

NONPROFIT NEWS

Information and connections for Minnesota's nonprofit sector

MINNESOTA
COUNCIL OF
NONPROFITS

Spring 2021

Nonprofit COVID Impact Report #4 - Key Findings

Minnesota's nonprofit sector has been through a lot the past 15 months as it has adapted to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, political and economic uncertainty, and international movements for racial justice.

MCN has been surveying nonprofits over that time to gauge the key impacts of current events on nonprofit operations, finances, employees, and communities, and has [recently released its fourth impact report](#) offering an update on how the nonprofit sector is faring. Key findings include:

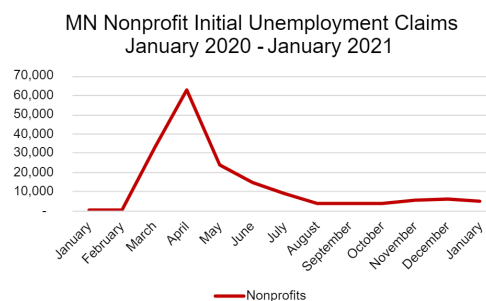
Increased demand for services and decreased ability to provide services persists

From homeless shelters to food banks, nonprofits continue to provide essential services that touch the lives of every Minnesotan. Isolation, health events, and collective trauma this past year have all increased demands for services while nonprofits simultaneously faced funding loss and operational disruption. Virtual delivery of programming cost nonprofits time and money and ultimately expanded services to new groups in 2020, and now nonprofits are exploring hybrid models that integrate in-person and virtual service delivery. Looking to the future, nonprofits are also tasked with developing and implementing plans for a safe return to office and budget forecasting when the environment still presents variables and high degrees of uncertainty.

Some financial relief with increased funding from foundations, individuals, and government

The second year of the COVID-19 crisis presents complicating forces: revenue loss for certain organizations due to the

pandemic's disruption (from canceled events to lowered service capacity), partly offset by increased charitable giving and further federal stimulus. An enormous financial shot in the arm came from the CARES Act's forgivable Paycheck Protection Program loans, which provided 5,305 Minnesota nonprofits with \$3.4 billion in the first round alone. One-third of organizations also saw increased charitable revenue from foundations and individuals.



After an initial spike in unemployment claims, employment stabilization

The nonprofit sector saw a catastrophic jump in the number of initial claims for unemployment among nonprofit employees from March – July 2020 (averaging around 29,000 per month, with the highest of 63,012 in April). Nonprofit unemployment activity leveled off in August 2020 (averaging around 4,800 per month from August 2020 - January 2021).

Reckoning with racial inequity

Following the murder of George Floyd by police — and exacerbated by the police killing of Daunte Wright, the trial of Derek Chauvin, and acts of hate against the Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander community — a top priority for Minnesota nonprofits continues to be overdue action on our state's substantial disparities between white Minnesotans and Black people, Indigenous people, and people

of color (BIPOC) as it relates to income, wealth, education, and criminal justice. These racial disparities also carry over to many aspects of the nonprofit sector, including organizational assets, real property ownership, revenue sources, and government contracts. Throughout the past year, nonprofits and philanthropies grappled with how their organizations could move beyond heartfelt public statements to taking specific actions and making fund allocations that directly address racial inequities.

[Read the full, most recent impact report.](#)

*Kari Aanestad, director of advancement,
Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.*

IN THIS ISSUE...



Where We Stand: nonprofit health care; nonprofit unionization
...page 2



How the American Rescue Plan impacts Minnesota
...page 3



MCN's Equity & Justice committee & executive search update
...page 4



Prioritizing your professional development this summer
...page 7



You're award worthy! Now accepting nominations
...page 8



What comes after the Census?
...page 9

Where We Stand

Census turnout, health care for nonprofits, nonprofit unionization

by [Jon Pratt](#), MCN executive director

MN keeps House seat & electoral vote

If Minnesota had counted just 26 fewer people in the 2020 Census, the state would have lost one of its presidential elector votes and one seat in the U.S. House, according to [Census data released April 26](#). Minnesota was the top state for people responding to the census, at 75 percent, and showed 10 year population growth of 7.4 percent to 5,709,752.



More than 300 cities, counties, advocacy groups, and private sector entities put \$4 million into door knocking, phone banking, and advertising and social media campaigns. From November 2019 to April 2020, [MCN granted a total of \\$156,000 to 41 nonprofits in Minnesota](#) to conduct census outreach. The \$2,000-5,000 grants were made possible in partnership with the Minnesota Council on Foundations, which organized foundations to create a pool of money for census engagement and persuaded the legislature to allocate funds.

