

NONPROFIT NEWS

Information and connections for Minnesota's nonprofit sector

MINNESOTA
COUNCIL OF
NONPROFITS

Winter 2019

MCN Virtual Trainings Bringing Learning Opportunities to Minnesota Nonprofits Where They Are

Building on early success with its initial e-learning offerings last year, MCN will expand those offerings in 2019.

Participants have raved about the increased access to quality trainings through this new offering launched in late 2017 with Supervising for Employee Engagement with Lisa Negstad and Developing Your Evaluation Strategy and Plan with trainers from The Improve Group. In 2018, the offerings were expanded to Supervising for Team Engagement, Evaluation Basics, and Beginning and Intermediate Grantwriting with MCN's own director of advancement Kari Aanestad.

Sondra Reis, MCN's director of e-learning said, "As we launched our e-learning program, we focused on taking some of our highest quality trainings, particularly

those that have been popular as in-person offerings, and re-envisioning them as a live online class. Our number one goal is accessibility—how can we help our members access these trainings no matter where they are located? As a result, we've seen high levels of participation from throughout greater Minnesota in these trainings but also from the Twin Cities, too. A lot of people are realizing that they prefer to learn online."

Overwhelmingly participants have given high ratings to the training content, activities, and delivery platform. Over 95 percent of participants in the last six months of virtual trainings agree with key success measures for these trainings:

- The activities helped me learn the content. (96% agree)

continued on page 3...

Shared Goals of Thriving Families and Communities Reflected in Governor Walz's Budget

Each day, Minnesotans in every corner of the state wake up wanting the same things for themselves and their families: to go to a good job; for their children to spend their day in safe, enriching care or quality schools; and to come home to share a meal. It's why Minnesotans have a history of coming together to invest in a high standard of living, with quality health care, good schools across the state, and other elements that allow families and communities to thrive.

This year, one of policymakers' primary tasks is to move toward that vision of a state where everyone can prosper as they craft the state's next two-year budget. MCN shares that vision and works through its Minnesota Budget Project to

support tax and budget policies to get us there. The Minnesota Budget Project's agenda for 2019 seeks to build broader prosperity by making affordable health care and child care available to more Minnesota families, and supporting fair tax policies that focus on everyday Minnesotans.

We have also urged policymakers to make advancing racial equity a primary goal in their decision-making and deliberately address the structural barriers that block Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) from thriving in today's economy. Due to discriminatory housing policies in place over the past century, BIPOC Minnesotans are far more likely to live in areas where access to the building blocks of

continued on page 3...

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

NONPROFIT BITS

Save the date!

The 2019 MCN Annual Conference will be taking place on Thursday, October 24 and Friday, October 25.

This year, we are thrilled to be hosting it for the first time in Rochester at the Mayo Civic Center!

Stay tuned for more details on the event, coming in Spring!

IN THIS ISSUE...



Where We Stand ... page 2



Census 2020 page 5



Change Leadership page 4



Greater MN Nonprofits page 8

Where We Stand

New Human Rights Commissioner, CNCS Closing, and Charitable Giving Incentives in Play

On January 8, MCN public policy director Rebecca Lucero was sworn in as Minnesota's new Commissioner of Human Rights by Governor-elect Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor-elect Peggy Flanagan. Minnesota's Human Rights Department was established in 1967, and is one of 23 commissioner positions in Minnesota's state government appointed by the Governor, with 45 staff and a \$5 million budget.

We are sorry to lose Rebecca as an MCN colleague and unstoppable nonprofit advocate, but thrilled that she will take on this critical leadership position in state government. Rebecca has a passion for gender and racial justice, and of course nonprofit partnerships, so will now bring her creativity and positive spirit to a new forum.

The Public Policy Director position is an important one to fill for MCN, so we'll have more news about that search soon.

Minnesota CNCS national service functions moving to Kansas City?

The Corporation for National and Community Service (which supports VISTA, AmeriCorps, Senior Corps) is seeking to implement a "Transformation and Sustainability" plan that includes closing all of the CNCS state offices – with Minnesota's state office scheduled to close on May 1st.

