



Nonprofit News

Information and connections for Minnesota's nonprofit sector.

Winter 2012

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



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Proposed Budget Amendments Threaten Nonprofits' Future

The most serious threat in decades to Minnesota's ability to fund public services and invest in our prosperity looms in the 2012 Legislative Session. Policymakers are considering constitutional amendments that are short-sighted and fail to deliver on their promises. Minnesota's nonprofits would see further cuts in state and local government funding sources and be asked to "do more with less" in addressing community needs as government resources decline and more Minnesotans look to nonprofits for help.

In 2012, the Minnesota Legislature is expected to debate constitutional amendments that would have the effect of restricting the state's ability to fund schools, safeguard the public health and maintain other critical services. Three such amendments were proposed in 2011 and will be considered this year.

- House File 1598/Senate File 1384 would require a three-fifths supermajority vote in each body of the Legislature in order to raise state income or sales taxes, or to increase the authority of local governments to raise property taxes.
- House File 1661/Senate File 1378 would limit general fund

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Stay Updated and Learn More About 2012 Technology Trends on March 16

For many of nonprofit professionals, it wasn't too long ago when we thought we'd never put our personal profile on a public website, much less send a Tweet. Our to-do list was in a notebook, not our email inbox, and we sent most of our marketing materials in print – flyers, newsletters and brochures. We didn't know what a QR code was (and maybe still don't). We've all come a long way in just a few short years.

The 2012 Nonprofit Technology & Communications Conference, co-hosted by MCN and MAP for Nonprofits, will take place on Friday, March 16, at the Hyatt

Nonprofit
Technology
& Communications
Conference

2012

Friday, March 16
7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Hyatt Regency Minneapolis
1300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis

MAP
for nonprofits
unleash the power

MINNESOTA
COUNCIL OF
NONPROFITS

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Nonprofit Bits

Grantmaker Outlook Webinars

The Minnesota Council on Foundations is hosting Grantmaker Outlook Webinars in 2012. For more information, please visit <http://www.mcf.org/events>.

2012 February Budget Forecast

MCN's Minnesota Budget Project will release its Budget Forecast in February 2012. To review this updated Forecast, visit www.mnbudgetproject.org.

Nonprofit Resilience, Risk Management and the Health Exchange

By Jon Pratt, MCN Executive Director

While some people might believe that “nonprofit” implies “no money” or unreliable income compared to business or government, Minnesota employment figures from the recession reveal a very different story. Annual employment and wage data collected by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development show that while businesses shed 7.1 percent of the employees in the recession, the nonprofit workforce grew by 4.8 percent.

	2007	2010	Change
Business	2,038,399	1,893,808	-7.1%
Government	370,939	373,968	0.8%
Nonprofit	279,068	292,559	4.8%
Total	2,688,406	2,560,335	-4.8%

A worldwide consensus has developed that successful democracies need to create opportunities for engagement and service through a nonprofit or nongovernmental sector, also known as NGOs or sometimes civil society. We also need to keep making the case that modern service and information economies benefit from the resiliency and creativity of the nonprofit sector—as we’ve seen in Minnesota.

Risk Management: 500 Clients Served by Nonprofit Insurance Advisors to Date

Launched in November, MCN’s newest service, Nonprofit Insurance Advisors, is a growing source of business insurance for Minnesota’s nonprofit sector. Working with major national and specialty carriers, Nonprofit Insurance Advisors has already placed 25 additional property-casualty policies, 10 directors and officers liability policies and 14 workers’ comp policies. In some situations, such as with 45 neighborhood organizations in Minneapolis, the insurance agency is able to bring together risks in a single policy for even greater savings. Nonprofit Insurance Advisors is a classic case of nonprofits working together, taking advantage of scale and specialization in the nonprofit sector.

Nonprofits at the Health Exchange Table

Despite the continuing argument over the proper federal role in healthcare reform, state governments are already planning its implementation (see page 12). Nonprofits have a big stake in these plans as employers, providers and advocates for people that need health care—often with specialized needs.

For this reason, it is great to see nonprofit leaders included alongside representatives from business, labor and the public sector in the Governor’s Health Care Reform Task Force: MayKao Hang, president/CEO of Amherst H. Wilder Foundation (St. Paul); Jan Malcolm, CEO of Courage Center (Golden Valley); and Ralonda Mason, supervising attorney of St. Cloud Area Legal Services (St. Cloud).

In addition, three nonprofit representatives were named to a Minnesota Health Insurance Exchange Advisory Task Force focused on establishing a Minnesota made Health Insurance Exchange: Sue Abderholden, executive director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Minnesota (St. Paul); Dorii Gbolo, CEO of Open Cities Health Center (St. Paul); and Alfred Babington-Johnson, president/CEO of Stairstep Foundation (Minneapolis).



“A worldwide consensus has developed that successful democracies need to create opportunities for engagement and service through a nonprofit or nongovernmental sector.”

Proposed Budget Amendments Threaten Nonprofits' Future

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spending in the biennium to 98 percent of forecasted revenues.

- House File 1612/Senate File 1364 would limit all spending in the biennium to the amount of all revenues collected in the previous biennium.

If a majority of each body of the Minnesota Legislature votes in support of any of these amendments, it would go before voters in the November 2012 general election. Each of these proposals presents significant challenges to the state's future and would likely result in considerable long-term strains on the nonprofit sector.

These amendments are short-sighted. They would make it more difficult to reach common-sense solutions to meeting the state's priorities. They would lead to more budget gimmicks as policymakers seek to find ways to meet the needs of their constituents that get around these formal limits. Minnesota would see even more gridlock as a small number of legislators would be able to block action on important priorities.

When the state faces revenue shortfalls—as Minnesota expects to in the next budget cycle—these amendments virtually guarantee that the state won't take a balanced approach, including raising revenues. Instead, it is forced into a cuts-only approach.

