for a \$10K grant, giving you more time to submit an application and take advantage of our courses and events.

Who can apply?

Owners of for-profit small businesses based in the United States, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands who are 18 or older may apply. Owners of multiple businesses may apply for one business only. See national grant FAQs for more information.

How do I apply?

Register and complete any combination of two eligible courses or events anytime in 2026 to unlock the grant application. Apply once to remain eligible for \$10,000 grants awarded throughout the year.

When will I hear back?

Applications will be reviewed monthly from June through December 2026. Each month, 10 small businesses will be selected for grants. If you are not selected in a given month, your application will remain under consideration for the remainder of 2026. All applicants will receive a final decision by January 12, 2027.

[Apply Today >>](#)



We can help you find your focus

Building a budget that actually works. Growing your network organically. Mastering work/life balance. All this and more with Digital Ready. What will your focus be?

Check it out



BUDGETING TIPS AND NETWORKING KNOW-HOW

Struggling with budgeting, networking, or work-life balance? Digital Ready can help you find your focus and achieve your goals. Discover expert insights and practical tools to streamline your success at:

https://link.digitalready.verizonwireless.com/OTk2LUtXQy0zNzcAAAGZKn5A0-kz96GrTzwrOAAOnZ_2TNNWrU_BQXIGWbjvQHw_pjs1hSTgctExNiFQleIF4R3PHE=

Find the event that fits your goals:

<https://digitalready.verizonwireless.com/category/events>



Event • Ask the Expert

The ultimate AI business blueprint: Combine tools for maximum efficiency

Jul 26, 2 PM CT



Event • Ask the Expert

Step-by-step financial projections

Jul 30, 1 PM CT



Event • Hands-on Help

Pitch perfect

Aug 17, 1 PM CT

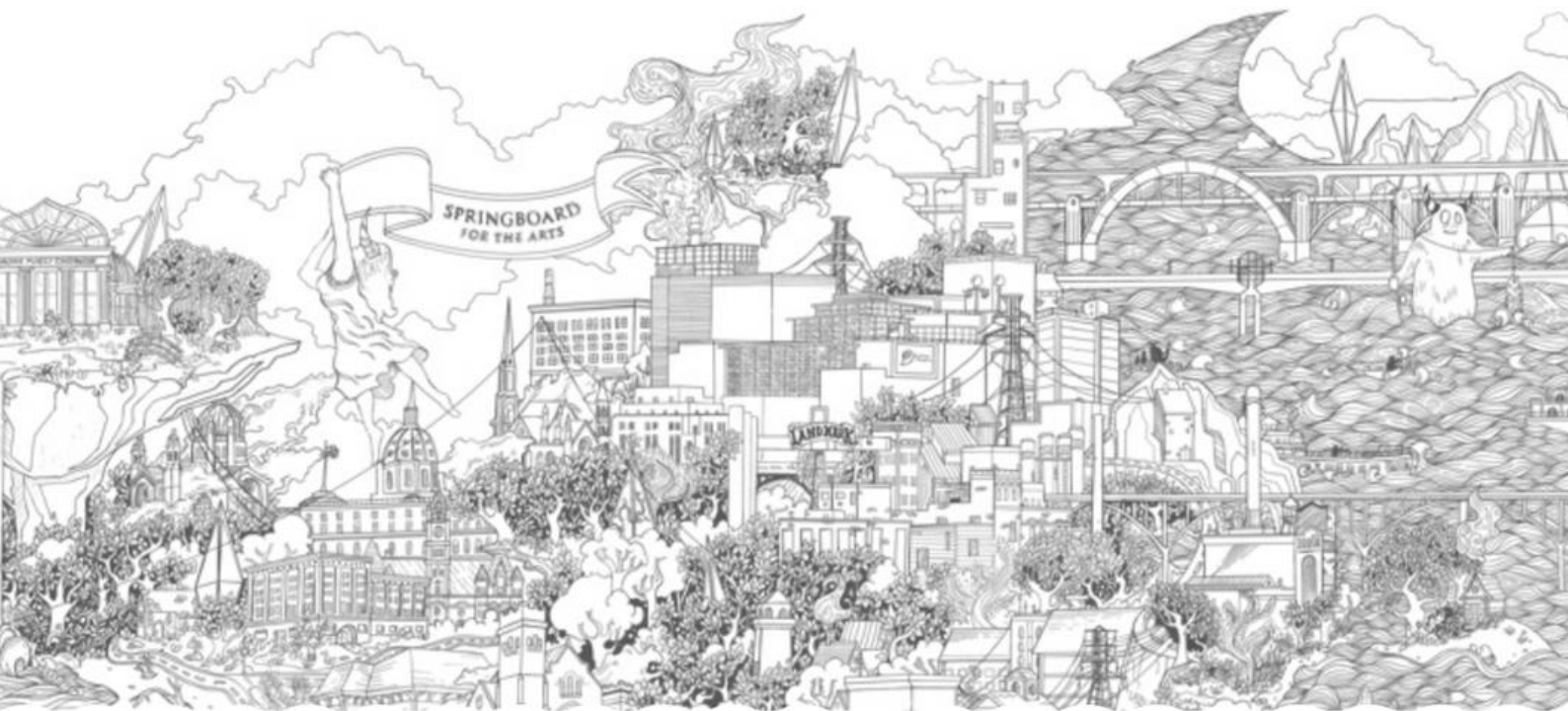


Event • Ask the Expert

Converting likes to sales

Aug 18, 11 AM CT





Springboard for the Arts Calendar of Events - Professional Development

- July 22, 2026 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM - Cheers to the Future! Celebrating Springboard's Next Chapter
- August 14, 2026 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM - Website Study Hall for Artists
- August 21, 2026 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM - Creative Community Coffee Club

Learn more and register at: <https://springboardforthearts.org/events/>

Additional Resources

- Get connected to Artist Career Consultants here:
<https://springboardforthearts.org/professional-growth/career-consultations/artist-career-consultants/>
- Work of Art Toolkit: <https://springboardforthearts.org/woa>
- Handbook for Artists Working in Community:
<https://springboardforthearts.org/artists-working-in-community/>

Tax Tips from the IRS



- [Here's what taxpayers need to know about business related travel deductions](#)
- [Companies who promise to eliminate tax debt sometimes leave taxpayers high and dry](#)
- [Get an Identity Protection PIN](#)
- [Tax Resources for Members of the Military](#)



July
22
2pm~3pm

FINDING THE FUN IN FUNDRAISING

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

July
24
1pm~2pm

BUILD A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL AND 12-MONTH PLAN

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

July
29
12pm~1pm

Economic Prosperity Info Session

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

July
31
1pm~2pm

GROWTH WITHOUT COMPROMISE: LESSONS FROM ICONIC FOUNDERS

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)



Aug

5

2pm~3pm

SCALING TO EXIT

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

Aug

5

1pm~2pm

HUBZone Certification Basic

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

Aug

6

12pm~1pm

FRAMEWORK FIRST: COHESIVE BUSINESS MODELING FOR CLARITY

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

Aug

12

12pm~1pm

Wednesday Webinar: SBA Funding for Start-up Businesses

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

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