A diverse group of community organizations and growing number of members of Congress oppose this move, and Rep. Betty McCollum (D-Minn) introduced the Keep Community Service Local Act, which would prevent the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) from closing state or territory offices without approval from Congress.

Rep. McCollum released a statement stating that: "CNCS staff in these 46 state and territorial offices are immersed within the communities they serve, making them especially aware of their community's unique needs—and how CNCS service programs can help fill those gaps most effectively," Rep. McCollum said. "Closing these offices without consulting stakeholders and moving toward a hastily developed regional plan undermines the CNCS mission and is unacceptable."

MCN now sponsors 20 VISTA slots in Minnesota nonprofits and has experienced the Minnesota CNCS office as a highly effective and accessible resource. MCN would hate to lose this important resource to an unnecessary reshuffling.

Tax impacts on Charitable giving raising new questions

The 2017 federal tax bill raised major questions about how 2018 individual charitable contributions would respond to a dramatic decrease in the number of people itemizing their taxes—and so a reduction in the number of people being able to deduct their charitable contributions. There was a wide range of predictions ranging from little change in total contributions to a dramatic reduction, with the preliminary conclusion being that little change comes closer to the actual result (though final 990 returns for most organizations will not be filed until the summer—with final totals).

Minnesota's situation is a bit different from the rest of the country in that we are one of two states that have a charitable tax deduction for taxpayers who do not itemize—which tends to be the taxpayers outside of upper income categories. The Minnesota legislative session is underway, with tax committees still wrestling with the question of how much Minnesota's tax code should conform to the 2017 federal changes. MCN will advocate for strong charitable giving incentives throughout the session, including keeping Minnesota's non-itemizer charitable deduction.



Virtual Learning Taking Off with Minnesota Nonprofits

continued from page 1...

- The training provided information that I need to use in my role. (98% agree)
- The trainer promoted participant engagement. (98% agree)
- It was easy to use the virtual classroom tools (chat, polls, etc.). (98% agree)

Participant feedback included:

“This was a great class. It was easy to follow along and the trainers did a great job keeping me engaged.”

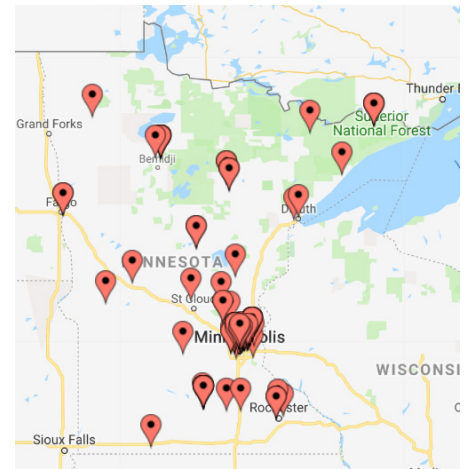
“This was well done and well organized. I’m a very visual learner so can be challenged to stay focused with online learning. I was able to focus and understand quite well.”

“Participants go in our virtual trainings thinking it’s going to be just another webinar—where you listen, look at slides, and maybe get your questions

answered.” Reis said. “But we’ve intentionally designed each of them to be so much more than that. These trainings are highly interactive—combining presentation, conversation, and some individual reflection and work during and between sessions.”

“There are some really amazing thought leaders in the field of live virtual training—who’ve learned how to really help people learn and engage with the content even when they can’t see the trainer,” Reis continued. “We’ve been using the best of what the research by and experience of these thought leaders says to make these trainings truly valuable to our participants and the nonprofits they serve.”

And the training evaluations bear that out: 99 percent of participants say they are likely to recommend one of MCN’s virtual trainings to a colleague or a friend (with 54 percent commenting



Participants in MCN’s virtual trainings so far in 2019 are located throughout the state.

that they are extremely likely to do so).

In 2019, MCN will again expand its virtual training offerings to include Collaborative Problem Solving, How to Start a Successful Nonprofit and How to Build a Better Nonprofit: Implementing Nonprofit Excellence. For the entire list of virtual trainings and conferences, visit <http://bit.ly/MCNvirtual>.