Such cuts harm the state's future success in two ways. First, they erode the quality workforce, safe and appealing communities, and other investments that are critical to our prosperity. Second, they make it more difficult for the state to recover

from a tough economy. A cuts-only approach means more firefighters, nurses, teachers, social workers and others out of work, and no longer buying goods and services from our local businesses, further dragging down the state's economy.

These amendments don't deliver on their promises for greater accountability and reform. Similar provisions have prevented other states from reforming their tax systems through closing tax loopholes. And it would be more difficult to reverse the situation where the one percent of Minnesotans with the highest incomes pays the smallest share of their incomes in state and local taxes.

These amendments are wrong for Minnesota. They would sharply limit Minnesota's ability to respond to changing demographics and emerging needs. And Minnesota would have more budget debates like what we saw this summer, characterized by gridlock and gimmicks.

Nonprofits have a critical role to play in calling for sensible budget solutions that are in the long-term interest of the state's fiscal health and the well-being of Minnesotans. Nonprofits have first-hand knowledge of working together with partners in government and the private sector to build strong communities. Nonprofits have seen how the people they serve have been harmed by budget cuts and the difficulty of funding nonprofit services in a time of government retrenchment. The nonprofit sector can't allow this situation to be locked in to our constitution. Nonprofits should and must get involved. Sign on in opposition to these amendments and find other ways to become involved at the Minnesota Budget Project's website at www.mnbudgetproject.org.

Stay Updated and Learn More About 2012 Technology Trends

Continued from page 1

Regency Minneapolis. This year's conference will offer more breakout sessions than ever before, for all roles and levels of experiences, including a packed schedule of early morning sessions to help you get the most out of your day. The conference will also present the 2012 Dot.Org Awards recipients for innovation and creativity in use of technology, and offer over ten Help Desk Stations where participants can receive expert technology advice.

For more information on the 2012 Nonprofit Technology & Communications Conference or to register, please visit www.minnesotanonprofits.org/nptech.

Submit Nominations for the Dot.Org Awards

MCN encourages nominees from any Minnesota-based nonprofit doing innovative and creative things with technology. A nonprofit may enter in more than one category, but each nomination should meet the criteria of the category for which it is nominated. [Nominations are due by February 10.](#)

Nominate a nonprofit in the categories of:

Connecting Communities • Website Redesign • Innovative Program Delivery • Most Creative Campaign • Mobile Media

For more information or to nominate a nonprofits, visit www.minnesotanonprofits.org/nptech

Effectively Embrace Minnesota's Changing Demographics

Nonprofits that both reflect the diversity of the communities they serve and have an inclusive organizational culture are more effective in accomplishing their mission. In response to demand from the nonprofit sector, MCN is offering a new line of programming addressing these goals.

Join MCN and nonprofit peers for a new six-part webinar training series hosted by Dr. Mai Moua. Dr. Moua is founder and president of Leadership Paradigms and a leading authority on cultural competence, diversity and inclusion. These webinars will help nonprofits:

- Explore the unique assets that diversity and inclusion bring to organizations;
- Identify challenges that create barriers to effective diversity and inclusion work;
- Engage the whole system to shift perceptions of diversity and inclusion;
- Create strategies to leverage organizational effectiveness in diversity and inclusion, and;

- Invest in diversity and inclusive leadership practices.

The webinars can be accessed with: 1) a basic Internet connection and phone line, or; 2) in a group setting in Willmar, followed by a facilitated discussion about diversity and inclusion at the organizational, community and regional levels. For more information about the webinars, including dates, fees and registration, please visit www.minnesotanonprofits.org/diversity-inclusion.

In addition to this webinar series, MCN and the Charities Review Council of Minnesota will co-sponsor free monthly networking lunches on topics related to diversity and inclusion throughout 2012. Each month, participants will take part in a facilitated discussion around a topic of diversity and inclusion.

Each lunch will take place on the third Thursday of every month at a different Twin Cities nonprofit that serves diverse communities. Lunches are free and no RSVP is necessary.



Diversity & Inclusion

The first six lunches will be facilitated by Dr. Mai Moua and will follow the same topics covered in MCN's Diversity and Inclusion Webinars (webinar participation is not required to attend the networking lunches).

The following organizations have generously donated meeting space for these monthly lunches: African Development Center (ADC), Council on American-Islamic Relations Minnesota (CAIR-MN), Hmong American Partnership (HAP), CAPI, discapacitados abriendo caminos (d.a.c.) and American Family Indian Center. For specific dates and locations, please refer to www.minnesotanonprofits.org/diversity-inclusion.

MCN and the Charities Review Council encourage you to participate in as many of these lunches as possible and bring your colleagues, volunteers and board members. These conversations will help continue to move the momentum of diversity and inclusion forward and foster an ongoing dialogue that will generate change within individual nonprofits and the entire sector.

If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie Haddad, program director, at 651-757-3071 or shaddad@minnesotanonprofits.org.

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Embrace 2012 with a Long-Term Focus

By Susie Brown, MCN Public Policy Director

We begin 2012 with an interesting set of circumstances—we're pleased that the November budget forecast showed a surplus, we expect significant activity on constitutional amendments, and we predict that our nation's highly politicized environment will become even more so between now and the November election. With the year just underway, I recommend—and caution—that we closely tend to the incredible issues and opportunities which are demanding our short-term attention, and we carefully ensure that we maintain focus on our long-term priorities.

The Budget Surplus: A Time for Celebration But a Long-term Problem Remains

The budget surplus announced in November is reason to celebrate—for a moment. However, we know that the state has yet to find a sustainable way to fund our investments in an educated workforce, safe and vibrant communities, and other building blocks of the state's future prosperity. Yes, we can make good use of the current surplus, but we have many significant issues to address in the long term. MCN's Minnesota Budget Project continues to lead the way on advocating for budget and tax policies that will both strengthen Minnesota's long-term fiscal health and be fair and progressive toward those Minnesotans with the fewest resources.

