



NATIONAL

Paul Rudd becomes a real-life hero for a bullied Colorado boy

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AMINA KILPATRICK



Paul Rudd, pictured arriving at the Los Angeles premiere of *Ant-Man and the Wasp* in 2018, reached out to Brody Ridder after learning the 12-year-old boy had been bullied and came home with a nearly empty yearbook.

Jordan Strauss/Invision/AP

Brody Ridder, 12, had arrived home from school with a nearly empty yearbook, only managing to acquire the signatures of two teachers and two classmates despite asking

for more.

Ridder decided to sign his own yearbook with a note to himself: "Hope you make some more friends," he wrote.



Brody Ridder.

Cassandra Ridder

Ridder's mom, Cassandra Ridder, had reached her breaking point, she told NPR Friday over the phone. Her son's message to himself was a reflection of months worth of bullying her son experienced at school in a Denver suburb.

"Parents need to teach their children kindness, open up that dialogue. And if you see your child being mean to somebody else, talk to them about how that could possibly make them feel. Talk to them about intent versus impact," Ridder said.

Brody's hurt and pain inspired her to share a message with the parent's Facebook group for the school.

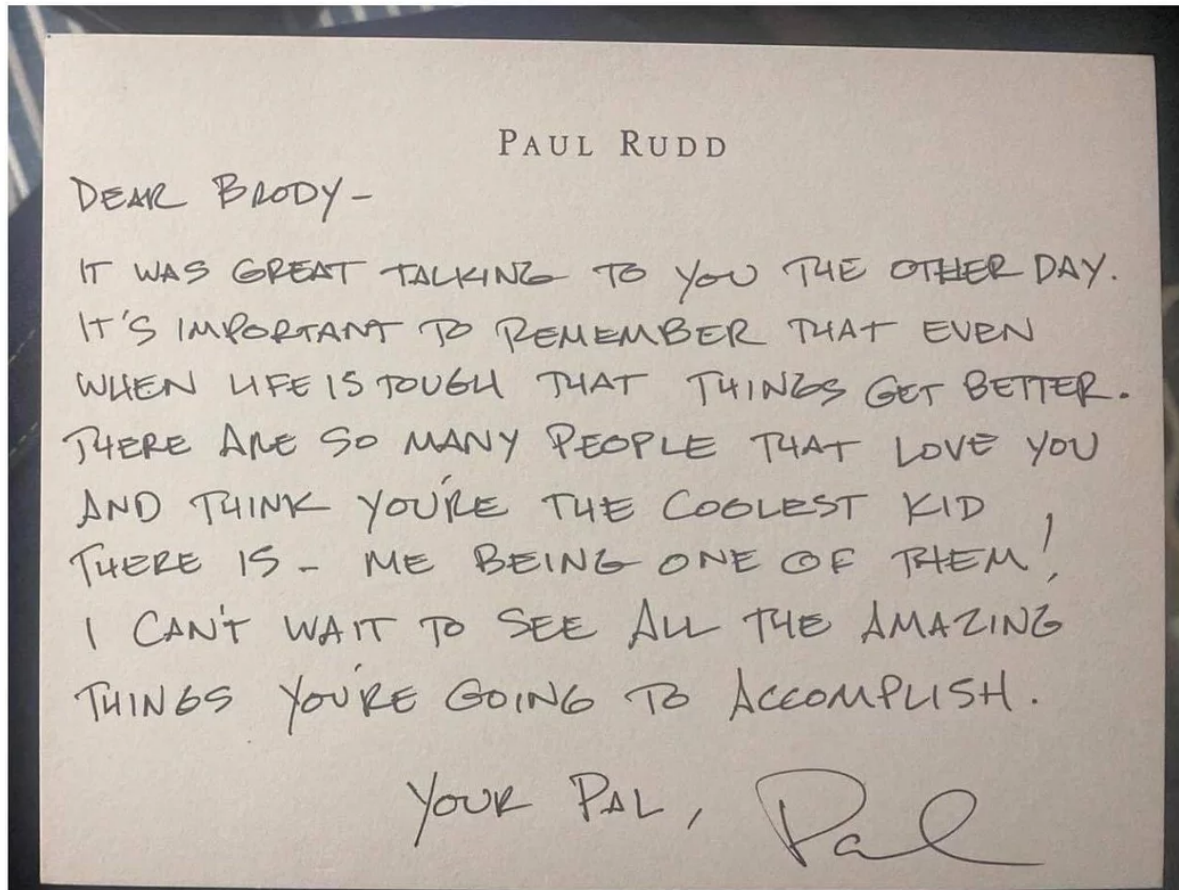
"My poor son. Doesn't seem like it's getting any better. 2 teachers and a total of 2 students wrote in his yearbook. Despite Brody asking all kinds of kids to sign it. So Brody took it upon himself to write to himself. My heart is shattered Teach your kids kindness."

