

NONPROFIT NEWS

Information and connections for Minnesota's nonprofit sector

MINNESOTA
COUNCIL OF
NONPROFITS

Fall 2020

MCN centering racial equity and nonprofit values during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond

On July 20, 2020, the board of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits approved a resolution acknowledging that racism is a public health crisis facing Minnesota, and that the nonprofit sector has important role as part of a society-wide effort to dismantle systemic racism and address structural barriers to health and economic well-being in Black communities, Indigenous communities, and communities of color (BIPOC).

The COVID-19 pandemic has only elevated what has already been known, and vigorously declared by BIPOC communities: exclusionary and racist policy choices over the past century in areas including housing, education, and job opportunities; ongoing forms of discrimination and bias; and lack of public investment in communities of color, have created structural barriers leaving workers of color with lower average earnings, higher rates of unemployment, lower rates of health insurance coverage, and restricted avenues to build intergenerational wealth.

Nonprofits cannot fulfill their missions in a racist society, cannot change the world alone, but can play a key role in building an equitable future

Nonprofits have distinct charitable missions, and together we work toward building a healthy, cooperative, and just society. As long as racism is present, that world does not exist. While remaking the world requires the entire community, nonprofits are in a unique position to advance policy changes needed to address systemic racism.

As we work to address problems,

nonprofits must recognize our own responsibility and history in relation to the current realities of structural racism. This includes ensuring nonprofits have the tools and resources to make changes within their own organizations and the sector to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion; and recognizing and learning from those leading the way in this work.

MCN's response falls into three main areas:

1. Advance public policy changes that counter systemic racism through advocacy and engagement campaigns and support of nonprofits' own advocacy work
2. Recognize the leadership of BIPOC-led and serving nonprofits, and nonprofits advancing racial equity, and ensure they have the tools and resources they need to succeed
3. Convene and equip the nonprofit sector to advance racial equity through the development of race-conscious organizational practices and ensuring MCN's staff, board, and membership reflect Minnesota's racial/ethnic identities.

For more information on MCN's public declaration of racism as a public health threat and strategic priority on racial equity, please click on the resources below:

- [Statement of Racism as a Public Health Crisis](#)
- [Updated Strategic Priority on Equity and Justice](#)

Kari Aanestad, director of advancement, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and Clark Goldenrod, deputy director, Minnesota Budget Project

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

NONPROFIT BITS

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits recently released the *2020 Minnesota Nonprofit Salary & Benefits Survey*. Helping nonprofits maintain fair and competitive compensation practices, the survey report presents compensation data for 77 common nonprofit jobs by six budget categories, seven geographic regions, and 12 activity areas so you can compare your organization's compensation to similar organizations. Easy-to-use charts and tables report the data using averages, medians, and quartiles - providing affordable, reliable information for salary and benefits decision-making. Learn more at www.minnesotanonprofits.org/pubs.

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Where We Stand

Election participation, nonprofit job recovery, and equity in bonding bill

by Jon Pratt, MCN executive director, and Nonoko Sato, MCN associate director

Getting past November 3 to the end of the U.S. election was a relief to many of us, independent of how our candidates fared. Minnesota’s traditions of active participation came through again — “habits of the heart” — of volunteering, making charitable contributions, completing census forms, and voting.



Minnesota nonprofits across the state encouraged voter registration and helped the people they serve participate and vote. MCN and other networks (including Voices for Racial Justice) provided resources to integrate nonpartisan voter engagement into nonprofits’ ongoing activities and services, including mini-grants from MCN for outreach to the Center for Hmong Arts and Talent, CAIR-MN, Deaf Equity, Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County, Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association, and Pillsbury United Communities.

Final numbers on Minnesota’s tradition as one of the highest voter participation U.S. states will have to wait for the final word from the State Canvassing Board, but early indications are positive, with 3.3 million voting out of 4.1 million in the VEP (Voting Eligible Population). This makes for a 79.9 percent turnout rate, beating the national average (66.4 percent) for the highest in the U.S.