Constitutional Amendments Have Captured Our Attention But Have Not Distracted Us

We have entered a year of unprecedented activity on constitutional amendments. While one has passed the legislature and is known to be on the ballot in 2012 (a ban on marriage for same-sex couples), several others continue to be under consideration in the legislature, including a provision to require a photo ID as a condition of voting. We believe this proposal is a step in the wrong direction. For several years MCN's Minnesota Participation Project has worked with nonprofits throughout the state to provide non-partisan voter registration, education and assistance to the polls for thousands of voters. We have long participated in efforts to develop bi-partisan election reforms which will improve systems and access for voting in Minnesota. These long-term efforts to maintain and expand our state's high voter turnout remains the ongoing work which will have the long-term payoff for a Minnesota that has a truly engaged citizenry. Three variations of another amendment propose to restrict the state's ability to invest in its priorities (see page 1). Please look to MCN's Minnesota Budget Project as your resource on the details of these proposals and the harm that would be done if they are passed.

In a Polarized Environment, Nonprofits are a Unique Place for Community Collaboration

The nonprofit sector is uniquely positioned to bring people together around issues that are important to communities. When working with elected officials across the political spectrum, we find that we may encounter different views about why problems exist or what to do about them, but for the most part everyone is interested in being a part of a thriving community. Throughout Minnesota, nonprofit organizations are often critical hubs of activity, arts, community participation, services and supports, health and well-being, collaboration and creative problem solving. Wherever people are on the political spectrum, whatever the extent of polarization where politics happens, the nonprofit sector is at the core of the fabric of our communities. Our ongoing effort at building relationships and connections with policymakers, regardless of their political affiliation or election cycles, demonstrates our sector's important opportunity to be non-partisan connectors in complex and divisive times. As we face redistricting and state and federal elections, let us pause to recognize and value our unique long-term role in helping diverse communities come together to solve problems, create solutions and enhance the infrastructure of our society.



"Our ongoing effort at building relationships and connections with policymakers, regardless of their political affiliation or election cycles, demonstrates our sector's important opportunity to be non-partisan connectors in complex and divisive times."

Federal Health Care Reform Brings Changes and Opportunities for the Nonprofit Sector

Did you know that one out of every ten Minnesotans is living without health insurance? The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), which became federal law in March 2010, lays out a path to reform the nation's health care system and reduce the number of uninsured. Some elements of the ACA have already taken effect – children can no longer be denied coverage due to a preexisting condition, most young adults can stay on their parents' health plan until age 26, and preventive services must be provided with no out-of-pocket costs.

There are more significant changes to come. For many nonprofit employers, these changes will bring new opportunities to provide health insurance for their employees. In Minnesota, key decisions are being made right now about how health reform will be implemented in our state, and nonprofits should be engaged to ensure that the process results in equitable outcomes for the communities they serve. Here are some key issues to be aware of:

One way the ACA will reduce the number of uninsured is by providing tax credits for small businesses. The ACA is already helping small businesses, including nonprofits, overcome financial hurdles to providing health insurance for their employees. Small employers (those with fewer than the equivalent of 25 full-time employees) are currently eligible for tax credits if they cover at least 50 percent of the cost of health insurance for their workers and pay average annual wages below \$50,000. From 2010 to 2013, the maximum credit is 25 percent of the premiums paid by eligible nonprofit employers. Beginning in 2014, the maximum credit increases to 35 percent of the premiums paid by a nonprofit.



For many nonprofit employers currently providing affordable health care coverage to their employees, the ACA will have little immediate impact. Beginning in 2014, the ACA will require small group plans to meet certain requirements – such as providing a defined set of benefits and limited deductibles and cost sharing. Plans that were in place by March 23, 2010, will be “grandfathered” in, meaning many employees will not experience any immediate changes in coverage.

Nonprofit employers that do not currently provide health coverage will have new requirements and opportunities. Beginning in 2014, medium and large employers – those with more than 50 employees – will be required to offer adequate and affordable insurance, or pay a fine. Some of these employers will likely have the opportunity to shop for plans through the health insurance exchange. Small employers – those with fewer than 50 employees – will not be required to offer insurance to their employees, although some will qualify for tax credits if they do so. Overall, the ACA is not expected to have a significant impact on the cost of health insurance premiums. A potential increase in premiums due to a broader range of required benefits is likely to be offset by other factors, such as lower administrative costs and improvements in the overall health of the population.

Policymakers are currently working out many critical details for implementing the ACA in Minnesota. Many key stakeholders are already fully engaged in this process, including government agencies, HMOs, health care providers, large businesses and insurance brokers. While these groups have a legitimate voice, the nonprofit sector is in a unique position to represent the interests of the people the ACA is intended to help – the uninsured and our most vulnerable populations.

Several opportunities exist for nonprofits to get involved and stay informed. A Health Insurance Exchange Advisory Task Force is developing legislation that will likely be debated during the 2012 Legislative Session. Another group, the Health Care Reform Task Force, is charged with delivering a plan to reform how we deliver and pay for health care in Minnesota. Both of these task forces are already at work – but nonprofits are welcome to attend meetings, provide public comment and potentially join work groups. Additional information on health reform, including future task force meetings, is available on the Health Reform Minnesota website, <http://mn.gov/health-reform>.

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and its Minnesota Budget Project will continue to inform the nonprofit sector about health reform. Visit www.mnbudgetproject.org for the latest information and opportunities for involvement.



**MINNESOTA
BUDGET
PROJECT**

An initiative of
the Minnesota Council
of Nonprofits

Who? Where? How? GIS Questions Your Nonprofit Should Ask

By Jeff Narabrook, MCN Public Policy Associate

The list of software familiar to most nonprofits usually doesn't include GIS (Geographic Information System) software. Nonprofits tend to underutilize and undervalue GIS, and it's time that changed.

GIS software, sometimes called 'mapping' software, is not so different from the types of software tools nonprofits are used to. It's a versatile tool with easy and highly complex applications. It's used not just for creating maps, but for analyzing spatial data in unique ways.

Though the cost of GIS software has been prohibitive to most organizations, the rise of free online tools and the launch of GIS-software publisher Esri's Nonprofit Program have made it more affordable.