Sponsor Message

After sharing the post with the school community in May, Cassandra posted to her personal Facebook, wanting to keep her friends updated on what was happening. That is when the support exploded; celebrities, companies, parents, kids all reached out online and in real life to show Brody support.

Among those to see Cassandra's message was Paul Rudd, who plays Ant-Man in the hit films *Ant-Man* and *Avengers: Endgame*. Rudd FaceTimed Ridder last month and sent him a handwritten note:

It's important to remember that even when life gets tough that things get better. There are so many people that love you and think you are the coolest kid there is — me being one of them!"



Actor Paul Rudd writes a handwritten of support to Brody Ridder.

Cassandra Cooper

Brody even received his own signed Ant-Man helmet from the actor.

"We put it in one of those little helmet cases," Cassandra said. "Now he's storing it in his room, displaying it. He's so proud of it."



The Ant-Man helmet Paul Rudd sent Brody Ridder.

Cassandra Ridder

Brody is sorting through the wealth of support her family has received over the last few months. They are still reading letters that have been sent to him. This support all means the world to her son.

She is currently in talks with nonprofits that work on anti-bullying initiatives to continue spreading the message of kindness and empathy.

Sponsor Message

When Brody returned to school after his mom posted on Facebook, a group of older students visited his class and signed his yearbook. Cassandra said the support has been well received by her son, and he has been really positive.





High school students with Brody Ridder.

Cassandra Ridder

"He is just over the moon," Cassandra said. "He is so excited. He feels hopeful for next year. He's excited to try to put himself out there to make more friends."



Students posing with Brody Ridder at his school.

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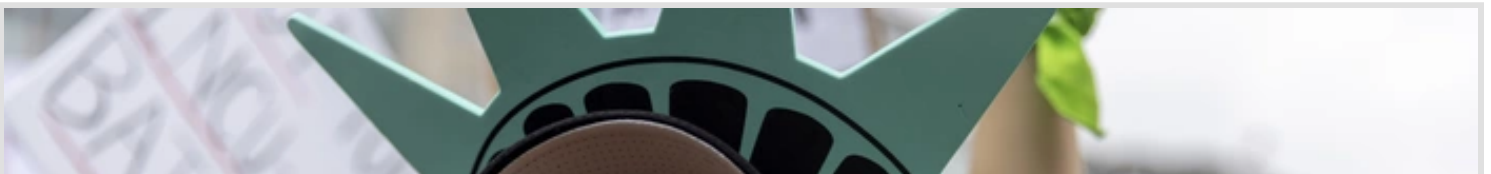
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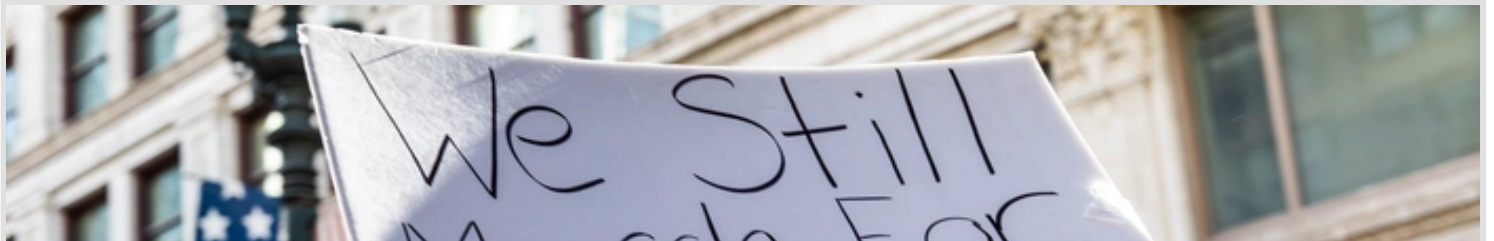




