



Nonprofit News

Information and connections for Minnesota's nonprofit sector

Fall 2018

The mission of the **Minnesota Council of Nonprofits** is to inform, promote, connect and strengthen individual nonprofits and the nonprofit sector.

Protecting State Investment in Healthy Communities Should Be a Top Priority for 2019 Legislative Session

Good health shouldn't depend on the size of someone's paycheck or their address. Fortunately, Minnesota has a history of investing in healthy people and healthy communities. The health care provider tax funds many of those investments, such as affordable health care coverage, improved access to doctors and other health care providers, and better health in communities across the state.

tans have affordable health care through MinnesotaCare and Medicaid, funded in part through the provider tax. These include working Minnesotans who don't have affordable insurance through their employers, as well as seniors, Minnesotans living with disabilities, and families with children.

Minnesota policymakers must take action in the 2019 Legislative Session to keep those investments in place. That's because in 2011, as part of a deal to pass the state's budget and end a government shutdown, the Legislature voted to repeal the provider tax starting in 2020. Minnesota is among the nation's leaders when it comes to overall rates of health

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The provider tax is an essential funding source for Minnesota nonprofits that provide health services across the state, and we all benefit when our neighbors get the support they need to live healthier lives. Around one million Minneso-

Nonprofit Employment Up, Wage Gap Narrows: Full Report Available Online

Minnesota's nonprofit sector has experienced 25 years of continuous growth in employment and share of the state's workforce (even during the Great Recession years of 2008-09). From 1993-2017, Minnesota nonprofit employers added 157,181 employees, or a 92 percent growth in their workforce, outpacing overall Minnesota workforce growth of 29 percent.

(even when large Hospital, College and University employers are removed from the equation to avoid skewing the numbers).

For the first time, in 2017 average annual nonprofit wages equaled government wages in Minnesota. The 14-page report, with state wide findings and six regional breakdowns, is available at the MCN website.

To see a summary of some of the information available in the *2017 Nonprofit Economy Report*, turn to page 3.

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American Indian Community Housing Organization wins Mission Award 7

Nonprofit Bits

Register Today for Session Line-Up on January 11th

New location: Saint Paul College
\$25 for MCN members / \$40 for nonmembers

Reserve your spot to hear directly from the Governor's office and legislative caucus leaders as they share their priorities and you have the opportunity to get your questions on the legislative table at the beginning of session. Show up and advocate!

Association Health Plan, GrantAdvisor Expands, Business Genius to the Rescue

By Jon Pratt, MCN executive director

Could your nonprofit's health plan be improved? That is the question MCN began tackling in March 2018 by exploring creation of an Association Health Plan for Group Health Insurance. An Association Health Plan would combine the insurance purchasing power of nonprofits across Minnesota, to reduce administrative costs through economies of scale, strengthen bargaining position, and offer a wider array of quality insurance options. Please stay tuned -- while MCN initially aimed for a January 2019 start date, that timing was not possible. MCN has formed a trust to sponsor the plan, BenefitsMN, – and is working with a major carrier and the Minnesota Department of Commerce to secure approvals and create a viable alternative for nonprofit employers.

If you have any questions or recommendations for this new service please contact Margie Siegel, Association Health Plan team lead, at msiegel@minnesotanonprofits.org or (651) 478-4063.



Honest Feedback: GrantAdvisor.org reviews available online

GrantAdvisor ratings and reviews of foundations by nonprofits continue to grow, with 31 Minnesota foundation profiles now available online. 500 foundations have been reviewed nationally since MCN launched the site with partner organizations in California in 2017. The GrantAdvisor website is being refreshed, with new search functions, an intuitive vertical layout with clearer score comparisons in search results, and re-oriented homepage spotlighting most recent reviews.