Governor’s Budget Focusing on Efforts to Create “One Minnesota”

continued from page 1...

opportunity - such as good schools and jobs, affordable health care and child care - are limited.

We were pleased that Governor Tim Walz included several of our priorities in his budget proposal released in February. Importantly, Walz’s budget maintains the health care provider tax. Unless policymakers take action this year, this funding source is scheduled to expire, resulting in the loss of around \$700 million a year that helps fund affordable health care for over one million Minnesotans and other investments in healthy people and communities. A revenue loss of that size would also threaten funding in other areas that Minnesotans value, like housing, the

environment, and community development.

Walz also proposes major investments in affordable child care, including providing assistance to about 1,000 more Minnesota families, as well as increasing the rates paid to child care providers, which is key to ensuring families have choices.

The governor’s tax proposal prioritizes working people and their families by expanding the Working Family Credit, a state tax credit that boosts incomes and gets children off to a stronger start. He also has a plan for updating the state’s tax code (“tax conformity”) that maintains tax provisions that

Minnesota working families count on.

In partnership with state and local governments, Minnesota’s nonprofit sector helps to create strong communities where all Minnesotans can thrive. State budget and tax decisions that make sustainable investments in public services, along with transformational work against systemic racial barriers, are critical to building a more inclusive society. We are thankful that many steps in this direction are set out in the Walz/Flanagan’s first budget.

Stay up to date on the latest at the Legislature by visiting our website: mnbudgetproject.org.

INVESTING IN A VISION

Financials can build a foundation for achieving your mission. That's why Flagship Bank offers products and rates to help leverage your budget to focus on the big picture. Let's talk about your goals and how we can help.

952.944.6050
flagshipbanks.com



1.00% APY*
NONPROFIT
CHECKING
ACCOUNT

*Annual Percentage Yield. 1.26% APY for balances \$100,000 and greater. APY is accurate as of 2/11/19, and is subject to change at any time. \$500 minimum balance required to open account. Fees could reduce earnings.



FLAGSHIPBANK

Investing in you.



Change Leadership is Key to Nonprofit Success

Leadership is about strong relationships, emotional intelligence, and team work. At the same time, leadership is about fiscal transparency, ethical decision making, and taking a long-term view.

At this year's Nonprofit Finance & Sustainability Conference, attendees will have an opportunity to focus on both sides of their leadership brains.

They'll have a chance to hone skills around budgets, accounting, and fiscal leadership. Plus, they'll expand their ability to manage a crisis, lead with influence, and find opportunity in change.

Keynote speaker, Eddie Torres, president and CEO of Grantmakers in the Arts, will speak about Leading Change; Managing Transitions. Change is many things: risky, critical, necessary, inevitable. It has financial implications. Some change is planned and strategic; other change is unexpected. No matter the cause or intensity, leaders must lead through change.

Eddie will use a storytelling format to share lessons from his leadership journey. He has learned that effective change leaders often embrace the characteristic of humility and a willingness to create a

shared vision among stakeholders.

Eddie's leadership journey demonstrates the importance of sustaining a clear vision for change. He has learned that an organizational vision is often part of a larger world vision: How is the world changing? What role do we play in it? What parts do we resist, reform, reimagine, redesign? What parts do we work to accelerate?

Change can come as a planned process or an unplanned surprise. When change is planned, it's important to build a sense of urgency around the need for change. In these situations, leaders must develop a guiding coalition to lead the change and generate short-term wins on the path toward sustaining the change. When unexpected change brings crisis to a nonprofit, Eddie says it's important to "recognize a crisis as a crisis." In both situations, he says it's important to "explore your values and plan your response through the lens of your values."

Whatever change your organization is facing, Eddie's story will have lessons for you. Join us on April 11 at the 2019 Nonprofit Finance and Sustainability Conference, minnesotanonprofits.org/finance-conference.