THANK YOU NONPROFIT CENSUS GRANTEES!

Aeon, Alliance of Chicanos, Hispano, Latino Americans, Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency, Asamblea de Derechos Civiles, CAIR-Minnesota, Campus Compact, Centro Tyrone Guzman, Community Action Partnership of Ramsey and Washington Counties, Cultural Diversity Resources, Deaf Equity, Ghands, Inc., Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County, Hmong Museum, Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association, Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners, Jordan Area Community Council, Korean Adoptees Ministry Center, KSMQ Public Television, The Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota, Little Earth Residents Association, Living At Home Network, Northside Economic Opportunity Network, Organization of Liberians in Minnesota, The English Learning Center, Pelican Rapids Multi Cultural, Pillsbury United Communities, Planned Parenthood North Central States, Prairie Five Community Action Council Inc., Project for Pride in Living, Promise Neighborhood of Central MN, Rise, Incorporated, The SEAD Project, Senior Services of Ramsey County, Sewa - Asian Indian Family Wellness, Somali Community Resettlement Services, Vietnamese Social Services of MN, Women for Political Change, Wright County Community Action Inc., Marshall Area YMCA.

BenefitsMN continues growth, competitive health insurance rates

Employee health insurance is the third-largest expense for many nonprofits, after payroll and occupancy. To help nonprofits manage these costs, MCN launched [BenefitsMN as an association health plan](#) on January 1, 2020, built in partnership with Gallagher Benefit Services and Medica. Since that time, 72 nonprofits have joined BenefitsMN from all over Minnesota (more enrolling each month) with over 500 employees and 850 total participants. A key success of the first year has been that 82 percent of BenefitsMN members experienced a zero percent flat renewal on January 1, 2021 – achieving goals of affordability and sustainability. Changing health insurance carriers can be a pain, but we encourage nonprofit HR staff to explore this health plan option to improve your ability to recruit and retain the best possible staff.

MCN employees form union

On April 30, the National Labor Relations Board presented the results of a union recognition election, with the outcome that out of nine MCN employees eligible to vote on the representation question, six employees voted to certify the union, and three voted no. MCN supported the organizing group's March 12 petition for a representation election, and supported the right of all affected MCN staff to decide for themselves whether the union should be recognized as their representative. MCN's management and board congratulated the Minnesota Newspaper & Communications Guild on its recognition as the collective bargaining representative for the employees in the bargaining unit.

As we begin negotiating a labor agreement and managing in a collective bargaining environment, MCN remains committed to providing a strong, healthy, and productive workplace, with a full set of competitive wages and benefits, including the voices of all MCN staff and the communities we serve. MCN will engage in good-faith negotiations to reach agreement in the interest of both labor and management.

There is a growing interest in forming unions in Minnesota's nonprofit sector, with a dozen other nonprofits recognizing or expanding unions in the last year: Jewish Community Action, Minnesota Voice, Minnesota Youth Collective, Minnesota Freedom Fund, Augsburg University, Minneapolis Crisis Nursery, Walker Art Center, Minnesota Public Radio, OutFront Minnesota, Hope Community, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and Beacon Interfaith Housing.

What the American Rescue Plan means for Minnesotans

Minnesota's nonprofits have seen first-hand the manifestations of the health and economic crises: increased hunger, difficulty paying rent, loss of child care options, and other repercussions from job and income losses. This pandemic also has laid bare the systemic, racist barriers that keep Minnesota's Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) from justice and opportunity.

The recently passed American Rescue Plan (ARP) directs essential supports and funding to people, communities, and public services as only the federal government can provide, while easing hardships and bolstering the economy in a broad and lasting way.

We are living through what is likely the most unequal recovery in recent history. While hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans struggle to make ends meet, those with the most resources have continued to gain wealth and income.

And while the state's budget outlook has improved over November projections, the [February budget forecast still showed Minnesota's general revenues lower than expected a year earlier](#).

The ARP provides individuals and families with extended federal unemployment insurance and expanded tax credits for lower-income workers and families with children.

- More than 1.1 million Minnesota children will benefit from the expanded Child Tax Credit, which is expected to drive an historic reduction in child poverty.
- Over 450,000 Minnesotans will see an average increase in food assistance of \$25 a month, much of it to households with children.
- In addition, the third round of economic stimulus payments include teenagers, young adults, and adults with disabilities who were left out of previous payments.