Each of the following foundations report scores for nonprofit relationships, accessibility and success at accomplishing their goals:

3M Foundation	Marbrook Foundation	Patrick & Aimee Butler Family Foundation
Andersen Corporate Foundation	Mardag Foundation	Pohlad Family Foundation
Best Buy Foundation	Margaret A. Cargill Foundation	RBC Foundation USA
Blandin Foundation	Mary's Pence	Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation	McKnight Foundation	Securian Foundation
Bush Foundation	Media Foundation	Shavlik Family Foundation
Carolyn Foundation	Medtronic Communities Foundation	The Saint Paul Foundation
Catholic Community Foundation of Minnesota	Minneapolis Foundation	Travelers Foundation
Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation Inc	Northwest Area Foundation	US Bank Foundation
Headwaters Foundation for Justice	Otto Bremer Trust	Wells Fargo Foundation
Hugh J. Andersen Foundation		

Winners Take All: a Useful Critique

One unexpected advantage of the nonprofit sector is how much access we get to free, unsolicited advice about how to run these organizations. This well intentioned advice often comes in the form of “be more like business,” crank down on metrics and make your organization data driven, and if possible craft algorithms to determine staffing, scheduling, client interactions and budget decisions.

Nonprofits have used ordinary business tools since the flood, of course, but are now confronted by Third Wave “Business Genius/Social Change Rescue” from triumphant tech titans. A refreshing critique is now available from Anand Giridharadas, author of *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World* and a former foreign correspondent and columnist for *The New York Times*. Giridharadas is scheduled to give a keynote address at the Center for Effective Philanthropy conference in Minneapolis May 7-9 in Minneapolis.

Protecting State Investment in Healthy Communities Should Be a Top Priority for 2019 Legislative Session

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insurance coverage, but there is still important work that needs to be done so that all Minnesotans can get the care they need. If Minnesota policymakers don't maintain the provider tax, it will be a serious blow to the state's ability to adapt to an aging population, and ensure all Minnesotans can have their health care needs met.

Focused investment is needed in Minnesota's rural areas, where primary care providers, dentists, mental health professionals, and other caregivers are in short supply. State investments to help health care providers serve rural communities could disappear if the provider tax expires.

Minnesota also needs to seriously address racial equity in health care. People of color in Minnesota are more likely to lack access to health care, and often have worse health outcomes than their white neighbors. Any cutbacks to state health care programs will do disproportionate harm to communities of color. That would compound the barriers to health they already experience due to a history of lack of public investments in their communities, which means people of color are more likely to be exposed to lead and pollution, and are less likely to be able to afford healthy foods.

The harm caused by the loss of the provider tax would likely go beyond health care. Some policymakers have suggested that the resources from the provider tax

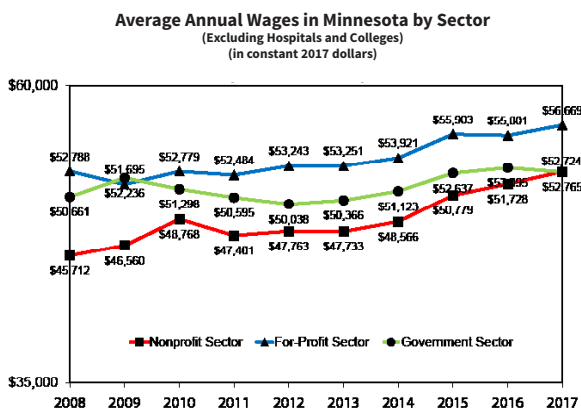
could come out of the state's general fund instead. But that's the funding source for other public services that Minnesotans value. Diverting that much revenue out of the general fund would create pressure on other priorities such as K-12 education, financial aid for college students, and building economic opportunity in Greater Minnesota through expanding access to broadband.

Minnesota policymakers should act in 2019 to keep this critical funding source from vanishing, and protect important investments in Minnesotans' health and well-being.

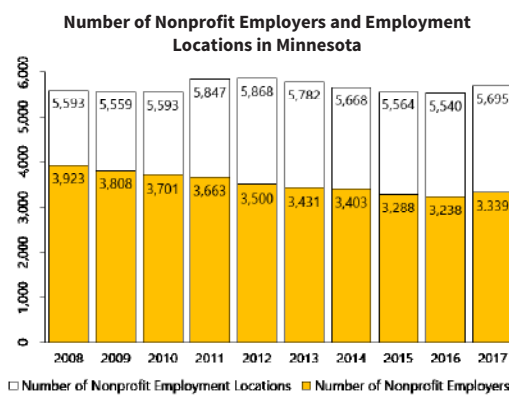
For updates on this and other tax and budget issues, head to mnbudgetproject.org.