Here's an example of how MCN has used GIS to advance its advocacy goals: In 2011 MCN opposed a proposal to require that voters without a current valid photo ID must cast a 'provisional' ballot. The voter must obtain and present a photo ID to their County Auditor; otherwise, the vote would not count.

To document the barriers this creates, MCN used GIS software to generate a table of distances from every city and town to its County Auditor's office. Some results were striking: provisional ballot voters in Sauk Centre would need to travel 96 miles roundtrip to St. Cloud just to have their vote counted. Without GIS, this analysis would not have been possible.

Whether it's for your advocacy, fundraising or program delivery, it's likely that GIS can strengthen your organization in unique ways. Here are four questions your nonprofit could develop answers to with the help of GIS.

1. Who Are We?

Using lists of members, clients, partners and locations, use GIS to get a better sense of how you and your stakeholders relate to one another. Do your participants congregate in certain areas? What population changes have occurred in relevant areas? How far on average do people travel to participate in your programs?

2. Where Do We Go From Here?

Having better understood who you and your stakeholders are, use GIS to inform your planning and set priorities. Where are the gaps in your service delivery area? Where are the areas for growth? What trends do you see in the community that impacts your organization's short and long-term goals?

3. How Do We Impact Public Policy?

GIS is a unique advocacy tool for showing community need, mapping policy consequences and finding the intersection of decisionmakers and your stakeholders. Do you have board members, donors and program participants who live in the districts of key decision-makers? How many constituents in a certain district are recipients of a service you provide?

4. How Do We Tell Our Story to Others?

Finally, use GIS to tell the story of your work to others. Show donors and supporters how your services are impacting your neighborhood and where your work happens. Demonstrate the reach of your organization into areas that need your services. And communicate the vision you have for how your organization will grow and respond to the communities it works in.

For an affordable copy of GIS software for your organization, contact the Esri's Nonprofit Organization Program. The Esri Nonprofit Organization Program is designed to provide nonprofits an affordable means of acquiring ArcGIS software and services. For more information, visit www.esri.com/nonprofit.

For about GIS or the way MCN has used GIS, please contact Jeff Narabrook, public policy associate, at jnarabrook@minnesotanonprofits.org.

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Breaking New Ground: Educating Minnesotans About Muslim Faith

Last fall, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and MAP for Nonprofits presented the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Minnesota (CAIR-MN) with the 2011 Nonprofit Mission Award for Anti-Racism Initiative.

CAIR-MN is the state's only Muslim civil rights organization that serves Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim. Its mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civic liberties, empower American Muslims and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding. With a primary purpose to assist victims that have encountered bias crimes, discrimination and defamation, CAIR-MN provides legal assistance and attorney referrals, legal trainings for employers, youth civic engagement programs, civic and media relations

trainings for the community and more.

CAIR-MN faces discrimination as an organization as well. When asked how the nonprofit handles discrimination, Lori Saroya, CAIR-MN's co-founder and president, responds, "We understand that it is a difficult time to be Muslim in America. There is unprecedented backlash, hate, fear and discrimination against American Muslims. As a civil rights advocacy organization, we take pride in being on the frontlines in addressing these challenges and serve as a buffer between our community and the attacks."



ways to make discriminatory behavior stop or even what their rights are as citizens. CAIR-MN empowers American Muslims to combat racism by informing them of what constitutes as illegal bias actions and provides them with the resources to confront these actions with just resolutions.

The year 2012 marks CAIR-MN's five-year anniversary and the start of new programs. In the spring, CAIR-MN will host Minnesota's first law professionals networking event, designed to bring together Minnesota Muslim lawyers, legal students and other legal professionals. The networking event will provide attendees a platform to discuss ways to give back to the Muslim community. Additionally, CAIR-MN will also organize the first Muslim Youth Leadership Symposium this summer, which will be a two-day seminar that seeks to engage high-school students in Minnesota around civic engagement and to help them build leadership skills.

CAIR-MN also continues its ongoing work through its "Know Your Rights" training and "Journalist's Guide to Understanding Islam and Muslims." Through "Know Your Rights," CAIR-MN recognizes that sometimes the most difficult part of facing discrimination isn't the act itself, but the victim's feelings of disempowerment. Some victims, new immigrants for example, are unaware of

CAIR-MN has also distributed hundreds of copies of its "Journalist's Guide to Understanding Islam and Muslims" locally. The 55-page media guide has been designed to give media professionals the tools they need to gain a better understanding of Islam and to write more informed stories about Muslims. CAIR-MN also hosts an annual media breakfast, which provides media professionals a chance to meet in person with CAIR-MN representatives. Here, the media can learn more about the organization, receive an overview of Muslim cultural norms and practices, and discuss current issues affecting the American Muslim community and network.

Through trainings and advocacy, CAIR-MN has worked closely with Muslim communities since 2007. In its continued effort to act as a bridge for Muslims, CAIR-MN protects the civil liberties of these communities and offers an opportunity to strengthen the dignity and self-worth of Muslim individuals. To learn about CAIR-MN's work, visit mn.cair.com.