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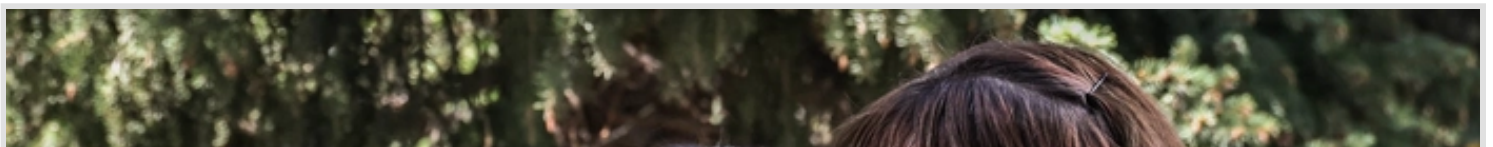
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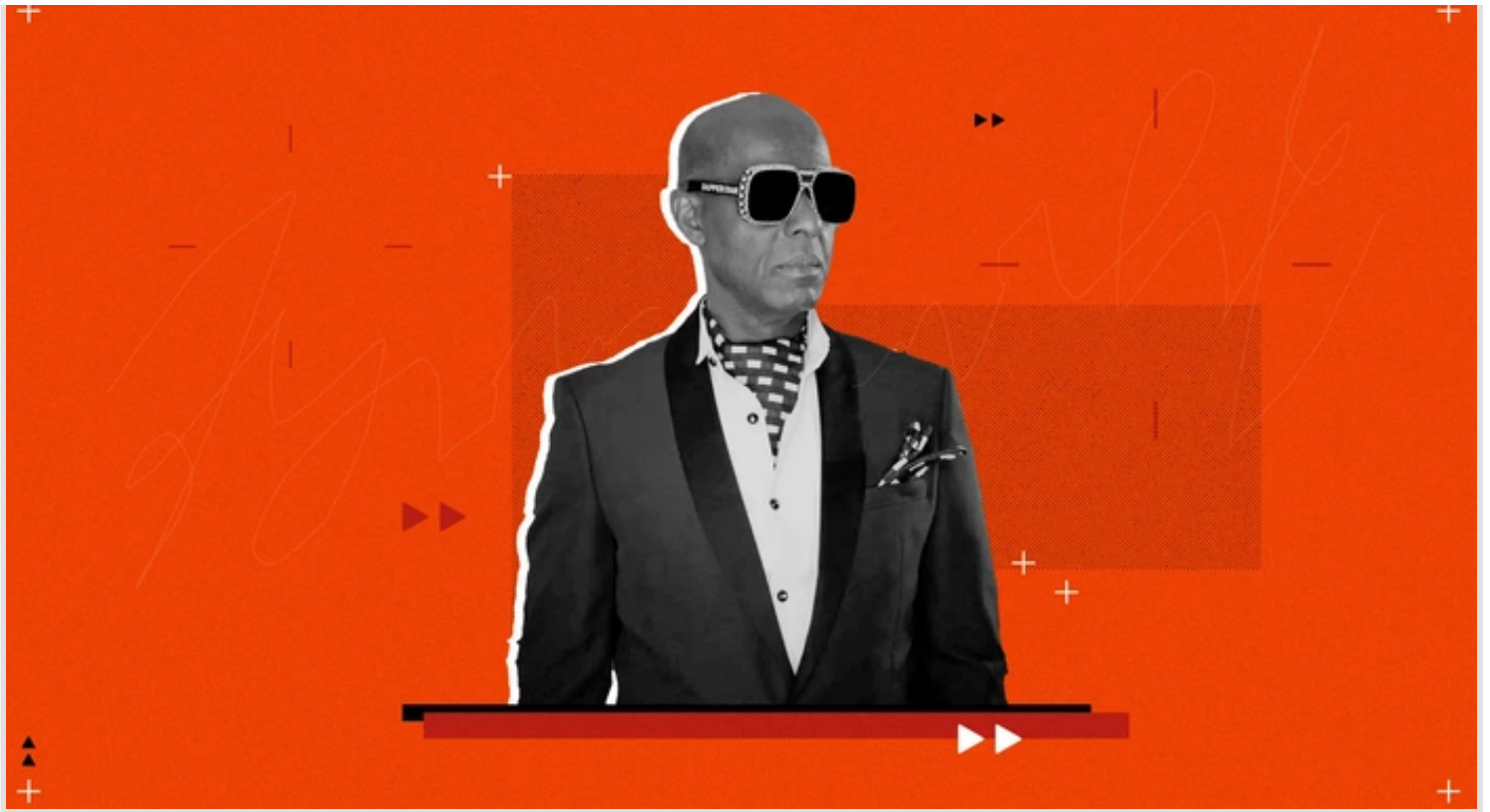