Nonprofit Employment Up, Wage Gap Narrows: Full Report Available Online

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As stated on page 1, this graph shows that over time, nonprofit average annual wages have been closing the gap with average annual wages for for-profit and government employees. Employees of hospitals report higher wages and stronger wage growth than is the case for much of the nonprofit sector. Removing them from the analysis has a dramatic impact on average annual wages in the nonprofit sector.



The overall number of nonprofit employers in Minnesota has fallen by 15 percent over the last ten years, with a reduction in nine out of the ten years ending with fewer than 3,400 employers in 2017. A single employer may operate more than one location in the state, and the number of nonprofit locations has also been falling, marked by a decline in four of the five years ending with 5,695 employment locations in 2017. Churning is normal across this population of organizations, so that each year a number of nonprofits merge, some dissolve and new organizations start up.

Visit minnesotanonprofits.org for the full 2017 Nonprofit Economy Report!

As part of national partnership, Minnesota Budget Project advances broader prosperity

Starting next year, younger Minnesota workers will qualify for an important income-boosting tax credit, helping them gain a stronger foothold in the workforce and build a stronger future. This nation-leading expansion of the state's Working Family Tax Credit was passed by the Minnesota Legislature thanks to the smart leadership, analysis, and advocacy by the Minnesota Budget Project and its allies.

It's just one example of how focused work to advance tax and budget policies at the state level has expanded opportunity for people and families across the country. It's the kind of impact that the State Priorities Partnership (SPP), a network of state-based groups including the Minnesota Budget Project, was created to deliver.

Now celebrating 25 years, the State Priorities Partnership has members in more than 40 states, who use analysis, strategic communications, and coalition-building to build more inclusive economies. These groups, supported by the Washington D.C.-based Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, equip lawmakers, journalists, advocacy groups, nonprofit service providers, and the public with unassailable information

that supports policy changes so that children get a quality education, families have the medical care they need, and working people get the support they need to build a better life.



In 1999, the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) created the Minnesota Budget Project to be the State Priorities Partnership group in our state, as one of the ways that MCN advances its vision for a healthy, cooperative, and just society. That's achieved through the work the Minnesota Budget Project team does to identify and promote public policies that make our state a place where everyone can thrive, and by providing nonprofits with information and tools they can use to successfully

engage in policy debates, especially tax and budget debates, to better advance their missions.

Looking ahead, SPP groups including the Minnesota Budget Project are working on addressing racial inequality through internal organizational work, and analysis and advocacy to begin to undo the harmful effects of systemic racism that continues to prevent communities of color from reaching economic security.

To learn more about the State Priorities Partnership and the work partners like the Minnesota Budget Project and its peers are doing throughout the country, visit www.statepriorities.org.

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State and Federal Policy - Where Are We?

By Rebecca Lucero, MCN public policy director

It's the most wonderful time of the year – legislative session time!

I love this time of the year because it is an important and powerful moment for nonprofits to raise awareness about both the consequences and opportunities of budget and policy decisions. It also highlights how nonprofits are uniquely positioned to bring people together from across the entire political spectrum to create long-term solutions.

In Minnesota: We have a new political environment, new committee structures, and hopefully a continued surplus, the importance of introducing nonprofits and their issues to both new and returning legislators becomes more important than ever. One key opportunity to engage with leadership is at MCN's annual session line-up on January 11th. Register today! With this changing leadership, you won't want to miss this! There are many moving pieces at the Capitol this year. Here are some specific areas MCN is working:



- **Tax Conformity and spending:** Minnesota still hasn't decided how it is going to conform to the federal tax bill. This is an awesome opportunity for Minnesota because how we choose to raise revenue has major implications on how much and where we spend money to undo racial and economic disparities so all Minnesota's thrive.
- **Build a Strong Democracy:** There was a decisive win in Florida with the decision by voters to restore voter rights to former felons. This will likely have an impact on efforts in Minnesota to work on voter access through re-enfranchisement and automatic voting registration.

