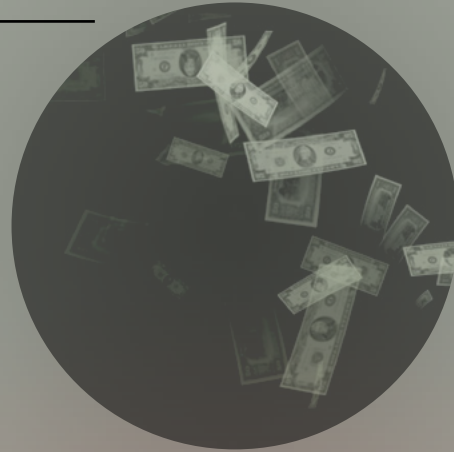


NONPROFIT NEWS



the fundraising imbalance



The imbalance of “back to normal” fundraising

Together we will be enough;
2024 Fundraising Conference preview

The do's & don'ts of nonprofit charitable gambling

Northern foundation takes rural funding to new level



Get sustainable solutions for your organization.

Reduce waste and improve recycling at your organization with a grant of **up to \$10k**. Use your grant to cover the cost of bins, efficient equipment, educational materials, reusable food service ware and more!

Learn more and schedule a **free site visit** with a Recycling Expert today!

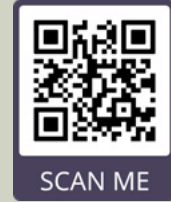
[BizRecycling.com/Grants](https://bizrecycling.com/grants)



Face to Face in Saint Paul used a grant to purchase bins and switch to compostable food containers. [See their story.](#)



Subscribe MCN's e-newsletters by interest area to receive the latest nonprofit resources.



Nonprofits are a force for good. We're here to help.

As one of the largest state associations of nonprofit in the country, the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) joins nonprofits across interest areas to advance important nonprofit issues.

MCN is a trusted ally and advocate for you. Visit our website to learn how MCN can support your nonprofit: www.minnesotanonprofits.org.

[Relevant workshops & conferences](#)

[Timely nonprofit data & research](#)

[Impactful state & federal advocacy](#)

[Strong member network & benefits](#)

Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
2314 University Avenue West, Suite 20
St. Paul, MN 55114
Phone: 651-642-1904
Fax: 651-642-1517

info@minnesotanonprofits.org
www.minnesotanonprofits.org



04

The imbalance of "back to normal" fundraising

Are we backsliding in philanthropy where the pandemic sparked change?

05

You didn't learn this in school: State Agencies

Why nonprofits need to understand how state agencies work to effectively advocate for change

06

Do's & don'ts of nonprofit charitable gambling

Who's allowed, permissible activities, and spending rules

07

2024 Fundraising Conference preview

Gain tangible strategies, co-learn with peers at full day conference

08

On the move

Celebrating new nonprofit staff and board members

10

Broad benefits of affordable child care

How nonprofits benefit from lower monthly child care costs

11

Northern foundation takes rural funding to new level

2023 Nonprofit Mission Award recipient for Responsive Philanthropy

12

Upcoming nonprofit trainings

Opportunities to prioritize your professional development

The imbalance of “back to normal” fundraising

Talk to any fundraiser and they can quickly outline specific frustrations about what makes their job more difficult than it needs to be.

As fundraisers, we spend a large percentage of our time researching and identifying opportunities, cultivating and stewarding critical relationships, creating beautiful and succinct marketing materials, communicating just enough to educate and inform but not too much to alienate supporters, writing grants, reports, appeals, and handwritten thank you notes. Then wash, rinse, and repeat.

Some organizations are certainly lucky to have a dedicated staff person or (*gasp!*) a team to manage all that it entails to raise money. But we know many Minnesota nonprofits are small, where the fundraiser is the leadership, programs and operations staff, and content expert.

Fundraising highlights the imbalance of wealth, power, and privilege in our sector.

For so long, it is simply expected for nonprofits to center the needs of donors above community and follow arbitrary rules and procedures that were clearly not designed by those most impacted. Despite knowing what the challenges are, cultural and decision-making models are powerful and difficult to shift.