Honor an Exemplary Leader or Organization

Nonprofit award season is in full swing! These awards are your opportunity to honor a leader or organization in the sector doing outstanding work.

Nonprofit Leadership Awards

In partnership with the Center for Integrative Leadership at the University of Minnesota, these awards honor three leaders at various stages in their nonprofit careers.

Nonprofit Mission Awards

Nonprofits make outstanding contri-

butions to Minnesota's high quality of life. The Minnesota Nonprofit mission awards honor these contributions.

Virginia McKnight Binger Unsung Hero Awards

Opening soon, these awards honor four individuals making a significant impact in the community but have not yet been recognized for their work.

For information on award timelines, how to nominate, and more, visit minnesotanonprofits.org/awards.

Agendas and Action

Census Outreach Campaign Launches in April!

The 2020 Census is less than 400 days away. Nonprofits know how important it is for everyone to be counted because the census impacts all of us. Accurate representation ensures inclusion and equity for our community, and it drives the fair distribution of resources, money, power, and access. The 2020 census faces special challenges since for the first time it is being done online, and with the controversial citizenship question which is still waiting for a court decision. Nevertheless, it is required by the Constitution to get an accurate count every decade, and nonprofits are crucial partners in making this happen!

There are several practical steps that organizations can do to help Minnesota achieve a complete and accurate count in 2020:

- **Promote Census awareness with visuals or materials!** Gather resources and create a one pager on the census, or use pamphlets from other organizations, and distribute it to your constituents. Put up a poster about the census in your workplace. Include census facts on your website - write a blog post or have a webpage with resources on the census. Make it easy for your community to access information about the census!
- **Inform and train your staff/board/volunteers.** Ask someone from the Minnesota Census Mobilization Partnership (mcf.org/public-policy/community-action), or the State Demographers' Office (mn.gov/admin/demography/) to present to your organization's staff about the census at your next staff meeting. Expand the reach further by including your organization's board members! Tell your volunteers about the census. The goal is to get everyone counted, and one of the simplest ways you can contribute is by making sure internal folks know about why it matters!
- **Mention the census at your events.** Are you having a community event or a program happening soon? This is a great opportunity to educate community members about the census. Mention the census - when it's happening, what to look out for, and direct them to resources! The Minnesota Census Mobilization Partnership is a great place to start (mcf.org/2020-census-and-american-community-survey).
- **Talk to your constituents about the census.** Your staff have trusted relationships with community members. Learn about which messages work in certain communities. Get handouts for targeted communities, if needed. Offer pamphlets about the census at your organization. Mention the census, and how it impacts our community, people are more likely to respond if they know how the census impacts them.
- **Host a Census education meeting in your community.** Partner with leaders working on the census! Gather census nerds and get them on a panel on why the census matters. Attract people with food. Give out one pagers, tools, and resources. Get people excited about the census!

United States Census 2020



MCN in the process of creating Census 2020 tools for nonprofit outreach. Stay tuned and contact our Policy and Equity Coordinator, Michelle Chang (mchang@minnesotanonprofit.org or 651-757-3078), if you have any questions. We are working hard to bring you the resources you need to make census engagement easy!

To learn more about Census 2020 engagement please join us at a launch event at the Capitol on April 1, 2019 (April marks one year out from official 2020 census day). The census deeply impacts our community, as we are all interconnected. So let's work together to make sure Minnesota and Nonprofits count!

2018 Nonprofit Mission Award Recipient for Anti-Racism Initiative: Ujamaa Place

Approximately 10,000 males are incarcerated in Minnesota prisons. Of those, 31 percent are African American males, despite the fact that African Americans represent only five percent of the state's population. In an era of policies geared toward reducing prison populations, the reality is that Minnesota has among the worst track records in the country relating to the incarceration of people of color at disproportionate rates.

A community-based nonprofit organization in St. Paul serving African American men ages 18-30, Ujamaa Place re-engages young Black men, helping them transition out of incarceration, unemployment, homelessness, and poverty into educational, employment, and life skills programming. Ujamaa Place empowers enrollees to redefine their concepts of themselves, manhood, success and positive community values.