At the federal level government continues to be deeply divided. With the substantial shifts in the House, there will be more focus on oversight and it becomes even more challenging to move legislation. Congress will at least need to make sure the government is funded every year (and at the time I am writing this, a December 7th deadline on continuing resolutions looms.) Besides the budget process, some specific areas MCN is focusing on include:

- **Changes in the Senate Finance Committee:** Senator Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) is returning to his role as the chair of the Senate Finance Committee where he will have greater oversight over 501(c)(3)s. Senator Grassley is known as the "lead critic of nonprofits" and is interested in nonprofit and foundation oversight, nonprofit compensation levels, overall transparency, and is concerned with how donor advised funds are being used. This highlights the importance of forming and deepening relationships with members of congress to tell the story of why nonprofits are so essential to thriving communities.
- **2020 Census:** Minnesota is full of strong leaders on the Census at the state and local level. Importantly, Keith Ellison as Attorney General means that Minnesota will continue in its participation of the federal lawsuit regarding the citizenship question. And, Representative Betty McCollum will be able to further champion the importance of the census in her elected role of the Appropriations Committee.



There are obviously many more moving pieces at all levels of government—Medicaid, housing, food, arts, and more. We are all deeply interconnected. I am so grateful for all those we partner with in the nonprofit community that are so critical to the policy making process. We look forward to working with each of Minnesota's nonprofit organizations during the 2019 Legislative Session and beyond!

Nonprofit Awards and Advancements



Nou Yang was named senior program director at Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

FamilyMeans named Katie McNulty director of development and communications.



Shereese Turner joins Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity as senior director of programs and services.

Amanda Moua named executive director of Page Education Foundation.

Foundation for Essential Needs (FFEN) has hired Kate Burggraff as executive director.

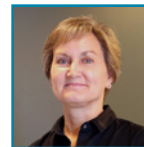


Conservation Corps Minnesota and Iowa has hired Mark Murphy as executive director.



Peter Carlson named managing director of Yellow Tree Theatre.

Gena Johnson joins The American Craft Council as director of development.



Stacy McMahon joined Aeon as vice president of asset management.

Submit Your Announcements

Visit MCN's Sector News at www.minnesotanonprofits.org/sector-news. MCN member organizations are invited to submit your organization's awards, staffing announcements and other news to scrumrine@minnesotanonprofits.org.

MCN VISTA Cohort Making Waves

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) started its AmeriCorps VISTA program in 2014 as a way to extend its mission to inform, promote, connect, and strengthen individual nonprofits and the nonprofit sector. The program inspires and equips three networks—nonprofit leaders of color, emerging nonprofit leaders, and philanthropic and capacity-building organizations—to overcome inequities of access, develop new networks of beneficial relationships, and increase cultural agility in ways that nurture and sustain these partnerships for future success.

MCN is excited about all of the work that our current AmeriCorps VISTA cohort has been doing in their organizations since beginning in the summer.

This year's cohort include a wonderful collection of individuals dedicated to enhancing the impact of their host organization:

- Jackie Schell - African Development Center
- Jacob Alex - American Indian Family Center
- Tori Dylla - All Parks Alliance for Change

- Katherine Medina - Casa de Esperanza
- Tobey Slagenweit-Coffman - Council on American-Islamic Relations Minnesota
- Tyra Payer - Dream of Wild Health
- Anika Johnson - Exodus Lending
- Paige Myers - Frogtown Farm
- Emilina Guimont - Ka Joog
- Sharon Rebar - Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota
- Jacob Vang - MIGIZI
- Kat McCaffery - Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
- Hannah Passmore - Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center
- Taylor Gauthier - Neighborhood Development Center
- Lydia Maendel - Northside Residents Redevelopment Center
- Ellen Wallingford - Standpoint
- Pakou Khang - Women's Initiative for Self-Empowerment

To learn more about each of the VISTA cohort members, as well as their organizations, visit mcnvista.org.

Thank you!

For making our world a more fair and sustainable place in which to live.

There's lots more to do.
We're here to help.

We are attuned to the realities you face, and bring a wealth of expertise and a spirit of collaboration to helping you achieve your goals.