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Upcoming Training Events

FEBRUARY TO MARCH 2012

Diversity and Inclusion	Policy
<p>DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION SERIES: CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE MATTERS: TOOLS TO BUILD CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND AGILITY February 14, 10 — 11 a.m. Webinar Fee: \$45 for MCN members / \$65 for nonmembers</p>	<p>ADVANCED ADVOCACY: CAPITOL RESOURCES February 8, 9 a.m. — noon State Office Building 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Saint Paul Fee: Free</p>
<p>DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION SERIES: WHAT'S EMOTIONS GOT TO DO WITH CULTURE: STRENGTHENING CROSS CULTURAL INTERACTIONS USING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE March 13, 10 — 11 a.m. Webinar Fee: \$45 for MCN members / \$65 for nonmembers</p>	<p>COFFEE WITH COMMISSIONERS SERIES: LUCINDA JESSON, DEPT. OF HUMAN SERVICES February 16, 9 — 10:30 a.m. Wilder Center 451 Lexington Parkway North, St. Paul Fee: Free</p>
Fundraising Trainings	Governance
<p>ADVANCED GRANTWRITING March 22, 9 a.m. — noon Minnesota Council of Nonprofits Conference Room 2314 University Avenue, Suite 20, St. Paul Fee: \$85 for MCN members or nonmembers</p>	<p>NONPROFIT GOVERNANCE SERIES: WORKING WITH CHALLENGING BOARD MEMBERS February 15, 1 — 4:30 p.m. Wilder Center 451 Lexington Parkway North, St. Paul Fee: \$45 for MCN members / \$65 for nonmembers</p>
<p>GRANTWRITING CLINIC FOR BEGINNERS March 27, 9 a.m. — noon Minnesota Council of Nonprofits Conference Room 2314 University Avenue, Suite 20, St. Paul Fee: \$85 for MCN members only</p>	<p>NONPROFIT GOVERNANCE SERIES: BOARD LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT - HOW TO ENHANCE AND PLAN FOR LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION March 7, 1:30 — 4:30 p.m. Wilder Center 451 Lexington Parkway North, St. Paul Fee: \$45 for MCN members / \$65 for nonmembers</p>
Communications	Management
<p>NONPROFIT TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE March 16, 7:45 a.m. — 4:30 p.m. Hyatt Regency Minneapolis 1300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis Fee: \$169 for MCN members / \$199 for nonmembers</p>	<p>STARTING A SUCCESSFUL NONPROFIT Saturday, February 18, 8:30 a.m. — noon Minnesota Council of Nonprofits Conference Room 2314 University Avenue, Suite 20, St. Paul Fee: \$85 for MCN members or nonmembers</p>

Get detailed information and register at
www.minnesotanonprofits.org
Click on Events & Trainings.

2012 PMLI Participants

MCN is proud to announce the selection of 30 nonprofit leaders for the 2012 Performance Management Leadership Institute. Each leader works with communities in Central or Northern Minnesota. Congratulations!

- Bobbie Bauman, Humane Society of Kandiyohi & Meeker Counties, Willmar
- John Beckwith, Minnesota Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils, Apple Valley
- Shannon Benolken, Itasca County Habitat for Humanity, Grand Rapids
- Laurie Berner, Udac, Inc., Duluth
- Jessica Boyer, United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties, Alexandria
- Steffanie Bristow, Happy Dancing Turtle, Pine River
- Kimberly Clement, Kinship of Aitkin County, Aitkin
- Fawnya Day, Todd County DAC, Browerville
- Kathy Enger, Northern Lights Library Network, Detroit Lakes
- Jessica Gangl, Junior Achievement of the Brainerd Lakes Area, Brainerd
- Cheryl Gullickson, Deer River Hired Hands, Inc., Deer River
- Lisa Hamilton, Advocates Against Domestic Abuse, Aitkin
- Tonya Heldt, Mid-Minnesota Women's Center, Inc., Brainerd
- Sandy Hennem, Ours to Serve House of Hospitality, Inc. Village of Hope, Bemidji
- Jackie Johnson, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central MN, Saint Cloud
- John (Jack) Judkins, Bemidji Community Food Shelf, Bemidji
- Mary Junnila, Lighthouse Center for Vision Loss, Duluth
- Apeckchya Karki, The NetWork for Better Futures, Minneapolis
- Jennifer Lien, Baby Steps, Grand Rapids
- Erica Lundberg, Northern Dental Access Center, Bemidji
- Judy Moening, United Cerebral Palsy of Central MN, Saint Cloud
- Stephenie Och, Hands of Hope Resource Center, Little Falls
- Carol Priest, Red Lake Homeless Shelter, Red Lake
- Anne Roach, Tool Shed Inc., Little Falls
- Tim Schmutzer, Pine Habilitation & Supported Employment, Inc. (PHASE), Sandstone
- Emily Steinmetz, The NICU Community, Sartell
- Amanda White Thietje, Mixed Blood Theatre, Minneapolis
- Kate Wigren, Community Action Duluth, Duluth
- Kathy Wills, Family Pathways, Cambridge
- Mohamed Webo, Midwest Oromo Communities, Inc., Saint Cloud

Consider Getting Involved with Ballot Measures

Nonprofit organizations are legally allowed to participate in ballot questions. While there are some state reporting requirements related to the level of activity an organization engages in, and some federal limits according to a nonprofit's IRS classification, nonprofits in Minnesota should feel free to engage in important policy questions in their communities—and should learn about and understand the constraints and requirements to do so.

- There are no legal limits on the types of activities nonprofits may do to support or oppose ballot measure questions.
- The IRS caps nonprofit spending on ballot measure activity (classified as a direct lobbying expense for reporting purposes), yet significant activity is allowed within those limits.
- Nonprofits can and should maximize their opportunity to have an impact.

Six Ways to Make an Impact

1. Adopt an organizational position in support of or in opposition to a ballot measure question.
2. Educate your staff, board, donors, volunteers and program participants.
3. Connect to a ballot measure campaign; ask them what would be most helpful to advance the position your support.
4. Ask people to vote for or against a ballot measure question, such as staff, board, donors, volunteers and program participants.
5. Participate in get-out-the-vote activities such as voter registration, voter reminders and voter education related to ballot measure questions.

6. Provide resources, such as space, staff time and email lists to existing ballot measure coalitions and campaigns.

Transparency and Reporting

Nonprofits are accustomed to providing financial information to the IRS through the annual Form 990 filing. Organizations engaging in ballot measure activity will also need to report these 'direct lobbying activities' on schedule C.

The IRS asks nonprofits to report ONLY 'direct lobbying' expenses, meaning those activities wherein you ask someone to vote for or against a specific ballot measure.

To ensure compliance with the IRS, just keep a list of activities and expenses associated with your ballot measure direct lobbying advocacy activities.