Ujamaa Place is a diversion program at sentencing—the criminal justice system's option for less serious offenders. The program is cost-effective for taxpayers and saves court time, keeping court dockets from becoming too large, and reducing prison overcrowding.

Since Ujamaa Place's doors opened in 2010, approximately 2,000 young Black men from Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area have come to Ujamaa needing help. The organization's highly trained African American direct staff and coaches develop a high-context transformational plan to meet each participant at his level, rather than applying a prescribed approach for all; an excellent alternative to incarceration.

"The men served at Ujamaa Place are among the most marginalized in our communities," said the organization's president and CEO Otis Zander. "Living in extreme poverty, they have confronted systemic racism and disparities throughout most of their lives. Together, with many other community partners in the Twin Cities we are successfully addressing those disparities, transforming the lives of our Ujamaa Place enrollees."



To date, no man enrolled at Ujamaa Place has reoffended. Instead of prison, men are protected from becoming homeless by offered job skills training and ultimately gainful employment.




Through the ground-breaking work of Ujamaa Place, African American men formerly involved with the criminal justice system and enrolled in Ujamaa are less likely to reoffend, receive mental and chemical health treatment as needed, are provided safe housing options, become trained for employment, and ultimately find jobs. The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits was honored to present the organization with the 2018 Mission Award for Anti-Racism Initiative.

Learn more about Ujamaa Place at www.ujamaaplace.org.

TRUSTED. PARTNER.

Plan. Showcase. Connect.
Celebrate. We partner with
you from start to finish.

SAINT PAUL
RIVERCENTRE™

rivercentre.org   

Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
2314 University Avenue West, Suite 20
St. Paul, MN 55114-1802
Address Service Requested

Update your record with MCN:
by emailing MCN at info@minnesotanonprofits.org.

Greater Minnesota Nonprofits Respond to a Changing Landscape

With six staff living and working in regional offices, the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits is keeping a finger on the pulse of Greater Minnesota. In 2019, a variety of forces are impacting nonprofits in small towns, urban centers, and rural communities, with a few key themes remaining tightly focused in MCN's gaze.

Across Greater Minnesota, nonprofits are coming together to address homelessness and housing, affordable child care, and transportation. These basic needs of families and individuals are, in many communities, unattainable. Nonprofits are taking a multi-faceted approach to complex issues. Many organizations are forming collaborations, task forces, and committees to address these issues—often in collaboration with government agencies and local funders.

As demographic changes impact communities across the state, nonprofits are supporting and developing a new generation of local and regional leadership who bring more diverse perspectives. A deliberate and conscious effort is being made towards ensuring that the people who are impacted by nonprofit

services are included at decision making tables, sharing feedback, and contributing. Nonprofits are also being purposeful in addressing ways to better work across cultural differences to form a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable workforce.

Many organizations are looking intentionally at their boards of directors, their hiring practices, and their succession planning to be mindful about recruitment strategies and to be conscious in developing the leadership capacity of their staff. In a similar vein, as nonprofits think about organizational leadership capacity, multiple organizations are addressing local challenges of recruiting new leadership. Many nonprofits are small and are not able to develop a second tier of internal leadership. Thus, succession planning is an important theme for various organizations.

As funding streams continue to ebb and flow, various nonprofits have been focusing on their missions and narrowing their services. Instead of trying to do everything for their target demographic, they are collaborating through networks and referrals. For example, one organization has been taking on

the clothing distribution that used to be spread out in smaller pockets in the community. That way, clients can have a greater selection—and the other nonprofits have more storage space! And at the same time, nonprofits understand that competition drives growth. Innovation is a by-product when communities support diverse perspectives and approaches to create a system of solutions.

Each of these themes is resonating in Greater Minnesota's communities in different ways. Larger urban centers often have more capacity than small towns and rural counties. And as we move into 2019, Governor Walz's commitment to "One Minnesota" shows us that we are all together in building a state where everyone can thrive.

You can find MCN's regional offices at minnesotanonprofits.org/regional-chapters.