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2018 Mission Award Winner for Innovation: American Indian Community Housing Organization (AICHO)

The 2018 Nonprofit Mission Award recipient for Innovation, the American Indian Community Housing Organization (AICHO) works tirelessly to ensure that every American Indian woman and child deserves to live in a safe, non-threatening environment and should be treated with dignity and respect.

Created in 1993 as an Indigenous response to social conditions in Duluth, MN, AICHO transforms oppression into opportunity by asserting their political and cultural ties to the land and forging a commitment to build sustainable, community-owned practices.

AICHO's work currently consists of an American Indian Community Center, 44 units of permanent supportive housing, a domestic violence emergency shelter, legal advocacy, a climate and cultural resiliency initiative, social enterprise activities (including a retail space selling Indigenous artwork), community outreach, and youth programming.

In the past year, AICHO has taken their model a step further, taking strides towards a cultural resiliency initiative rooted in a focus on the environment, sustainability, and climate change. With this addition, it's become an entirely new solution for low-income housing that utilizes the metaphor of a sweet-grass braid with three inseparable strands—Indigenous housing, arts & culture, and food—to bring AICHO's vision of a new, robust Indigenous strand to a strong, local economy together.

From installing the first fully functional solar array on an Indigenous center in the country, to implementing urban gardens and green space into the design of our low-income housing, the sustain-

ability piece of our efforts is completely changing the tone of what supportive housing means for our homeless and Indigenous populations. Since the implementation of our Climate and Cultural Resiliency initiative, we have been able to run our center as an incubator for innovative approaches to address the disparities within the community that affect everyone.



In the long term, this type of work is impacting the non-native community as well by combating stigma against Indigenous people. This impact is summarized in a quote by AICHO's founder, Vicky Ybanez, "Indigenous people not only have solutions for ourselves, but for the world at large."

By centering Indigenous values in all aspects of their work, AICHO has harnessed innovative thinking rooted in cultural resiliency to address the impacts of violence, housing and economic inequity, historical trauma and racism on Indigenous communities in and around Duluth. The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits was honored to present the organization with the 2018 Mission Award for Innovation.

Learn more about the American Indian Community Housing Organization at www.aicho.org.

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Lessons from MCN's Journey Towards Intercultural Competency

This past year, MCN has intentionally shared our journey towards intercultural competency with our members. We've shared some of the changes we've made with our focus of equity to create transformational change. We've experienced failing forward and embraced growth because our commitment to ending disparities is greater than those rough moments. We've heard from many members who are similarly working on ending inequities and appreciate the intentionality of this work. There is no checklist, or easy process. There are stories and lessons. Reflecting on 2018, here is some of what we've learned from our journey thus far:

- **Have a common language.** Common language ensures that our staff understands when we say equity it doesn't mean counting people, it actually means ending disparities in money, power, access, and resources. It allows us to think with an intersectional lens and act.
- **Embrace the hard conversations about race.** Racism is both pervasive and yet difficult for some to

talk about. Of course, Minnesota has some of the highest disparities in the country so we cannot talk about equity without talking about race. We continue to try to practice this head on, grounded in our values.

- **Intentionally talk about gender.** Gender is fluid. Making time to reflect on our values around gender creates a culture that more easily incorporates inclusive practices, such as using gender pronouns at events so everyone can show up as their authentic selves.
- **Use an equity framework.** Similar to common language, we bring together a co-creation team to use an equity framework. This list of intentional questions guides us through reflections on how we are living our values to work towards transformational change.
- **Ensure inclusive decision-making.** Intentionally creating space to center the most marginalized is key to disrupting inequitable systems that uphold the dominant narrative.

- **Move beyond trainings and checklists!** We still have trainings because we are all learning, and we get to action quickly because equity is about doing the work to create change.

Our most important lesson from 2018 is how important it is to reflect. Inequities thrive when we exist on auto-pilot; relying on how things have always been done, fearing change, and failing to acknowledge and address real disparities. Building in reflection is essential to disrupting inequities and demonstrates our commitment to creating a culture within MCN where equity is at the center of our work.

What is your organization doing to move towards transformational change? What are key lessons of 2018 that you're taking into 2019? We are excited to continue to learn and build together.

For more information, or to submit your ideas, please contact us.