Additional Reporting for Highly Active Organizations

A small number of nonprofits that spend relatively large amounts of money on ballot measure activities may have some additional reporting requirements. Laws have been created to disclose ballot measure and other campaign spending to the public.

- If you spend more than \$5,000 in one calendar year to defeat or support a statewide ballot measure question, you must register with the Minnesota State Campaign Finance Board and complete necessary reporting documents.
- If you spend more than \$750 in a calendar year to defeat or support local ballot measure questions, you must file a simple one-page report with the Minnesota Secretary of State.

For more information on ballot measures and nonprofit reporting requirements, please contact Jeff Narabrook, public policy associate, at jnarabrook@minnesotanonprofits.org.

Risk to the Uninsured Nonprofit

Change of leadership within nonprofits sometimes results in a lapse of the organization's nonprofit insurance. An uninsured nonprofit will have a hard time protecting itself from even the most generic slip and fall claims, will have to spend too much time working on claim management and will be unable to provide services to its communities.



NONPROFIT INSURANCE ADVISORS

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If an organization is subject to claims of harm from a member of the public, fails to meet contractual obligations or fails to comply with regulatory or legal requirements, it risks significant financial loss if it is not insured.

Additionally, a nonprofit organization's reputation in the community allows it to attract contributions and volunteers. This means that a good reputation is essential for that nonprofit's continued success. If a nonprofit is uninsured, or allows its insurance to lapse, it risks allegations of financial mismanagement or employee misconduct that will negatively affect its reputation and standing within its community.

Nonprofits do have options to help cover risk; specific procedures will vary from organization to organization. Generally, nonprofits should continuously identify, minimize and protect against potential harms. Moreover, insurance is often an appropriate part of an overall risk management program. If a nonprofit's insurance policy is not in force due to nonpayment, it runs the risk of paying for expenses or fines out of pocket. The coverages that nonprofits participate in protect the nonprofit entity and help keep it in the business of helping communities served.

For more information about insurance coverages, please visit www.nonprofitinsuranceadvisors.org or contact Andrew Morse, Nonprofit Insurance Advisor's senior insurance consultant, at 651-757-3096.

2012 Nonprofit Finance & Sustainability Conference

Nonprofit finance and sustainability has always been important, and today these issues are more crucial than ever. Most organizations' finances have transformed dramatically in the past three years, and it is likely that organizations' financial landscapes will continue to change in the future. With these changes, the roles of financial management and accountability have changed too.

Financial management isn't only reserved for executive directors and finance managers anymore. Board members, program managers, bookkeepers, operations managers and others are responsible for understanding an organizations' financial picture and all play a role in maintaining accountability and sustainability.

Please join the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and Nonprofits Assistance Fund for a Nonprofit Finance & Sustainability Conference.

The day-long conference will take place on Thursday, April 19, in Brooklyn Center, and will offer insights, strategies and tools for staff and board members to look at your organization's financial sustainability from diverse perspectives—from strategy and oversight to implementation and evaluation.

This conference will bring together the best and the brightest to shed light on critical issues and best practices to help your organization remain sustainable into the future.

For more information, please visit www.minnesotanonprofits.org/events-trainings.

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Local Start Up Makes College Possible for Students Across the Nation

College Possible, formerly Admission Possible, was established in 2000 by Jim McCorkell as an effort to increase college admission for low-income students. Since its foundation, College Possible has grown to employ 23 full time staff and 70 AmeriCorps members and serve 6,800 students in 2011. Currently working in the Twin Cities, Milwaukee, and Omaha, they plan to reach 20,000 students annually in 10 sites across the country by 2015. Having made the transition from a local start-up to a national voice in the world of education, College Possible is an example of successful nonprofit growth.

Founded to address the inequality in college admission and completion between college-capable upper- and low-income students, College Possible works to provide the support and skills necessary for students to be competitive college applicants and successful college students. This support comes through a high school program, college planning workshops and college program.

“We’re serving 7,600 low-income students in Minnesota annually, and historically 98 percent of students in our program earn admission to college and nearly 80 percent have graduated or are persisting toward their college degree. We’ve been doing this work in Minnesota for over ten years and we’re thrilled to continue growing to reach all the students in the Twin Cities who could benefit from our program,” explains Sara Dziuk, executive director of College Possible Twin Cities.

The high school program consists of a two-year curriculum that requires students attend after-school sessions for four hours a week during their junior and senior years. The junior curriculum introduces students to the college appli-

cation process, provides test preparation for ACTs and SATs and brings students on campus visits. During senior year the focus shifts to the application process, applying for scholarships and financial aid, and preparing students for the transition into college. College planning workshops are also offered for underclassmen, encouraging them to consider their postsecondary options early in their high school careers.



College Possible acknowledges that admission to college is the first of many obstacles students have to completing a degree. For this reason, they also provide support for graduates of the high school program once they are enrolled in college. Coaches guide them through renewing their FAFSA applications, managing their time, balancing obligations, and locating internships and other professional development.

Both programs are implemented by 70 AmeriCorps members who serve as coaches for high school and college participants. Trained and supervised by College Possible staff, these national service members give a year of their time to serve at College Possible, and are compensated with a living allowance and education award.

The work of these coaches and the College Possible staff has yielded amazing results. Participants in the programs are

more than twice as likely to enroll in a four-year college as other low-income students, according to a 2011 Harvard University study. 98 percent of students served in the program have earned admission to college, and participants had an average ACT score improvement of 21 percent.

With results like these it is no surprise that College Possible has drawn national attention. In June of 2009, President Obama highlighted the program at an event that focused on innovative community programs. In 2011, College Possible received Mutual of America’s national Governor Hugh L. Carey Community Partnership Award for its work building partnerships with leaders from a variety of sectors.

“We’re honored that College Possible was awarded the Mutual of America Foundation’s Community Partnership Award for our innovative approach to addressing social issues and close partnerships in the communities we serve. This award highlights the impact of our strong partnerships with high schools, colleges, the AmeriCorps program and many other nonprofits in our community, all of which make our remarkable results possible,” states Sara Dziuk.