[Importantly, the federal package also directs billions to the state of Minnesota, and local and tribal governments](#), to support and expand crucial public services that more of us are relying on to get through these crises.

Funding for local and tribal governments will target infrastructure and services, such as broadband, housing, and education, to strengthen the economic vibrancy of those communities.

The ARP takes lessons learned from the 2008-09 Great Recession, which didn't go far enough and meant the recession was longer and the recovery slow. It wasn't strong enough to quickly end the harmful impact of job and income loss among Americans. The weak federal response resulted in budget-cutting among states and local governments, limiting the very services and supports that folks needed to get by and get back on track. That austerity also exacerbated unemployment and challenges faced by folks of color & those living on low incomes.

Minnesota policymakers should make wise investments with these resources to address long-standing disinvestment in public services, while intentionally ensuring our BIPOC neighbors have what they need to thrive in the months ahead.

[Additional state revenues, raised by asking those who have the most resources to pay a bit more](#), will allow Minnesota to sustain those investments to create a state where equity and justice are a given, regardless of what we look like or where we live.

Laura Mortenson, communications director, Minnesota Budget Project.



Transform your Nonprofit in 3 Steps

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MCN's internal equity work - Equity & Justice committee

MCN's staff equity and justice committee regularly holds discussions on how we can improve our internal and external commitment to our [four priority areas: race/ethnicity, disability, geography, and socioeconomic status](#).

Most recently, we discussed how the boundaries of work are defined. Many folks in the nonprofit sector are often expected to go beyond their regular job duties and work extended hours to further the mission of their organization. This is often because we are passionate about the causes we serve!

How can the work deemed as “extra effort” be recognized as a regular part of our jobs?

A starting point is to explicitly name what typically goes unsaid.

In regards to labor, many Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) are often expected to lead racial justice efforts within their organizations. People with disabilities may have to advocate and educate their organizations to receive reasonable accommodations and changes to work that help everybody.

Rural nonprofit folks may travel and take the time to build connections across multiple counties. Entry-level nonprofit workers balance serving the mission alongside advocating for better pay and working conditions. And all nonprofit professionals share their passion for their work and mission outside of formal work hours.

At MCN, we believe in valuing the added labor of historically marginalized groups. Concrete steps need to be taken to address and eliminate such uneven expectations of unrecognized labor.

Earlier this year, MCN discussed the leadership of our equity and justice committee. We intentionally agreed to have two white staff members lead the committee, as we wanted to relieve our colleagues of color from the expectation of leading the racial justice work we are doing.

Additionally, we have renewed our work towards racial justice in response to public protests across the state. We started a bite-sized learning series on racial justice on the first Monday of

every month, which is open for anyone to attend. We have continued to be thoughtful about including racially diverse experts as conference and workshop presenters. And we also have discussed how we are paying our consultants. If we are centering voices of color, we need to make sure we are compensating for their labor.

Our staff equity and justice committee meets monthly to further MCN's commitment to our values. But the committee alone is not enough to make the change we want to see.

Equity and justice are a part of all of our work. Each staff member is thoughtful and reflective on how their work can include equity and justice values around race/ethnicity, disability, geography, and socioeconomic status.

It is the collective effort of our staff that helps us improve as an organization every day.

[Kat McCaffery](#), program assistant, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, and [Bradley Wolfe](#), Southwest Minnesota regional coordinator, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.

An update on MCN's Executive Search

Last December, [MCN announced that we're commencing a search](#) for a successor to our organization's founder and current executive director, Jon Pratt. Pratt will continue to lead MCN as executive director while the search is underway in the first half of 2021, eventually moving into a new senior research fellow role within MCN.

After reviewing proposals from a number of promising search firms, MCN's Executive Search Committee has selected [Good Insights](#) to help guide MCN through the next steps of the search process. This firm was selected for their [demonstrated commitment to anti-racism](#), their experience with organizations comparable to MCN, and how they have articulated a clear process for bringing stakeholder voices to the table.

Since being selected, Good Insights has gathered stakeholder feedback for the search committee to reflect upon and use to influence the timeline, role, and recruitment.

Prioritize your professional development this summer

The natural world of the Upper Midwest is awakening - reminding us through its magical display of regeneration that possibility and arrival can coexist. What does this duality mean for our own learning as nonprofit leaders? It is unique for each of us but all of us hold expertise – a body of knowledge and way of returning to our work from year to year – while also holding the potential, the necessity, for new growth.

MCN is ready to support you as you adapt to and shape the changes necessary for a thriving, accountable, and equitable nonprofit sector.