It takes enormous intentional investment of precious time and energy to come to solutions together creatively and collectively. But our hope is that it is possible.

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that funders, philanthropy leaders, government agencies, and corporations can act nimbly and quickly to meet the needs of the moment. Many released any restrictions, simplified application and reporting processes, communicated directly with grantees to find out what they need and provided extra support, created coalitions to collect and consolidate funding, and quickly got them into hands of communities in need. The circumstances were terrible, but it was inspiring to witness this moment of collective caretaking and giving.

As we move further away from the onset of the pandemic

and memories of collective commitment to anti-racism fade, many are eager to get “back to normal.” Certainly, we found joy in being back together in community – in restaurants, performances, conferences, offices, and staff meetings (ok certain folks will debate the last one).

Unfortunately, this concept of “back to normal” can feel like backsliding in areas where pandemic disruptions brought welcome change.

Funders concerned about the impact of the stock market and high inflation stopped accepting new requests all together. Support that poured into Black organizations and businesses in 2020 were cut as anti-racism work became less trendy and now faces judicial challenges as the work towards inclusion, equity, and justice is now highly politicized. Some foundations who provided unrestricted funding in 2020 are now returning to program restrictions, and many multi-year grants do not incorporate the impact of high inflation and increase in cost-of-living over the past few years.

We are happy to see conversations and movements towards philanthropy reform becoming more mainstream thanks to initiatives like Trust-Based Philanthropy, Community-Centric Fundraising, #CrappyFundingPractices, #FixtheForm, among others. If anything, we hope these movements inspire nonprofit professionals to push back against going back to “normal” as how things were simply didn’t work.

As your nonprofit state association, know that MCN is also championing philanthropy reform and is an active participant in many philanthropy systems like advocacy, partnerships, and working groups, to center nonprofit voices.

We hope this issue of *Nonprofit News* inspires you to join us in our collective work towards co-developing sustainable models of fundraising.

In community,



Nonoko Sato

Executive Director



Kari Aanestad

Associate Director

You didn't learn this in school: State Agencies



Marie Ellis

Public Policy Director

TL;DR: state agencies are not well understood but have a lot of power to implement law, and nonprofits need to understand how they work to effectively advocate for needed changes.

I can't be the only one who has had this experience: You have a new job at a nonprofit and people keep talking about "the

Department," "agency staff," using acronyms like "DEED," or referring to "Commerce" or "Health." You can tell that all these things are related to government, but don't recall learning about agencies in a government class.

You're right, you didn't learn this in school. Let's learn it now!

If you went to school in the U.S., you almost certainly learned there are three branches to our government: legislative, executive, and judicial. Today we'll focus on the executive branch, but first a quick note about the other two: The legislative branch is embodied by Congress (federal level) and the Legislature (state level), while the judicial branch is embodied by the courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court (federal level) and the Minnesota Supreme Court (state level).

Back to the executive branch.

The executive branch is led by the President (federal level) or the Governor (state level), and both levels make use of agencies, also referred to as departments. The state's executive branch also includes three elected positions and their offices: State Auditor, Attorney General, and Secretary of State.

In Minnesota the term "agency" can include executive branch agencies, boards, commissions, councils, and taskforces.

For the purpose of this article, we're looking at the larger executive branch agencies.

There are about 25 such agencies, including the Department of Corrections ("Corrections"), Department of Human

Services ("DHS" -- not to be confused with the federal agency Department of Homeland Security), Department of Transportation ("MnDOT"), and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency ("Minnesota Housing").

I've got a bee in my bonnet about the fact that the nicknames for each agency don't follow any convention. Why not MnAG and MnCORR to match MnDOT? Or DHF for Minnesota Housing, to match DHS? *Sheesh.*

Each agency is led by a Commissioner appointed by the Governor.

