Death of George Floyd Sparks Protests in Sioux City

KTIV covered protests at the Sioux City Police Department in early June.

Protesters joined with others around the country after the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

While protests in Sioux City were mostly peaceful, some water bottles were thrown at police and a window at the police headquarters was damaged.

In addition to ongoing coverage of protesting outside the Sioux City police department headquarters and other areas of the community.

We also brought our viewers stories on how the Sioux City Police Department and organizations such as Unity in the Community are working together to bring awareness to issues with minorities and police departments.

Ike Rayford (pictured above), the President of Sioux City’s NAACP Chapter, says he understands the community’s frustration and anger, but he emphasizes, we need to be smart and strategic about change.

“We have to do it in a way that it makes change, and change will stick and stay,” said Rayford.

“I think it goes without saying that all of our officers are in total and complete support of the protests,” said Rex Mueller, Sioux City Police Chief (pictured above).

“We’re here for the people who are protesting, and we are going to continue to be here for the people who are protesting. We just want it to be constructive.”
Sharing Important Covid-19 Health and Safety Information

Spreading the Message of Importance of Masks and Social Distancing To Fight the Spread of Covid-19

The leadership of both Sioux City hospitals came together in a campaign produced by KTIV to encourage the public to wear masks during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Lynn Wold, President & CEO of Unity Point Health – St. Luke’s, and Beth Hughes President, Western Iowa Region MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center both appear in the spot talking about the importance of taking precautions and wearing a mask when out in public.

The PSA was produced by the KTIV Creative Services team and shared with other local broadcasters to increase the reach of the message. The two hospitals also shared the

KTIV Only Siouxland Station to Air Governors’ Daily Press Conferences

In April and May, KTIV was the only Sioux City TV station to offer daily broadcasts, both on-air and online, of news conferences from the Governors of Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota as each updated residents in their respective states on the COVID-19 Pandemic.

KTIV received a lot of positive feedback from viewers, especially older viewers, who shared they did not have social accounts or web access and that KTIV broadcasting the news conferences was the only way they would have been able to see them and get the information that they needed to stay informed.

KTIV Viewers’ Generous Support of Fundraising Drive for the Food Bank of Siouxland Raises over $21,000

KTIV’s on-air and online campaign to raise funds for the Food Bank of Siouxland collected $21,571 for the Food Bank of Siouxland. During April and May KTIV aired spots featuring the morning and evening anchor teams asking viewers to make a donation via a special link on ktiv.com. The amount raised is equivalent to 280,000 pounds of food or 234,000 meals.

Stella Daskalakis, KTIV evening news anchor, hosted a Facebook Live event with Food Bank Executive Director Linda Scheid to discuss the impact of Covid-19 on the Food Bank’s resources and what the organization does to support area food pantries and other service organizations during a crisis such as this.

The Food Bank of Siouxland has seen record demand and distribution levels during the Covid-19 pandemic and these funds will go a long way in replacing stock that was disbursed to area pantries and food programs in the area. The Food Bank of Siouxland provides food to 100 member agencies in an 11 county region.
KTIV and Quincy Media Provide Technical Assistance to Siouxland District Health Dept.

KTIV and parent company Quincy Media provided special equipment to facilitate pool coverage of press conferences from the Siouxland District Health Department.

Quincy Media provided technical equipment to work with local stations which provided a live pool feed for all local stations to use. This also kept members of the media and Siouxland District Health Department safe by only needing one person to cover the briefings, instead of each station sending separate crews.

Supporting United Way of Siouxland’s “Siouxland Recovery Fund”

The purpose of the Siouxland Recovery Fund is to provide financial resources to help meet short, intermediate and long term needs for recovery in the Siouxland area when a major disaster strikes.

The fund is a project of the United Way of Siouxland to aid in the recovery efforts for those impacted by COVID-19. All funds collected during this time will be used to help those efforts.

KTIV aired PSAs in support of the Siouxland Recovery Fund to increase awareness and donations to this project.

Some of the organizations who have benefited from this fund include: The Food Bank of Siouxland, Siouxland Mental Health Center, Sunnybrook Hope Center, The Salvation Army, Women Aware, The Warming Shelter, Sioux City Community Assistance, Boys & Girls Clubs of Siouxland, Dakota County Voices for Food, Siouxland Center for Active Generations, Council on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Growing Community Connections, Morningside Lutheran Church, Heartland Counseling Services, Rejoice! Community Church, Community Action Agency, LaunchPAD Children’s Museum and Boys and Girls Home of Nebraska.

High School Graduations Took Place This Spring and Summer With Virtual or Live Ceremonies on KTIV

Both the Sioux City Community School District and Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools broadcast high school graduation ceremonies on KTIV.

In May, Sioux City Community School District created virtual commencement ceremonies for each of their three high schools (East, North and West) and broadcast all three programs on KTIV. The school district also made the virtual ceremonies available on their website.

Bishop Heelan partnered with KTIV in June to produce a live broadcast of their high school graduation from Memorial Field in Sioux City, while keeping safety in mind with social distancing in place for the graduating seniors and anyone in attendance. The live broadcast was also streamed on KTIV’s Facebook page and ktiv.com so anyone with internet access could access the broadcast.

Above: A view from the field as one of KTIV’s cameras is in place for the live broadcast of Bishop Heelan Catholic High School’s commencement ceremony on June 27th from Memorial Field in Sioux City.
Parents and Schools Share Pride in their Graduates on KTIV and ktiv.com

Recognizing graduating high school students from dozens of school districts in the KTIV viewing area is no easy feat.

KTIV reached out to area school superintendents and parents of graduates to help recognize the Class of 2020 while Covid-19 was shutting down graduations and celebrations across Siouxland.