MCN Nonprofit Job Board mirrors gradual nonprofit employment recovery

Minnesota’s overall unemployment rate peaked at 9.9 percent in May 2020, after an April in which 63,000 nonprofit employees filed initial claims for unemployment insurance. The employment picture has been gradually improving, yet was still quite grim by the end of September, with 10 percent fewer nonprofit employees than the end of March.

MCN also sees these trends reflected in changes in activity at the [MCN Nonprofit Job Board](#). After a big drop in postings starting in April, MCN’s Job Board again reached 900 total postings (927) for the first time since February 2020.

Salary information is a required field for job posters, and is becoming an industry standard. Posting clear and accurate salary ranges saves time and effort for jobseekers and employers and leads to a more equitable employment environment. The adoption of this practice has required adjustment on the part of employers, and MCN continues to explore technical changes to the site to ensure broader compliance. Progress is being made, and the percentage of postings with a salary listed has reached a new high of 87 percent.

Equity for nonprofits in state bonding bill

Every two years, the Minnesota legislature makes decisions to allocate funds for projects across the state, from highway improvements and water projects to higher education facilities. For the first time, the 2020 bonding bill specifically recognized equity as a priority funding category, including capital grants for projects at eleven nonprofit organizations:

American Indian Center, Minneapolis	\$2.6 million
Baldwin Square Project, Minneapolis	\$1 million
Cultural Wellness Center, Minneapolis	\$250,000
Hmong American Farmers Association, West St. Paul.....	\$2 million
Indigenous Peoples Task Force, Minneapolis.....	\$2 million
International Institute of Minnesota, St. Paul.....	\$3 million
Juxtaposition Arts, Minneapolis.....	\$1 million
Native American Community Clinic, Minneapolis.....	\$3.8 million
Northwest American Indian Center, Bemidji.....	\$2 million
Regenerative Agriculture Alliance, Albert Lea	\$250,000
Victoria Theater Arts Center, St. Paul.....	\$2.4 million

Election Day 2020 is history, now the work of nonprofits and policy makers gets to the content

As this lands in our inboxes, we may not have complete clarity about the outcomes of the recent elections. But we do know what we're expecting our newly-elected public officials to respond to in the coming months and the year ahead.

We expect policymakers at all levels of government to take action to address the pandemic and subsequent economic fallout. We'll also be sure they know what nonprofits need to continue to serve our communities under significant financial disruptions.

It will be imperative for Minnesota policymakers to keep everyday families and workers, including those facing structural barriers to economic security, in the forefront of their work when they open the 2021 Legislative Session in January.

Some of the most important decisions they have to make will be in the context of setting the state's next two-year budget. As they strive to support people and communities hit by the virus, they'll also need to address the state revenue shortfalls that virus has caused, and bring the budget back into balance.

As a community of nonprofits, we have strength in numbers. We must share the stories and experiences of people and communities across the state, as well as educate decision-makers on why they must continue to fund the indispensable work we all do in our communities.

We all must continue to lift up what's needed for Minnesotans to get through these tough times and build a more equitable state. We must talk about the essential role that schools, health care, affordable housing, and other public services play in building thriving communities – and why we must change the ways we've fallen short, especially for Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC).

Job loss, hunger, and housing insecurity have all disproportionately fallen on Minnesotans of color, due to a legacy of structures and policies that have limited their access to opportunities in education and employment.

The requirement that states must balance their budgets every budget cycle, regardless of economic conditions or emerging needs, puts states in a bind.

But Minnesota has resources to draw on in this time of crisis. One of these is the strong budget reserve that's been built up over time. Maximizing dollars the state receives from the federal government is another.

Finally, Minnesota will need to raise additional state revenues fairly. The economic downturn is not impacting all Minnesotans equally. Those still doing well – profitable corporations and the wealthy – should shoulder more of the responsibility of funding essential public investments to secure Minnesotans' health and well-being, and support the recovery.

In the past, the nonprofit sector has united against harmful budget cuts, and has worked with partners across sectors to make the case for raising the revenues needed to fund crucial public investments. We look forward to working with MCN members across the state to be a powerful voice for what's needed now.