With a recent name change, vigorous growth plan and continued dedication to increase college admission and completion, the nonprofit sector is excited to see how College Possible will continue to serve low-income students in Minnesota and nationwide.

To learn more about College Possible and its work to make higher education accessible for college-capable, low-income students, visit www.admissionpossible.org.

Minnesota Economy Outperforms the U.S. Average, But Recovery Still Fragile

Minnesotans received mixed news when the state's 2011 November Economic Forecast was released late last year. Our state economy is outperforming the nation, yet there is still a risk that the U.S. could slip back into recession. The uncertainty in the forecast underscores the need for state leaders to invest in the basic building blocks of our economy: a highly skilled workforce and safe and vibrant communities.

According to the latest forecast, the state's labor market is showing signs of improvement, with the unemployment rate falling and Minnesotans working more hours. Minnesota's economic growth has resulted in higher-than-expected state revenues during the last budget cycle. That additional revenue, coupled with lower-than-expected spending, has resulted in an \$876 million surplus for the current budget cycle, the FY 2012-13 biennium.

If a surplus appears in a biennium, state law spells out how the funds must be used. The \$876 million in unexpected resources went to replenishing state budget reserves, providing a cushion against additional budget reductions in uncertain economic times. The first \$255 million of the surplus refilled the state's cash flow account and the remaining \$621 million brought the state's budget reserve close to its target of \$653 million. There were not enough resources left to start repaying the \$2.8 billion in delayed state payments to school districts that have been passed in recent years, although that is next in line if there are any future surpluses.

The nation's economic recovery is fragile. The forecast assumed that federal policymakers would extend the expiring payroll tax reduction and emergency unemployment benefits into 2012. This will help provide income to millions of Americans, allowing them to buy goods and services and spur the economy.



MINNESOTA BUDGET PROJECT

An initiative of
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Europe's financial troubles are another source of risk that could have far-reaching effects, acting to weaken the national recovery. Global Insight, Minnesota's economic consultant, sets the risk of a 2012 recession at 40 percent.

Minnesota policymakers have not put the state's budget on a sustainable path. Although Minnesota has a surplus in the current biennium, the forecast projects a \$1.3 billion deficit for the FY 2014-15 budget cycle, which grows to \$2.6 billion if the impact of inflation on the cost to provide services is included. This figure does not include the \$2.8 billion cost to repay school funding shifts. And there is a real possibility that the state's next official economic forecast, which will be released in February, could show a deficit opening up in the state's current budget cycle.

The unexpected surplus gives the state a buffer to prevent painful cuts in services in the face of future shortfalls. However, a looming deficit indicates that policymakers have not yet found a way to sustainably fund education, health care and other important services. How policymakers choose to address these challenges will have a significant impact on the state's economic future. Past budget decisions reduced Minnesota's investments in developing its workforce and building safe and vibrant communities. If policymakers opt to make further reductions, the state risks undermining its long-term economic success.

More information on the forecast, and state tax and budget issues is available on the Minnesota Budget Project website at www.mnbudgetproject.org.

Member Benefit Spotlight: Peace Coffee

Founded as a project of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), it is the mission of Peace Coffee to make



exceptional-tasting, organic fair-trade coffee that sustains the livelihoods of the people who grow, roast and sell it. This commitment manifests itself in many ways – from donating to over 300 nonprofit events a year to a distribution model that relies on bike deliveries and a biodiesel van.

The real star at Peace Coffee, however, is the coffee. Offering 19 different roasts and blends from Central & South America, Asia & the Pacific Rim, and Africa, there is sure to be something for every coffee lover. If you would rather warm up and re-energize with a non-coffee option, Peace also carries a number of Rishi teas including black, green, chai and herbal.

MCN is proud to partner with Peace Coffee to offer members a 25 percent discount off store price on wholesale coffee.

Members can access this discount, and others, by visiting www.minnesotanonprofits.org and clicking on Member Resources (member login required).

If you would like to try Peace Coffee, look for it at a number of cafes and grocery stores throughout the state, or visit their Wonderland Park coffee shop which celebrates its first anniversary this winter. The shop is located at 3262 Minnehaha Avenue in Minneapolis.

For more information about all of MCN member benefits, contact Lauren Van Schepen, nonprofit services assistant, at 651-757-3088 or lvanschepen@minnesotanonprofits.org.

Nonprofit Awards and Advancements

The Family Partnership received the "Agency of the Year" award from the national association of the Alliance for Children and Families for its demonstrated excellence in board participation and support, impact of advocacy efforts on local, state or national levels, and innovation in programming.



The Minnesota AIDS Project announced Bill Tiedemann is its new executive director. Bill comes to MAP from the Ohio Department of Health, where he

was most recently the program administrator in the HIV/STD/Hepatitis/TB Division. He served on the board of directors and the executive committee of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD).



Tisha Bolger is the new president-elect of the American Camp Association (ACA) national board of directors. Tisha is currently the chief operating officer of the

Girl Scouts of Minnesota Wisconsin River Valleys. She will begin her role as president in April 2012. Tisha's skills and experience from Girl Scout mergers will help ACA as it complete its transition into unification.

CLUES celebrated its 30th anniversary of service to the people of Minnesota in October 2011. In recognition of its 30 years of service to the community, CLUES received numerous, formal communiqués from state and national leaders that were read at its anniversary event.

CaringBridge won an eHealthcare Leadership Award in recognition of being an outstanding healthcare website, receiving a Silver Award in the Best Interactive Site category.



Pham Thi Hoa was named a program officer at the Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, Anne Ray Charitable Trust, following her service as executive director of CAPI. Hoa

brings 15-plus years of management experience with major international relief and development organizations and served on MCN's board of directors and executive committee.

CAPI announced Ekta Prakash as new executive director. Ekta served as CAPI's program director and will head CAPI's new strategic plan to move from being a primarily social service organization to an organization with a service model that includes social justice work, focusing on building its communities' human capital to advance economic vitality, health equity and gender democracy.