High-level staff at state agencies often leave if a new governor is elected from a different party than the governor who appointed the commissioner, but most agency staff are not in political positions and may stay on through many administrations. ("Administration" in this sense refers to the management of government operations, as opposed to the way it's often used to refer to the management of an office's operations i.e. "administrative assistant." I mean, did English run out of words? *Sheesh again.*)

Each branch has a function. The legislative branch creates law, the executive branch implements law, and the judicial branch interprets law.

Sometimes solutions to public policy issues must be made by changing statute, which requires advocacy to the legislative branch. Other times, the statutory language isn't where the problem lies – it lies in the way a state agency has implemented the law.

Public policy advocacy requires some detective work, to determine where the roadblock sits – it could be in federal law, state law, city ordinance, state agency policy, state agency practice, or elsewhere. This is sometimes referred to as a "lever" by advocates, meaning the specific place and strategy to push for change.

I hope this background gives you insights into state agencies, their function, and how nonprofits engage with them as both service providers and advocates.

Stay tuned for a future article with examples of the power state agencies have!

Do's & don'ts of nonprofit charitable gambling



Lenny Jones

Development Manager

While many associate pull tabs and bingo with local bars, charitable gambling can also serve as a fundraising strategy for nonprofit organizations. The particulars of hosting legal charitable gambling events can be a little complicated, but here's some basic information and links from our friends at the [Minnesota Gambling Control Board](#) to help you decide if this is

a fundraising option your organization wants to explore.

What You Can Do

Allowable charitable gambling activities include:

- [Pull Tabs](#)
- [Bingo](#)
- [Raffles](#)
- [Paddlewheels](#)
- [Tipboards](#)

Who Can Do It

Registered nonprofit organizations of the following four categories may host charitable gambling activities under state regulations:

- Fraternal organizations (ex. Eagles and Masons)
- Veterans organizations (ex. VFW halls)
- Religious organizations (ex. churches and other faith houses)
- "Other" nonprofits (ex. most of us)

Nonprofit organizations wishing to host charitable gambling events must be registered with the state of Minnesota and hold either a [license](#) or a [permit](#) from the Minnesota Gambling Control Board.

Licenses are required for ongoing charitable gambling activities, while an exempt or excluded permit is sufficient for nonprofits hosting only a limited number of charitable gambling activities within a calendar year.

Nonprofits must provide one of the following documents as proof of nonprofit status in order to register and obtain the necessary license or permit:

- Organization's IRS income tax exemption 501(c) letter
- Certificate of Good Standing for current calendar year

How You're Allowed to Spend that Sweet Money

Use of your charitable gambling proceeds is restricted to "lawful purpose", but the list of allowable expenditures is surprisingly generous. [Full information on allowables, taxation, and other profit-related questions can be found in the 2015 Use of Proceeds document from the MN House of Representatives.](#)

[The Minnesota Gambling Control Board](#) is happy to guide you in your quest to raise funds via charitable gambling, [so please do not hesitate to reach out to them with questions.](#)

And now – Off to the bingo!

Work with the agency that's focused on helping you reach your goals.

Our insurance advisors live and work in the communities they serve, partnering with an extensive network of top-rated insurance providers to deliver competitively priced solutions. Put us to work for you at bremer.com



Products and services offered through Bremer Insurance are not insured by the FDIC or any Federal Government Agency, are not a deposit or other obligation of, or guaranteed by, the depository institution, and are subject to investment risks including possible loss of the principal amount invested.

Together we will be enough: Fundraising Conference preview



Courtney Gerber
Program Director

When the conference planning committee came together this spring, a few things became immediately apparent: fundraisers are tired, fundraisers are rabble rousers with hearts of gold, and fundraisers like to have fun and make change in a supportive community of thoughtful peers.

Enter this year's [Nonprofit Fundraising Conference](#) theme: [Together We Will Be Enough](#).

And might I suggest the subtheme of, "individually we're cool too, but let's stop praising individual resilience in place of collective brilliance."

No one person can be everything to everyone, yet it can feel like this impossible expectation continues driving the industry. We need a pause button, maybe even a hard reset, so we can get down to the business of manifesting the abundant world seeded at the conference last year where collectivity becomes the fundraising (and grantmaking) norm rather than the trendy, stand-alone exception.

