

NEWS

This technology and its use in humans is alarming and thought-provoking. Dr. Rodger Watts, a professor here at CSP, put it well: "It's all just the beginning.

As we realize that we can do these scientific or computer things, there seems to be within the human spirit a visceral drive to do what we may be capable of doing. This is sad, given the fact that our morality and our ethical values are usually lagging way behind our technological development." †

Midterm Election Results Summary: *The 116th Congress*

BY TYLER DUNN

THE BALANCE OF POWER IN CONGRESS has certainly shifted since the 2018 midterm elections. The Democrats have taken control of the House of Representatives and the Republicans have widened their majority in the United States Senate. While every seat in both houses is significant, the leadership assignments in each party determines which bills will be voted on and what legislation or issues will be given priority over the next two years.

That being said, the 116th Congress will not see any changes from the 115th Congress at the top of each party in either house. Democrat Nancy Pelosi (CA-12) has been elected as the House Majority Leader and Republican Kevin McCarthy (CA-23) will become the House Minority Leader after the Republicans lost majority in the house.

Looking specifically at Minnesota, Tom Emmer of the 6th district won his election by voice vote to serve as the National Republican Campaign Committee Chair. Emmer will enter the leadership and will be in charge of fundraising and electing Republicans in 2020.

With the House changing hands, the Democrats will control the agenda and what legislation will hit the floor. Republicans believe that this could help their chances in the 2020 elections, as Steve Daines of Montana said in an interview with Politico, "I think it could be quite helpful, quite frankly, in 2020. If you turn the House over to Nancy Pelosi, the Democrats' agenda will be in full display before the American people – abolishing Immigration and Customs Enforcement... It will be about impeachment; it will be about a lot of issues that are out of the mainstream for most Americans."

Pelosi, who took office in 1987, is predicted to crack down on Republicans in the House, is likely attempting to launch several investigations, and be less likely to compromise on many issues.

Now transitioning to the United States Senate, where the Republicans picked up seats extending their majority to 53-47. Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky will continue serving as the longest serving Republican leader in the Senate. This comes to no surprise, as McConnell has been extremely

popular throughout his leadership.

On the Democratic side Senator Chuck Schumer of New York will remain in leadership.

McConnell has a record of being someone who is much more willing to compromise and cut deals with the Democratic Minority to get legislation passed. Senator Gerry Connolly of Virginia described McConnell as a "cold-blooded pragmatist," in a interview with Politico, following the statement with, "[McConnell] will make deals if he has to, and will do what we need to do to govern effectively and efficiently."

When looking at the 116th congress and the new faces that have been elected, there will be a very strong midwestern presence in powerful positions on the hill when the 116th takes secession.

South Dakota Senator John Thune was elected to the number two position in the Senate: Republican majority whip. Thune, who has an extremely high approval rating and is in a very safe seat, was a very clear choice for this position. His history serving on the agricultural committee has made him very popular in his state and among conservatives.

Minnesota makes an appearance at the federal level, with new faces taking office on the House side. One Minnesotan incumbent also won re-election, Tom Emmer of the 6th district, won by voice vote to serve as the National Republican Campaign Committee Chair.

Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar will also remain in Democratic leadership. She has had her name in the headlines as a potential candidate for the Democratic Party for the 2020 presidential election. Although being chair of the steering committee is historically not a stepping stone to the presidency, Klobuchar is extremely popular in Minnesota and could be successful in states where Democrats struggled to appeal in 2016.

As the 116th congress commences with the Democrats now having majority in the House, and with Republicans maintaining control in the Senate congressional productivity could certainly slow down. †

Passing the Torch: *Minnesota's First Hmong Essay Contest*

BY BAILEY PARENTEAU

MINNESOTA HAS A RELATIVELY LARGE and prosperous Hmong population. According to the U.S. Census taken in 2010, approximately over 66,000 Hmong people reside in Minnesota, with 29,000 residing in St. Paul alone.

Since the late 1970s, many Hmong families from their native country of Laos began residing in Minnesota and were drawn to the fantastic opportunities presenting in supporting their families with great educational systems, jobs, and housing.

At the 40th Hmong New Year celebration, located at the St. Paul RiverCentre, Minnesota's Hmong community reflected on their journeys and achievements together at the first essay contest, themed: "passing the torch."

The essay contest was meant to celebrate the past, the present, and the future of the Hmong community. According to the United Hmong Family website, the purpose of the essay contest was to allow creative minds of all ages and educational levels to capture the meaning of the theme. Each writer was to stitch together the Hmong past, present, and future into a "coherent, compelling, and beautiful tapestry that serves as a catalyst for uniting and empowering the Hmong community."

Leon Xiong, who is a second-generation Hmong-American, recited his winning essay to a large crowd of thousands of Hmong's who gathered to celebrate the festivities. In an interview with NPR, Xiong stated, "My inspiration came from my family and watching all of us grow up in this country and how successful we've been able to become."

Several notable Hmong-American judges agree that Xiong's essay was well-focused on the theme. Sophia Vuelo, Minnesota's first Hmong-American judge, (who was also just sworn in earlier this year), commented, "It was especially notable this year that we got to read literature, an essay by a young Hmong-American who was able to reflect on that theme well."

Additionally, judge Kang Vang, a Hmong-American filmmaker, said the essay contest has provided excellent opportunities for young Hmong-Americans to express their voices through writing. "A lot of times the voices of the younger people aren't heard, especially in the Hmong community," said Vang. "We're a community that really reveres the elderly."

Leon Xiong, who is a senior in high school, plans to study political science in Washington D.C. and work for a nonprofit after college. Xiong noted that he looks forward to seeing his fellow Hmong-Americans show off their intellectual abilities through more events like the essay contest. "It's an amazing feeling and such an honor to be able to read it out loud" said Xiong. Organizers and judges of the contest hope to continue the new practice in future celebrations.

"It shows that together we are more creative [... and] innovative, and that is how we achieve prosperity for everyone," said Vuelo.