Michelle Edgerton is the new director of development for Twin Cities RISE! (TCRI). Before joining TCR!, Michelle served as a development officer in major/planned giving

at Courage Center and was a regional director for Legacy Management Group.

Guild Incorporated was awarded the Provider of the Year Award, presented by NAMI Minnesota and given to a mental health organization that demonstrates excellence, respect and best practices. The award is particularly meaningful because it was unsolicited and comes from NAMI, the voice for families living with mental illness.

The Humphrey School's Public and Nonprofit Leadership Center announced Kevin Gerdes as its new director. Kevin is working to finish his PhD at the University of St. Thomas and has spent the majority of his career as a leader in the Minnesota National Guard.



Christine Ganzlin is the new vice president girls and youth for the YWCA of Minneapolis. She will lead all YWCA youth programming, including oversight of Girls Inc[®] at the YWCA of Minneapolis, YWCA Beacons Learning Centers and YWCA Healthy Life Choices programs.

The Neighborhood Leadership Program (NLP) of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation was awarded the Martin Blum Community Mediation Award presented by the Dispute Resolution Center for its efforts in the advancement of the constructive resolution of conflict through open communication and shared decisionmaking.

Dakota Communities announces Julie Manworren as its new president and CEO. Julie most recently served as the executive director of Simpson Housing Services. Her skills will allow Dakota Communities to move the organization forward as it addresses the challenges and changes facing the intellectual and developmental disability community.

Ready 4 K merged with Resources for Child Caring in January, allowing both organizations to build on their strengths and focus on keeping Minnesota strong. The work of Ready 4 K will continue in its new home; continuing to be a voice for the youngest Minnesotans. With the addition of Ready 4 K's grassroots organizing, past successes, leadership and lessons learned, Resources for child Caring will be able to expand its reach statewide.

Submit Your Announcements

Member organizations are invited to submit your organization's awards, staffing announcements and other news to mcharleston@minnesotanonprofits.org.

MCN Staff Announcements



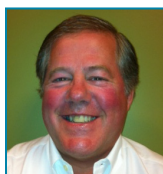
Lauren Van Schepen joined the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits in November 2011 as the nonprofit services assistant. Lauren provides a high-level of service to MCN's members and other nonprofits by answering their questions and other customer service related requests.



Paul Vliem is the development project coordinator at the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. He joined the MCN team in November 2011 and is responsible for coordinating the solicitation and stewardship of grant support for programs at MCN. Paul also manages key projects including the production of MCN's *Minnesota Grants Directory*.



Cindy Yang has transitioned from serving as MCN's operations assistant to a role as client service specialist for Nonprofit Insurance Advisors, a new service of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN). Nonprofit Insurance Advisors is specifically focused on brokering insurance for nonprofit organizations of all sizes.



Andrew Morse became a senior insurance consultant of Nonprofit Insurance Advisors in November. Andrew has been insuring nonprofit organizations in Minnesota since 1978. In this new role, he will serve existing customers and build relationship with new customers.



Ruth Duran Deffley, MCN's membership and chapters manager, will be leaving the organization in February. Ruth has been a key part of MCN's team since 2008. Her work has strengthened MCN's relationships with members and built lasting new relationships. Ruth has been a vital member of our team and will be missed.

NONPROFIT NEWS

A quarterly publication of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, 2314 University Ave. W., Ste. 20, St. Paul, MN 55114, 651-642-1904 or 800-289-1904.

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) is a statewide association of 2,000 nonprofits. Through its website, publications, workshops and events, cost-saving programs and advocacy, MCN works to inform, promote, connect and strengthen individual nonprofits and the nonprofit sector.

For information on submitting ads or articles, please contact Michaela Charleston at 651-757-3082 or mcharleston@minnesotanonprofits.org.

MCN members receive a free subscription to *Nonprofit News*. All nonprofits in Minnesota are eligible for membership. Associate membership is available for businesses and individuals. For further information on membership benefits, please contact Lauren Van Schepen at 651-757-3088 or lvanschepen@minnesotanonprofits.org.

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MCN Members Have Exclusive Access to Nonprofit Legal Handbook

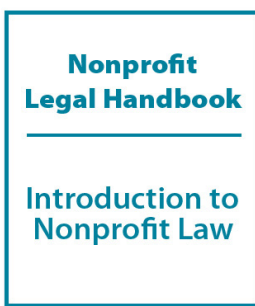
Nonprofit organizations, their managers and their boards of directors have a strong need for legal information. Nonprofit activities involve a substantial amount of legal liability, and yet many nonprofits lack ready access to basic legal information and do not have the resources necessary to procure ongoing legal counsel.

The *Nonprofit Legal Handbook* is a project of the MCN that strives to answer basic legal questions for nonprofit leaders in easy-to-understand language. Written and reviewed by attorney experts and additionally reviewed by nonprofit managers, the Nonprofit Legal Handbook offers plain English explanations of nonprofit law in 16 different sections. Below is just an example of the hundreds of questions answered in the *Handbook*.

Question: Do I need to provide compensatory time to exempt employees in the private sector who work more than 40 hours per week?

Answer: No. Compensation of “exempt” workers, by definition, is not based on the numbers of hours worked per pay period. Exempt employees are paid on a salary basis, in at least weekly increments. There is a risk that the Department of Labor may view an employer keeping track of hours worked by its exempt employees and compensating them hour-for-hour for hours worked over 40 hours per week is treating its employees as nonexempt workers, who do not meet the salary test for exemption from the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Some private sector employers, however, strive to provide some time off for exempt employees who have worked an excessive amount of time during a busy period. Time off under these circumstances should be coordinated between employer and employee so as to ensure sufficient coverage for the employer’s work. Note that there are different rules for public sector employers, which are not



Access the *Nonprofit Legal Handbook* at www.minnesotanonprofits.org/np-legal-handbook (member login is required)

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