So, [come on out to Brooklyn Center on Wednesday July 24](#) for a day of learning, celebrating, and reflecting together.

Wednesday, July 24

What to expect from the 2024 Nonprofit Fundraising Conference

Heritage Center
of Brooklyn Center



A full day of in-person professional development.



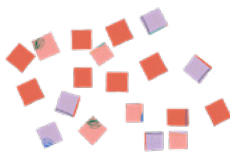
22 Breakout Sessions on timely topics, research, and case studies.



Inspiring Keynote with Hali Lee, Together We Will Be Enough.

"MCN's Fundraising Conference offers a multitude of opportunities to connect with peer professionals (and meet new ones!), gain a deeper understanding of Minnesota's evolving philanthropy landscape, and learn new strategies to enhance my skills"

"In the most professional way, I am squealing, jumping, screaming about Hali Lee's keynote! This is incredible!"



Pay What You Can & Team Rates to ensure all can attend.



Connection and networking with 400+ fundraising peers.



Digital downloads of materials for continued learning.

"Coming together as colleagues to exchange ideas and learnings is so inspirational! It helps me get outside my day-to-day box and be inspired by the amazing network of development colleagues in Minnesota."

Register: www.minnesotanonprofits.org/events/conferences/fundraising-conference



SCAN TO REGISTER

Nonprofit news & advancements



Katherine Johnson was named executive director of End in Mind Project.



Centro Tyrone Guzman announced Xavier Vazquez as their executive director; Xavier also serves on MCN's board of directors.



The Northland Foundation added three new board trustees, including Ben Benoit of USDA Forest Service Chippewa National Forest, Kenneth A. Reid of Lake Superior College, and Kristen Vake of the Iron Mining Association of Minnesota.



Shannon Mahedy joined Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry as communications coordinator.



Guild welcomed their new CEO, Trish Thacker.



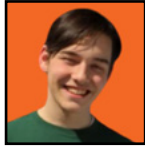
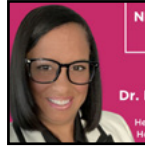
Catholic Charities Twin Cities announced John Marston as its new chief financial officer.



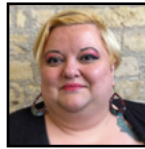
COPAL welcomed two new staff members, Maria Bertrand as grant manager and Emilio Rodriguez as organizer.



The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits welcomed two staff members, Shonni Kregel as research manager and Emily Steinmetz as Central Minnesota regional representative.



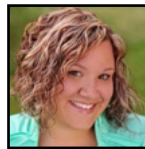
Youthprise welcome three new board members, Sandy Pulles of ServeMinnesota, Dr. Myriam Roby of Hennepin Health Care, and student and community organizer Charlie St. Dennis.



Esther Berland Blevins was named associate director of the Minnesota Center for Book Arts.



Leniya Morrор joined Twin Cities Diversity in Practice as programs and communications coordinator.



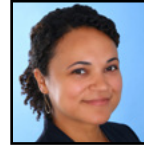
MSS welcomed two new board members, Alaina Gallagher of ARRM and Jennifer Diederich of the Minnesota Autism Center.



Maider Vang joined DARTS as resident service coordinator.



Propel Nonprofits announced the promotion of six staff members, including Heather Allen as fiscal sponsorship program senior consultant, Garret Backes as chief advancement officer, Darrell Beauford as senior accounting and finance consultant, Laura Ciotti as fiscal sponsorship program director, Mario Hernandez as senior director of strategic services, and John Skillings as senior accounting and finance consultant.

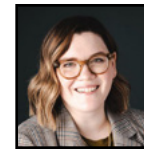
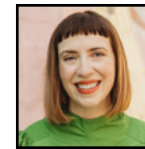


Governor Tim Walz appointed Tikki Brown as first commissioner of the new Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

The Center for Victims of Torture welcomed new board members Kate Barr formerly of Propel Nonprofits, former journalist John Habich, and Ann Huntsrod of Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP.