Minnesota Council of Nonprofits policy team and Minnesota Budget Project



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Fostering change, growth, and the construction of a more representative gathering for our sector at the 2020 MCN Annual Conference

Advance equity and justice. This is one of the MCN's new strategic priorities created in partnership with our board and staff at the beginning of 2020. MCN's conferences are one of the core elements of our work, bringing together the people who make Minnesota's nonprofit sector one of the most vibrant, resilient, and multifaceted in the country.

Since March, we have seen and heard from colleagues in pain. Funding and resources are being cut, just when the needs of our communities increase. Simultaneously, inequitable systems and practices are highlighted and rightfully criticized, as they disproportionately impact rural communities, grassroots organizations, and leaders of color. As much as we crave what we miss, we know that going "back to normal" is no longer possible, when "normal" was simply not working for so many. To remain vibrant, resilient, and multifaceted, change is necessary.

In our own journey as an organization, we have had many shining moments, and we have also stumbled and failed. The needs of the sector are immense, intense, and often overwhelming; AND we believe we need to start boldly addressing our own shortcomings and utilize our privilege and power to center voices, perspectives, and ideas of organizations who have had no choice but to be innovative, bold, and resourceful within a system that was simply not designed for them to succeed.

This drive is at the crux of the [2020 MCN Annual Conference](#), hosted virtually on December 8 and 10, 2020. Our sector is hungry for new ideas as it runs out of resources and traditional forms of reliable support. There is a lot we can collectively learn from organizations who face systemic racism, rural



Angela Conley

Irene Fernando

Ali Sultan

bias, and lack the "right" networks but persevered anyway for the good of their communities. We need to invest and learn from them, and we need to compensate their collective intellectual property and labor.

For the first time in our history, we are paying stipends to the planning committee and presenters at our annual conference, attempting to offer accessible ways to submit proposals, supporting first-time workshop presenters, and keeping costs low for small, rural, and BIPOC led nonprofit attendees. It is important to acknowledge that the decision to pay workshop presenters was an answer to the call of community members who expended the energy to remind us that a conference centering equity, which does not compensate presenters, rings hollow.

We are delighted and excited by the proposals that came in, such as Meditation and the Art of Peaceful Persistence with Black Zen's Jasmine Johnson; How to Build a Partnership to Disrupt Systems (we want to change this!) with Sarah Clyne of Northside Funders Group and Felicia Perry of West Broadway Business and Area Coalition; Responsive in Crisis: Family Engagement in a Pandemic from MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership; and Promising Best Practices for

Serving Immigrants and Refugees from St. Cloud's Career Solutions.

We're also excited to be joined in our plenary sessions by Hennepin County Commissioners Angela Conley and Irene Fernando ("Powerful Together: Collective Action at the County Level") and comedian Ali Sultan ("In the Future, There Will Be Laughter").

Ideally, this new focus should have had more planning time. It is difficult to move away from what we have done well (and at the expense of perpetuating the same harmful systems) and risk a critical income source that supports work that allows us to remain relatively independent to fight against those in power and ensure nonprofits remain strong, vibrant, and represented. As we all know, nothing about 2020 is ideal, and we have decided to embrace this uncertainty to do the necessary work we say we have been committed to do.

With the great work by the committees and our staff, the one thing we're missing is...YOU. We hope you are able to join us virtually on December 8 and 10. To learn more or register, please visit www.mcnannualconference.org.

Courtney Gerber, program director and Nonoko Sato, associate director, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits

Agendas and Action

Looking back at past recessions, and looking ahead



by Nan Madden, director, Minnesota Budget Project

For more than 20 years, I've worked on tax, budget, and economic issues impacting Minnesota and the five-plus million individuals who call our state home. In the midst of what has been a supremely challenging year, I've been asked what feels the same, as well as what is different, about this economic downturn and resulting state revenue shortfall.

As I look back on the ebbs and flows in our state's economic health, some things feel quite different in this moment in time.

It may be the most unequal recession in modern history

This pandemic-induced recession goes further than past recessions in amplifying economic and racial disparities.

