

MINNESOTA COUNCIL OF NONPROFITS STRATEGIC PLAN FOR YEARS 2005 -2009

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits Board of Directors approved the 2005-2009 Plan at its November 16, 2004 board meeting.

Strategic Planning contains five strategic themes to implement MCN's mission:

MCN informs, promotes, connects and strengthens individual nonprofits and the nonprofit sector

and vision for the future:

Nonprofit organizations accomplish their missions for a healthy, cooperative and just society

The Strategic Planning Committee was chaired by Jeff Prauer (COMPAS), and included Diane Haulcy (St. Stephen's Human Services Inc.), Yvonne Cheung Ho (Metropolitan Economic Development Association), Michael Wirth-Davis (Goodwill EasterSeals), Monica Herrera (Amherst F. Wilder Foundation), James V. Toscano (Park Nicollet Health Systems), Mary Hartnett (MN Commission Serving Deaf & Hard Hearing People), Sarah Stoesz (Planned Parenthood of Minnesota /South Dakota), and Graham Hartley (MIGIZI Communications, Inc.).

The Strategic Planning process began in March 2004 and included five committee meetings, seven member focus groups around the state, and several small working groups. The plan sets out the five themes and describes MCN's current and future work in these areas.

A separate five year MCN business plan will establish financial goals for major revenue sources over the five year period, set targets for increased revenue reliability and autonomy, and chart growth of financial reserves.

FIVE KEY THEMES:

- 1. SUPPORT THE EXPANDING CAPACITY OF INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE NONPROFIT SECTOR TO BENEFIT SOCIETY.**
- 2. IDENTIFY AND BRIDGE THE INTERSECTING AND VARIED NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF MINNESOTA NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.**
- 3. ESTABLISH A MORE COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPACT OF THE NONPROFIT SECTOR ON SOCIETY.**
- 4. INCREASE THE NONPROFIT SECTOR'S INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC POLICY.**
- 5. EXPAND THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SECTOR**

1. CAPACITY BUILDING - SUPPORT THE EXPANDING CAPACITY OF INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE NONPROFIT SECTOR TO BENEFIT SOCIETY.

MCN services for nonprofits support their work to solve community problems. Workshops, cost saving programs and publications support nonprofit management improvement and internal organizational ability to further their activities. MCN produces 7 publications. MCN members saved \$3,294,958 through a variety of cost saving programs. In 2003, MCN held 33 events with 2,045 participants; and www.mncn.org had 22 million hits and 96,000 users.

KEY ACTIVITIES:

- A. Support the development of a well-trained and highly motivated workforce.
- B. Help nonprofits learn from their own experiences, their counterparts, and people with experience and expertise in the field.
- C. Advance sector-appropriate theories on nonprofit management.
- D. Increase nonprofit advice, information, and assistance based on the *Principles and Practices for Nonprofit Excellence* and through MCN's multiple information channels.
- E. Examine the changing circumstances and developing needs of small and medium sized organizations.

2. CONNECTION AND INCLUSIVITY - IDENTIFY AND BRIDGE THE INTERSECTING AND VARIED NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF MINNESOTA NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

MCN helps individual nonprofits see the larger role of the nonprofit sector and their connection to it. MCN promotes cooperation among organizations by convening leaders around nonprofit functional areas such as public policy, human resources, communication and fundraising. MCN provides speakers and research to coalitions and organizations, along with use of MCN's conference room and custom analysis from MCN's database of nonprofit organizations.

KEY ACTIVITIES:

- A. Organize coalition development by activity area and geographic area.
- B. Develop information that reveals the connections and opportunities for mutual support among organizations and the community.
- C. Encourage constituent participation in the nonprofit sector.
- D. Develop specialized resources and reports for specific segments of the nonprofit sector.
- E. Develop strategies for nonprofit organizations to engage their constituencies with their organizations and with the larger community.
- F. Develop strategies for nonprofits to engage and support one another within and across geographic lines, constituencies, size, activity areas and size of organizations.

3. PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING - ESTABLISH A MORE COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPACT OF THE NONPROFIT SECTOR ON SOCIETY.

MCN annually publishes the Minnesota Nonprofit Economy Report and provides briefings to the media and public officials about the role and contributions of the nonprofit sector. MCN's website and publications sold to libraries and the public (especially the Minnesota Nonprofit Directory, Salary and Benefits Survey, and Minnesota Grants Directory) explain various aspects of the nonprofit sector.

KEY ACTIVITIES:

- A. Inform the public of the expectations and support available through the updated version of *Principles and Practices for Nonprofit Excellence*.
- B. Develop communications consulting and training to nonprofit organizations to enhance skills and resources for media relations and nonprofit message development.
- C. Develop and promote a guide of nonprofit contacts as an information source for the media.
- D. Develop a nonprofit toolkit to educate board members and others about the roles and responsibilities of nonprofit organizations and their boards.
- E. Promote the role of philanthropy in society.

4. PUBLIC POLICY - INCREASE THE NONPROFIT SECTOR'S INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC POLICY.

MCN has five registered lobbyists and a 70-member public policy cabinet. MCN collects information on pending legislation, initiates legislative proposals of interest to nonprofits, and sponsors analysis of how tax and budget policies affect low income Minnesotans. MCN's positions on bills are communicated directly by MCN staff to public officials, to 2000 people and organizations through a fax alert, and legislative session preview and update events. MCN also sponsors briefings and trainings on public policy issues and lobbying techniques. MCN is convening and teaching nonprofits about appropriate election year activities through the Minnesota Participation Project.

KEY ACTIVITIES:

- A. Convene key nonprofit leaders to support the strategy and the policy work of MCN.
- B. Transform the nonprofit/government relationship by improving communications, mutual understanding, and active consultation.
- C. Further address the specific budget and policy issues of Greater Minnesota.
- D. Support and inform the work of national nonprofit sector groups.
- E. Sponsor training and support for nonprofit nonpartisan voter mobilization including promotion of voter registration, education and turnout.

5. LEADERSHIP - EXPAND THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SECTOR

MCN has an ongoing role in developing leadership cooperation, promoting ongoing organizations and encouraging public participation. MCN helps strengthen networks and increasing nonprofits' access to and inclusion in decision making. Through coalition support, issue organizing and regular events, MCN brings nonprofit leaders together for information, planning and strategy. With the elevated presence of nonprofits in the state, MCN promotes leadership openness, media use of nonprofit sources and nonprofit participation in public bodies.

KEY ACTIVITIES:

- A.** Recruit and support nonprofit leaders for nomination to public committee and boards.
- B.** Conduct management and leadership trainings of future leaders and managers.
- C.** Support emerging leadership by providing venues and open networks to increase access for ethnic, gender and age diversity.
- D.** Convene leadership discussions on emerging issues and public policy choices.