Tubman voted in five new board members, Veronika Lantseva of U.S. Bank, Jill Lytwyn of Lotus Pharmacy, Angela Munoz of Medtronic, Travis Salisbury of St. Paul's Monastery & Benedictine Center, and Julie Thielman of Optum.



The Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation promoted Rhonda Cox to vice president of people and culture, and welcomed Nina Graham as philanthropic advisor and Bethany Israelson as finance and accounting manager.

Celebrate your new staff and board members!

MCN member organizations are invited to submit your staff and board announcements to [Laura Dunford](#).

Please include their name, title, and photo if available. MCN cannot guarantee all announcements will appear in *Nonprofit News*.



MASTER OF
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY



Concentration in Nonprofit Leadership and Management

Offering:

- Full time faculty
- Small class sizes
- Flexible Schedules
- Classes in St. Cloud and online

www.stcloudstate.edu/graduate/mpa • 320.308.2462

publicadministration@stcloudstate.edu



BOLD | INNOVATIVE | FOCUSED



MINNESOTA STATE

St. Cloud State University,
a member of Minnesota State

St. Cloud State University is committed to legal affirmative action, equal opportunity, access and diversity of its campus community. (<http://scsu.mn/scsuoea>)

Families and nonprofit employers would benefit from bold investments in affordable child care



Nan Madden

Director, Minnesota Budget Project

Lack of affordable child care is a large challenge for the state's prosperity that requires a bold public investment.

Great Start Affordable Scholarships is an innovative policy solution that could make the difference for many Minnesota families and nonprofit employers.

We've all read the stories: families can't find affordable child care, and child care providers struggle to stay afloat with a challenging business model. And employers, including nonprofits, name lack of child care as a factor in the state's workforce shortage.

For too long, parents have struggled to find child care that doesn't strain their family budget.

The federal government recommends that child care costs not exceed seven percent of a family's income, and Minnesota has also adopted that as a goal. But following that guideline, only about six percent of Minnesota families can afford infant child care, according to the Economic Policy Institute.

Care for an infant and four-year-old combined would cost a median income family more than 37 percent of their income.

At the same time, families struggle to find care. [First Children's Finance estimates that Greater Minnesota is short about 43,800 child care openings, and the Twin Cities Metro area is short about 54,400 openings.](#)

Nonprofit organizations make up 14 percent of the state's total workforce, and, like other employers, are feeling the impact.

[In a recent MCN survey of Minnesota nonprofits, about 50 percent of respondents named availability of affordable child care as having a great impact, some impact, or anticipated impact](#) in the future as challenges in hiring and retaining staff.

Great Start Affordable Scholarships are a new policy solution designed to lower monthly child care costs for families across Minnesota.

Here's how they could work:

- Families could qualify if they have children under five.
- Great Start Scholarships would reach a wide income range of families. For example, legislation under consideration this year would make scholarships available to families with incomes below 150 percent of the state's median income. For a family of four in Federal FY 2023, this is an income of \$188,468.
- The amount of Great Start Scholarships would be determined on a sliding scale based on family income, providing more support to families with more modest incomes.
- Great Start Scholarship payments would go directly to a family's child care provider, reducing the amount of the family's monthly child care bill. These payments would be paid prospectively to ensure providers have the upfront resources to care for the children.
- Great Start Affordability Scholarships would use public infrastructure already in place to make it easier for families to apply.

Affordable child care is a critical component to ensuring Minnesota children can grow and thrive and their families are economically secure.

A bold public investment in affordable child care would also contribute to Minnesota's economy, helping ensure employers, including nonprofits, have a stable and reliable workforce.

[Learn more about Great Start Scholarships](#) and [sign up for regular updates on affordable child care policy priorities](#) from the Minnesota Budget Project.

Northern Minnesota foundation takes rural funding to new level with Leadership Boost Grants program



John Wurm

Organizational
Development &
Engagement Director

Each year, nonprofits across Minnesota make incredible contributions to our state's high quality of life. [The Minnesota Nonprofit Mission Awards](#) were created specifically to honor these contributions. Since 1987, MCN has been showcasing the work of Minnesota's outstanding nonprofits through the Nonprofit Mission Awards in the categories of Innovation, Anti-Racism, Advocacy, and Responsive Philanthropy.