The downturn hit our country hard and fast, with an initial unemployment spike that was unlike any we have seen. But today, much of the job loss nationally among higher-income workers has been recovered, and many have seen remarkably high returns on their stock market holdings during the pandemic.

In contrast, lower-income workers and workers of color are more likely to find themselves in bad situations. They are both more likely to be working in front-line jobs with greater exposure to the virus and more likely to work in industries with the greatest job loss.

The state is better prepared

Some policymakers who lived through painful state budget cuts in the 2000s acted to be better prepared next time. They took a data-driven approach to how big the budget reserve should be, and ensured the state automatically socked away dollars when times were good.

As a result, the state now has a \$2.4 billion budget reserve — much more robust than in the 2000s. Policymakers have not had to scramble to respond to state revenue shortfalls, but instead could focus on tackling the pandemic and its economic impact.

More of us recognize that racial equity can't wait

The long-time work of many in the community, augmented by the intense public response to the police killing of George Floyd, has resulted in more policymakers speaking with urgency about making racial equity a priority. We all have a role to make sure they follow through.

However, there are other things that are all too familiar from the past.

The federal government's response has not been strong enough

Federal decision-makers must build on the quick action they took earlier in the pandemic to provide economic support for the skyrocketing number of people out of work and send resources to the states to respond to the pandemic.

Failure to enact a much-needed next round of action leaves states and other local governments struggling to meet their residents' education, housing, health care, and other priorities, and to keep teachers and other public employees on the job serving their communities.

State revenue shortfalls could threaten public services that nonprofits care about

Nonprofits are often partners with government to provide services that build strong communities — from care for the elderly, to youth development, to the arts, to protecting the environment, to name just a few. And strong public services, or their absence, make a difference as to whether people in our communities can thrive.

In the past, some policymakers sought to balance the budget with one hand tied behind their backs, without raising revenues. Their cuts-only approach pulled back on the safety net and other supports, and left many Minnesotans without what they needed to get by.

Some policymakers proposed funding cuts to nonprofits, arguing that nonprofits could make those dollars up elsewhere. The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits continues to work diligently to educate policymakers about COVID-19's damage to the nonprofit sector and the limits to other funding sources.

The good news? I've seen that when nonprofits and other partners work together against harmful budget cuts and for fair revenue-raising, that work has had a real impact on policy outcomes and the well-being of nonprofits and the people of Minnesota.

We've done it before, Minnesota nonprofits. Let's do it again.

Nonprofit News and Advancements



Washburn Center for Children hired Craig Warren as chief administrative officer.

Alan Peters, founder and executive director of Can Do Canines, will retire at the end of 2020, being succeeded by Jeff Johnson.



Tammy Teske Ausen joined YWCA St. Paul as the organization's new major gifts officer.

Minneapolis-based Scholarship America named Santiago Marquez to its national board of trustees.

Animal Humane Society hired Andrea Fahrenkrug as director of major and planned giving and Allison Lincoln as digital fundraising producer.



David Peeples joined Proof Alliance, formerly the Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (MOFAS), as associate director of programs.

Vail Place appointed Monique Rochard-Marine to its board of directors.



Minneapolis nonprofit Juxtaposition Arts hired Gabrielle Grier as the youth arts organization's new managing director.

Dr. Deidre Sanders joined the Great Plains Institute board of directors

Missions Inc. Programs named Princess Awa-ada Kisob as program director of the Home Free Shelter.



MinnPost appointed Tanner Curl to be the organization's new executive director.

Highland Friendship Club named Patty Dunn as executive director.

The Academy of Whole Learning promoted Dr. Wyayn Rasmussen to executive director and hired Brenda Tollas as head of school.

Innocence Project of Minnesota changed its name to Great North Innocence Project.

MCN Staff Update

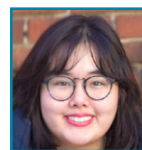
MCN is excited to announce the following staff additions in recent months, further strengthening the organization's communications, equity, and VISTA programs and activities:



Laura Dunford joined MCN as communications manager, effective November 23, 2020.



Meghan Marriott joined the Minnesota Budget Project, a program of MCN, as engagement manager.