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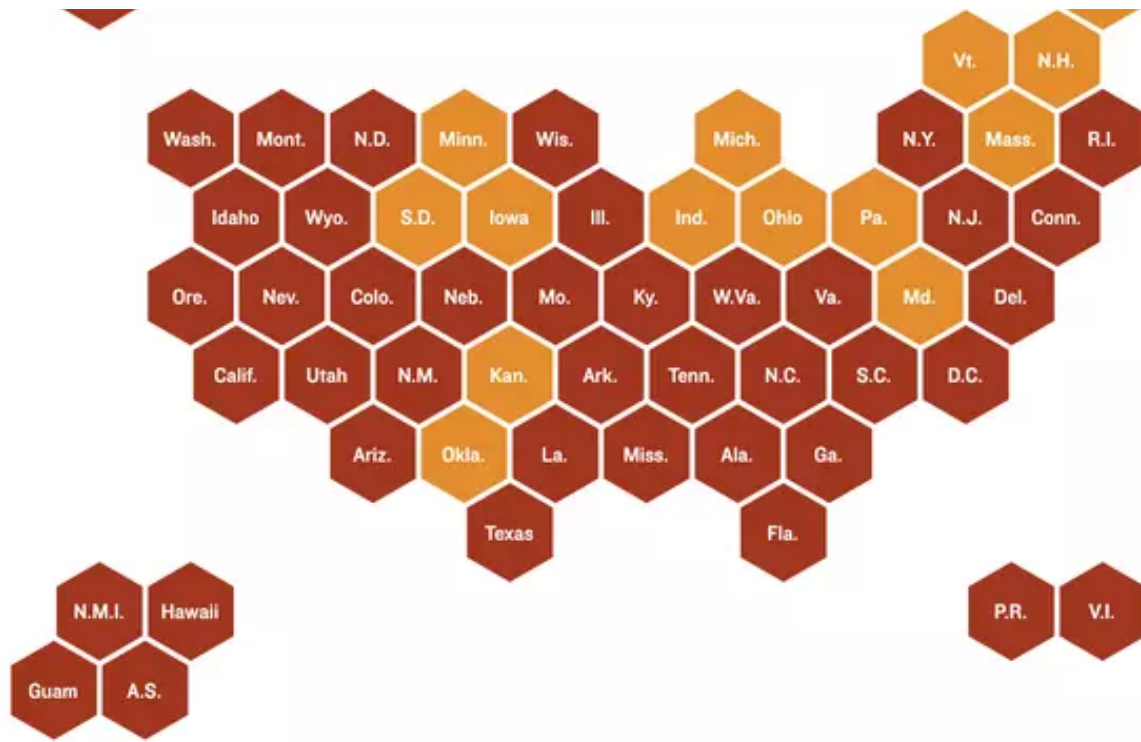


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