This spring and summer, MCN invites you to make us part of your learning community – a place where you can push your knowledge while strengthening your ability to participate in the perennial needs of the sector and intersecting communities.

[A full list of the workshops, conferences, and networking gatherings](#) available to members and potential-members alike is available online, but here is a taste of our warm-weather offerings:

- **If you want to prioritize self-care...**
[Intentional cohort building and sustained movement around self-care with Camille Cyprian of Centered Spaces](#). In this eight-week-long Mind Body Service Group, an intimate cohort of ten will “experiment” with a scientifically supported Mind-Body technique that can be immediately integrated into daily self-care practice. Camille has designed each group to address and prevent burnout, be educational, supportive, participatory, structured, and fun.
- **If you want to build equity in nonprofit systems...**
This four-series Spotlight digs into the legal landscape of equity, justice, and antiracist work within nonprofits with a focus on setting program fees and consultant pay to acknowledge historical inequities, affinity-group programming, and the recruitment, hiring, and retention of employees who identify as coming from a marginalized community. Content will be engaged through the lens of the Minnesota Human Rights Act. More details to come.
- **If you want to understand financial outlooks...**
In partnership with the Minnesota Council of Foundations there is a [free town hall with Neel Kashkari, president and chief executive officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis](#), and Fed senior vice president, community development and engagement Alene Tchourumoff on June 25. They will bring their perspectives to the Federal

stimulus in response to COVID-19, changing interest rates, overall economic health of the country, economic disparities around race and gender, the role of racism and race equity in economic recovery, and new directions and programs for the Federal Reserve.

- **If you want to strengthen your Board...**
A [Board Training Series will kick-off in July](#), with content spanning nonprofit law for non-lawyers, finance 101, governance, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **If you want timely HR policies...**
Participate in [knowledge sharing around timely HR policies](#) and COVID-19 vaccinations through a person-centered and culturally responsive lens.

Anticipate perennial offerings such as [Practical Leadership 1.0](#) with Lisa Negstad, and [Beginner Grantwriting](#) with Aileen Rosa Sánchez. If conferences are what you are after you have two to choose from this summer: the [Greater Minnesota Summit](#) and [ACTcon 2021](#), our fundraising, communications, and technology conference.



The feedback of our communities is vital in ensuring our offerings are relevant and accessible. We will experiment in the coming months with introducing 60-minute tune-ups and topic introductions at a lower price point. We will continue to build out offerings for smaller nonprofits and nonprofit workers at every level of an organization.

Despite some light at the end of the pandemic tunnel, MCN is committed to a fully virtual learning environment in 2021, with one possible in-person sneak peek come fall with our Annual Conference. We look forward to learning together – to continue pushing our potential.

[Courtney Gerber](#), program director, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.

Nonprofit News and Advancements



Big Brothers Big Sisters Twin Cities announced Patrick Sukhum as their chief executive officer.

The Science Museum of Minnesota welcomed six new members to its board of trustees – Adam Mishler, Mercedes McFarland Jackson, Funlola Otukoya, Suzanne Rivera, Jayshree Seth, and Rich Wang.



Amy Wartick was named director of marketing & communications at Make-A-Wish Minnesota.



Children’s Theatre Company announced that Ann Joseph-Douglass has been named director of education.

The Minneapolis Parks Foundation welcomed Sue Bennett and Erick Garcia Luna to its board of directors, and Michele Girard, Jean Sazevich, and Marsha Yang to its People for Parks Fund Advisory Committee.

Bradley Wolfe, previously Southwest Minnesota regional coordinator for the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, was named communications instructor at Ridgewater College in Willmar and Hutchinson, Minnesota.



Antonio Cardona has been named vice president of career readiness at Project for Pride in Living.

Pathways – A Healing Center announced the appointment of four new board members – Dee Baskin, Michelle Anderson, Aurea Gerard, and Ann L. Thompson.



The Women’s Foundation of Minnesota announced Lulete Mola has been named chief strategy & innovation officer (above), and LaCora Bradford Kesti has been named director of community impact (below).



Camp Fire Minnesota has named Kori Redepenning as president & CEO starting June 7.

Terri Allread, previously greater minnesota and Southeast Minnesota regional coordinator for the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, was named director of the Rochester Nonprofit Consortium.



Miranda Noll has joined DARTS as director of finance.



Sheila Ross joined Can Do Canines as the development manager. Ross joined Can Do Canines’ new executive

director, Jeff Johnson, who previously served in the Minnesota House of Representatives and on the Board of the Hennepin County Commissioners for 10 years.