Janet Nguyen joined MCN as equity & justice VISTA, where they will be developing the Resource of BIPOC Organizations.



Patrick Tschida joined MCN as the organization's new VISTA leader.

Submit Your Announcements

MCN member organizations are invited to submit your organization's awards, staffing announcements, and other news to jwurm@minnesotanonprofits.org. MCN cannot guarantee that all announcements will make it into *Nonprofit News*.

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Minnesota’s nonprofit economy: A tale of two realities – 2019 and 2020

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) recently released its [2019 Minnesota Nonprofit Economy Report](#) (MNER), an annual study that analyzes trends in nonprofit employment and wages to better understand the role of the nonprofit sector in Minnesota’s economy.

What’s Included in this Report?

Information on key economic trends including:

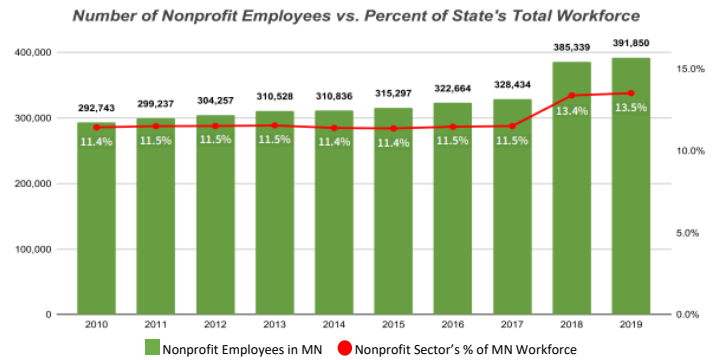
- Changes over 10 years in average wages across government, for-profit, and nonprofit sectors
- Changes over 10 years in average wages across key industries within the nonprofit sector
- The number of nonprofit organizations who have at least one paid employee and total nonprofit employees, broken down by major geographic regions
- Geographic distribution of nonprofits and employees by county relative to population density

How Can This Report Be Used?

- To build cases of support that describe the communities most impacted by your organization’s work and offer a picture of your local economy
- To inform nonprofit strategic planning, and public and private investments in the nonprofit economy
- To incorporate nonprofit employment trends into economic development plans and understanding regional differences and local economies
- To answer the question, “How many nonprofits are there?” in at least five different ways.

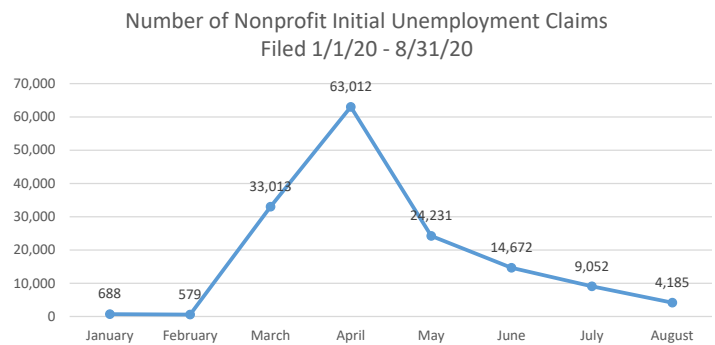
Key Findings and New Information

- In 2019 Minnesota’s nonprofit economy was at an all-time high with over 390,000 employees making up 14 percent of the state’s workforce (and surpassing government for the first time).
- Growth in average annual wages continued across all sectors, and nonprofits surpassed government again with a reported \$55,182 in average annual wages (excluding hospitals and colleges).
- For the first time ever, the report includes demographic information about Minnesota’s workforce. Three out of four employees in the nonprofit sector are female compared to 60 percent and 45 percent in government and for-profit respectively (Note: Sex data is provided by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. While MCN recognizes the broad spectrum of sexual and gender identities that transcends the binary of male and female, this report is unfortunately limited to only including the data that was provided).



Written and released as data was available in 2020, the 2019 MNER provides a retroactive view of key economic and employment trends in Minnesota’s nonprofit sector. The COVID-19 pandemic and demands for racial justice motivated by the murder of George Floyd have since deeply impacted Minnesota’s nonprofit sector, economy, and communities.