Voted by MCN member nonprofits, we are honored to celebrate the 2023 Mission Award recipient for Responsive Philanthropy, [Blandin Foundation](#).

Founded in 1941, Blandin Foundation supports rural communities throughout Minnesota, empowering them to address injustice, promote diversity, and embrace sustainability and equity. Today the foundation serves their home giving area in the Itasca County area of north-central Minnesota and communities of 20,000 or less across rural Minnesota.



[Watch Blandin Foundation's Mission Awards video.](#)

Rural Minnesota has seen dramatic change over the last 30 years, with pandemic and racial turmoil in recent years accelerating economic and social disparities that originally inspired Blandin's collective passion for rural philanthropy.

In April 2022, Blandin Foundation launched the Leadership Boost Grants (LBG) program to encourage Minnesotans living

in rural and Native communities to be visionary and creative as they move their communities forward to meet the moment's challenges and support local vision for growth.

From an initial pool of more than 300 letters of interest invited from Blandin Foundation leadership and broadband program alumni, the Foundation awarded 90 LBG grants in three rounds:

- 26 Community Planning grants totaled \$1.35 million and focused on people-to-people connections and discussions to set community vision, make communities more welcoming and inclusive, and pursue other development efforts.
- 32 Capital Projects grants, designed for towns of under 3,000 people, totaled \$2 million for buildings, equipment and infrastructure, including kitchen and playground equipment, skate parks, assisted living facilities, senior and youth centers and more.
- 32 Creative Placemaking grants totaled \$2 million and supported community planning, engagement, and arts and culture activities ranging from tourism to downtown revitalization, Tribal culture, food initiatives, and mental health supports.

LBGs were an opportunity for Blandin Foundation to listen deeply to communities' most pressing needs and aspirations following more than two years of acute isolation, stress, and trauma. Funding reached rural Minnesota communities like Milroy (population 297), Stephen (population 583) and Sebeka (population 741). Several communities are in counties with some of the state's highest poverty rates and lowest access to public infrastructure. For some, it's likely LBG is the first-ever philanthropic funding the community has received.

Through the truly *responsive* LBG grant process, Blandin Foundation moved closer toward becoming the type of foundation Charles Blandin intended, supporting rural organizations "just enough" so they are strong, adaptable, and ready to serve community needs for the long haul.

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits was pleased to present the foundation with the 2023 Minnesota Nonprofit Mission Award recipient for Responsive Philanthropy. [Learn more about Blandin Foundation.](#)

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 info@minnesotanonprofits.org.

06.11.24
1pm - 4pm

Virtual
[Facilitative Leadership](#)

06.21.24
9am - 3:30pm

Virtual
[Spotlight: Cybersecurity for Nonprofits](#)

06.26.24
9am - 3:30pm

Virtual
[Spotlight: Elements and Impacts of Relational Leadership](#)

07.11 - 12.12
2pm - 3pm

Virtual
[Supervisor Coaching Labs: Sharpen Your Supervision](#)

07.24.24
8am - 4:30pm

In-Person, Heritage Center of Brooklyn Center
[2024 Nonprofit Fundraising Conference](#)

07.30.24
9am - Noon

Virtual
[Intermediate Grantwriting](#)
Reoffered [October 22](#)

08.07.24
1pm - 4pm

Virtual
[Beginner Grantseeking](#)
Reoffered [November 13](#)

09.17.24
9:30am - 11am

Virtual
[Grantwriters Incubator](#)
Reoffered [November 12](#)

09.19.24
8am - 4:30pm

In-Person, Chase on the Lake, Walker, MN
2024 Greater Minnesota Summit
Registration opening soon!

10.10 - 10.11.24
8am - 4:30pm

In-Person, Saint Paul RiverCentre
[2024 MCN & MCF Joint Annual Conference](#)