KTIV directly contacted school administrators asking them to record brief video messages and photos recognizing their graduating seniors. These clips were then edited into an on-air campaign that aired in May and June.

The station also ran spots asking parents to upload their graduating senior’s photo to ktiv.com’s “Senior Spotlight” page.

The special page allowed parents to not only share their senior’s photo, but also share important information about their accomplishments and future plans.

Three Siouxland Middle Schools Recognized for Making a Difference

KTIV was proud to announce the three Grand Prize schools in our annual ‘Making a Difference” program.

Last fall we asked Siouxland middle and junior high schools to create short videos explaining how their students are making a difference in their communities. The three winning schools would receive a day for their students at Arnolds Park Amusement Park.

KTIV and Arnolds Park Amusement Park began this partnership in 2018.

Due to Covid-19, we were unable to host the students at the park. Instead, Arnolds Park has given each student from the three winning schools a free pass to attend the park at any time this season.

The three winning schools for 2020 are Pender Middle School, Charter Oak-Ute and Sioux Center. Each of the schools produced a video showcasing the outstanding work done by their students to make a big difference in their school and community.
Decision 2020: KTIV Partners With Other Iowa TV Stations for Political Coverage with Zoom Forums

KTIV partnered with KWWL and KCCI to co-produce two forums in May.

These events were for the Democratic primary for the Iowa U.S. Senate race and the GOP primary for U.S. House District 4 in Iowa. The forums were conducted on the video conferencing platform Zoom because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 4th District special aired on KTIV, KWWL (Waterloo), KCCI (Des Moines) and KTTC (Rochester, MN). The Senate forum aired on those stations with the addition of WGEM in Quincy, IL as well, which serves counties in southeastern Iowa.

This was the first time KTIV, KWWL and KCCI partnered on a program and the first time these stations produced a program like this using Zoom.

Diocese of Sioux City Partners with KTIV for Live Broadcast of Ordination Mass of New Priest

On June 6, KTIV and the Diocese of Sioux City produced a live broadcast of an ordination mass for Fr. Travis Crotty.

Due to CDC guidelines in place at the time and out of concern for the health of clergy and anyone in attendance, the Diocese chose to continue on with the ordination and broadcast it live on KTIV so it could still take place.

The ordination was broadcast live with a multi-camera production from the Cathedral of the Epiphany in Sioux City and was presided over by Bishop R. Walker Nickless.

The Rev. Brian Hughes provided “color commentary” of the ceremony alongside on-air host (and former KTIV anchor) Kristie VerMulm. The broadcast was streamed live on ktiv.com and the station’s facebook page.

Fr. Crotty is a native of Varina, Iowa and has been assigned to the All Saints Parish in Le Mars, Iowa.

Left: Fr. Travis Crotty during the live broadcast of his ordination service. Right: (Above) Bishop R. Walker Nickless Right: (Below) Hosts Rev. Brian Hughes and Kristie VerMulm.
Al Joens and Brad Pautsch Reach Major Milestones at KTIV

Morning Anchor, Al Joens and Sports Director, Brad Pautsch each recently celebrated important anniversaries at KTIV.

Al Joens celebrated 35 years with the station in June, 2020. He began his career at the station as a part-time weekend reporter in 1985.

Al served as the anchor of KTIV’s weekend, noon, morning and evening newscasts, but is most known for his long-term tenure as anchor of KTIV’s “News 4 Today.” He married KTIV coworker, Melissa Lazourakis in 2008 and has three grown children: Philip, Rachel and Kevin.

KTIV Sports Director Brad Pautsch celebrated 30 years with the station in May, 2020.

Brad began his career at KTIV in 1990 as a news and sports reporter. From there he quickly moved on to Weekend Sports Anchor and became KTIV’s Sports Director in 1996. Brad graduated from Crestland High School in Early, Iowa and is a graduate of Iowa State University. Brad’s wife, Sally is an art teacher in Sioux City and they are the parents of Joseph, Mary and Reggie.

The station aired promotional campaigns during May and June recognizing the accomplishments of both anchors and congratulating them on their anniversaries with the station.

MBJA and IBNA Recognize KTIV

KTIV News 4 has been honored with recognition from the Midwest Broadcast Journalists Association (MBJA) and the Iowa Broadcast News Association (IBNA).

In April, the MBJA awarded KTIV with three Eric Sevareid Awards: Award of Merit/Sportscast for “SportsFource Extra,” Award of Merit/Spot News Coverage for KTIV’s coverage of Midwest Flooding in Spring 2019, and First Place/Weather for KTIV Storm Team 4.

In June, the IBNA recognized KTIV with ten awards, including six First Place awards for: Flood Coverage, Spot News, Best Sportscast, Weather Coverage, Best Newscast and Overall Excellence.

“We are honored and humbled by this recognition from our industry,” said KTIV News Director Keith Bliven. “This broad acknowledgement of our coverage reinforces the hard work by our team of journalists to be the station our viewers depend on for news and information every day.”

Showing Appreciation to Our Employees During Covid-19

In order to provide a safe working environment for our employees and keep KTIV on the air, many of our staff members have been working remotely since Covid-19 became a concern in Siouxland.

To show our appreciation for our employees, station management put together “Thank You” care packages.

Station managers personally delivered the packages to employees’ homes (maintaining a safe distance) while they were working remotely. Those employees who were still working at the station also received an in-person thank you and care package, as well.

The packages included a thank you letter and a collection of snacks to help keep the team powered through this time. Another delivery featured cookie cakes.

KTIV appreciates how hard our employees have worked to keep the station on the air and find new approaches to covering the news and bring our viewers the information they count on every day during what has been a challenging time.