To support pressing needs for real-time information, MCN is also actively surveying nonprofits and analyzing impacts of 2020 events. Two special impact reports were released in [May 2020](#) and [July 2020](#). While the full picture of 2020 won’t likely come into view for months to come, early data suggests the depth of the economic impacts of current events:



Out of a total Minnesota nonprofit workforce of 391,850 at the end of 2019, more than 148,000 had filed an initial claim for unemployment insurance with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development by the end of August 2020. In other words, 38 percent of nonprofit employees experienced an employment event (such as reduced hours, temporary furlough, or job loss) that qualified them to file an initial claim for unemployment in March - August.

It’s encouraging to see the trend line decline from its April peak, and MCN will continue to track evolving conditions affecting nonprofits, report on the sector’s recovery strategies, and convene nonprofit community conversations.

Kari Aanestad, director of advancement and Jon Pratt, executive director, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits

Minnesota nonprofits play vital roles in 2020 Census and voter participation

As 2020 comes to a close, Minnesotans from Austin to Roseau, Luverne to Grand Portage have taken part in two linchpins of a successful, representative democracy — the decennial Census and local, state, and national elections.

Many nonprofits across Minnesota played key roles in Census participation and voter engagement. MCN would like to recognize the following organizations, each of whom received grants to better engage their communities and nurture participation in our democracy.

Census Grantees

Aeon
Alliance of Chicanos Hispanics and Latin Americans
Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging
Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency
Asamblea de Derechos Civiles
Campus Compact
Centro Tyrone Guzman
Community Action of Ramsey and Washington Counties

Council on American-Islam Relations Minnesota (CAIR Minnesota)
Cultural Diversity Resources
Deaf Equity
GHANDS, Inc.
Hallie Q. Brown
Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County
Hmong Museum
Intercultural Mutual Assistance Assoc.
Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners
Jordan Area Community Council
Korean Adoptee Ministries
KSMQ
Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota
Little Earth Residents Association
Living at Home Network
Marshall Area YMCA
Northside Economic Opportunity Network
Organization of Liberians - Minnesota
Our Savior's Community Services English Learning Center
Pelican Rapids Multicultural Committee
Pillsbury United Communities

Planned Parenthood Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota
Prairie Five Community Action Council
Project for Pride and Living
Promise Neighborhood of Central Minnesota
Rise, Inc
Senior Services Consortium of Ramsey County
SEWA-AIFW, Inc
Somali Community Resettlement Services
Southeast Asian Diaspora Project
Vietnamese Social Services of Minnesota
Women for Political Change
Wright County Community Action

Election Engagement Grantees

Center for Hmong Arts and Talent
CAIR Minnesota
Deaf Equity
Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County
Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association
Pillsbury United Communities



Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
2314 University Ave. W, Ste. 20
St. Paul, MN 55114

Phone: 651-642-1904
Toll Free: 800-289-1904
Fax: 651-642-1517
info@minnesotanonprofits.org
www.minnesotanonprofits.org

Mission

MCN works to inform, promote, connect, and strengthen individual nonprofits and the nonprofit sector.

Association Health Plan enters second year with affordable options for stronger, healthier nonprofits

BenefitsMN has achieved tremendous success in its first year of activity. Launched in January 2020 with 34 organizations participating, the association health plan (AHP) now has more than 50 participating nonprofits and over 600 people enrolled in the plans, including staff at these organizations and their spouses, partners, and dependents.

Plan information and rates are now available for new and renewing nonprofits for 2021, and we are confident that there are more deep savings ahead for new and returning participating organizations. Overall, the renewal premium increase for BenefitsMN participants is 1.39 percent, which is extremely low in an

industry that shows typical increases much greater than that. In fact, many nonprofits participating will see no premium increases this year.

Beyond that, BenefitsMN has secured a rate cap of nine percent for 2022 rates, which provides longer-term stability for participating organizations. We've also added another metro-based network, and another plan level, providing more options to better meet the needs of members.

There is still time for your nonprofit to explore BenefitsMN. Get a full proposal from Medica by reaching out to Gallagher Benefit Services at www.benefitsmn.org.