Submit Your Announcements

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

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You're Award Worthy!

Every year, the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN), in collaboration with allies, recognizes inspiring nonprofits and individuals going above and beyond to make Minnesota a better place for all to live, work, and play. With the challenges of the past year, the tireless efforts of so many represent the best of what our state has to offer — whether through building stronger communities, touching the lives of individuals in crisis, or creating innovative solutions to persisting problems.

MCN is currently accepting nominations for two award programs that recognize these difference-making nonprofits and individuals.



Virginia McKnight Binger Unsung Hero Awards

Since 2015 in partnership with The McKnight Foundation, MCN has presented the [Virginia McKnight Binger Unsung Hero Awards](#) to four Minnesotans — two from the Twin Cities metro and two from Greater Minnesota — who have demonstrated an exceptional personal commitment to helping others in their communities but who have received little or no public recognition for their work.

While previously overlooked, the Virginia McKnight Binger Award recognizes that their work is not undervalued. Each award honoree receives a \$10,000 cash award, as well as recognition at the 2021 MCN Annual Conference.

Nominations will be accepted Monday, May 24 through Friday, June 25.

Learn more about the [2021 Virginia McKnight Binger Unsung Hero Awards](#) to nominate someone today.



Minnesota Nonprofit Mission Awards

In an effort to highlight the outstanding contributions nonprofits make to Minnesota's high quality of life, MCN is excited to once again welcome nominations for the 2021 Minnesota Nonprofit Mission Awards.

Since 1987, MCN has been showcasing the work of Minnesota's outstanding nonprofits through the Nonprofit Mission Awards in the categories of [Innovation](#), [Advocacy](#), [Anti-Racism Initiative](#), and [Responsive Philanthropy](#).

Recipients of these annual honors receive a \$2,500 cash award (for all recipients except for Responsive Philanthropy recipient), two registrations for, and recognition at, the 2021 MCN Annual Conference; a one-of-a-kind art glass award; and a feature profile MCN's Nonprofit News.

Nominations for the Minnesota Nonprofit Mission Awards are currently open through Monday, June 14. Learn more about the [2021 Minnesota Nonprofit Mission Awards](#) to nominate a nonprofit organization today.

John Wurm, membership and communications director, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.

Minnesota's redistricting success - what comes after the Census?

We did it! Once again, Minnesota has held onto eight congressional seats!

In the distribution of seats after the 2020 Census, Minnesota was the last state to be given a congressional seat – counting 89 more people than New York. 89 people could be one city block, an apartment complex, or very small town!

Thank you to all of the nonprofits who supported the Census count!

Communities across the state benefit from Minnesota having the best level of federal representation. In 2019, MCN provided Census grants to 41 nonprofits who engaged in Census mobilization with historically under-counted communities to help them be counted!

Being counted matters, as it is tied to federal funding, representation in government, and city planning. Nonprofits play a critical role in promoting community participation.

We are all stronger when communities are using their voice and power to help shape and change the systems that impact them every day – especially communities that have been historically under-counted.

It is thanks to every nonprofit that held (virtual!) concerts, made PSA videos,

knocked on doors, and talked with their volunteers, clients, staff, and boards that Minnesota retains our representation in Congress.



What comes after the Census?

Glad you asked! [Redistricting happens following the Census.](#)

Redistricting occurs every 10 years, after the decennial Census. Every state and its municipalities are required by the U.S. Constitution to redraw their districts based on the results of the Census to achieve “one person one vote.”

Why should nonprofits care about redistricting?

Redistricting is about equity and inclusion and making sure that there is fair political representation and distribution of resources. We are all

stronger when our democracy is strong.

MCN, along with other community nonprofits, are active members of the [Our Maps MN campaign](#) and will be playing a role in organizing and mobilizing.

We will be engaging stakeholders across the state to talk about redistricting and why it matters, map BIPOC and other communities of interest, and advocate that community maps influence the legislative and legal process.

How can your nonprofit get involved?

- Join the [Our Maps MN Campaign](#).
- [Subscribe to MCN's Nonprofit Advocate](#) e-newsletter for redistricting updates.
- Follow redistricting reporter Hansi Lo Wang on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).
- Reach out to MCN's public policy advocate, [Ileana Mejia](#), with questions.

We look forward to working with you during Minnesota's redistricting process, as we continue to raise awareness about fair redistricting and begin to map our communities.

[Ileana Mejia](#), public policy advocate, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.



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Our Mission

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