

### 2022 session preparations underway

A comprehensive package of disability-focused legislation is ready for prime time at the Minnesota capitol. The Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD) has adopted its legislative priorities and a framework for members' efforts in the weeks ahead.

We Belong. Be Accessible. Be Equitable. Be Inclusive. Be Empowered. Those are the MNCCD messages for its 2022 agenda and for the legislative session.

More than 30 consortium members voted unanimously December 16 to approve the 2022 legislative agenda framework. The framework shapes group and individual members' discussions with state lawmakers.

The consortium previously approved its priority bills in three tiers.

Members are going into the session with a can-do spirit and willingness to work together. "We all know that dismantling ableism is a group project," said Maren Hulden of the Minnesota Disability Law Center.

The 2022 session is a bonding and supplemental budget year. While there's optimism over a projected \$7.7 billion budget surplus, the true number won't be known until February.

Mitch Berggren, who leads MNCCD lobbying efforts, said there will be other dynamics at play during the session. Redistricting means all 201 House and Senate seats are on the November ballot, along with state offices. There's also decisions to be made on various pandemic-related funding, including infrastructure dollars, plans to send \$250 million out to front-line workers and other measures.

MNCCD legislative initiatives are grouped under four themes. One is creating an equitable, accessible, safe, and just society. Several bills are under this category.

The quest for disability services accessibility assessment workgroup and pilots programs will be led by Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM). The Arc Minnesota will take the lead on a bonding proposal to call for greater accessibility in housing supported by state bonding.

The Minnesota First Provider Alliance will lead on a Personal Care Assistant/Community First Services and Supports (PCA/CFSS) rate frame work efforts. Parts of this proposal were passed in 2021 but other pieces remain missing and are affected by the delay in implementing CFSS.

One of the potentially game-changing proposals came out of several ideas and was wrapped into a greater accessibility package. This covers areas including special education, event licensing, grant appropriation, plain language, courtroom accessibility, emergency shelter and legislative process. AuSM is the lead here.

Another focus under this theme is that of addressing student discipline

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Pollard Hall is one of many state academy buildings eyed for improvements.

### State academies, hospitals eyed for 2022 bonding bill

Projects to improve accessibility at an array of state facilities are in the hunt for support from the Minnesota Legislature. Upgrades at state academies and hospitals are also vying for funding, in some cases seeking dollars to renovate or replace facilities that are almost a century old.

With a record \$5.5 billion in bonding requests on the table for 2022, difficult decisions are ahead. Requests were made in summer 2021 and have been undergoing review since then. State lawmakers have visited many of the project sites.

Gov. Tim Walz makes his recommendations January 17, which will then launch deliberations by the House and Senate.

Bonding will be a primary focus for state lawmakers, with decisions not expected until session's end, said Mitch Berggren, lobbyist for the Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD).

Passing a bonding bill requires a three-fifths majority in the House and Senate.

Disagreement over capital projects can mean the difference between getting projects supported or waiting another two years. Sometimes a dispute over single project can sideline the entire bonding list.

The last state bonding bill, passed in 2020, was \$1.9 billion bonding bill in 2020. That was about one-third the amount requested.

State academies have four requests in, with dormitory renovations topping the list. The academies in Faribault are requesting \$6.5 million for renovation of Pollard Hall on the Minnesota State Academy for the deaf campus, as well as Kramer, Brandeen and Rode dorms at the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind (MSAB).

Pollard Hall at MSAD was constructed in 1937 as a residence for elementary age students. It has had smaller renovation projects, including work done more than a

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**HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
BEST WISHES TO ALL!

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### Looking back at 2021, another year in the pandemic

By Access Press staff

2021 is in the books. It was a year of many challenges as well as key gains for Minnesota's disability community. It was also a year when several key leaders were mourned.

Read about our annual look back and visit past stories at [www.accesspress.org](http://www.accesspress.org)

#### January 2021

The Minnesota Legislature had an early January 5 start. Most session work was done virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Vaccines brought some measure of relief, but there were worries that it could take many months to have protection for all. How priorities were set was debated.

Maynard "Bo" Bostrom was remembered as a key figure in the development of housing options for people with disabilities, and for his work with Accessible Space Inc.

#### February 2021

Minnesota had lost eight disability



Cliff Poetz

service providers and was in danger of losing more due to the pandemic. Closings in rural area left people especially isolated, without income and in danger of losing

skills.

St. Paul Police Department's COAST Unit was hailed for its work with people in mental health crisis, serving as an alternative to the typical law enforcement response to emergency calls.

New leaders took the helms at MDI, Living Well Disability Services and BlueSky Designs.

#### March 2021

People with Down syndrome raised red flags about COVID-19 vaccine priority. Those living in the community and not in group homes had to wait despite being immunocompromised. Families and the Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota raised issues of health and equity in urging vaccines for those with Down Syndrome.

Spinal cord and traumatic brain injury research was jeopardized by a looming state budget cut.

The MS Society celebrated 75 years.

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EDITORIAL

# 2022 legislative session offers the chance to get involved

Agendas in hand, disability advocacy organizations and individuals are preparing for January 31. That's when the 2022 Minnesota Legislature starts its regular session.

Weeks of legislative committee meetings, town halls and advocacy group gatherings are wrapping up. Those gatherings have shaped what we will be hearing more about in the weeks ahead.

Ironic as it may be to speak of visibility during a largely virtual legislative session, 2021 was the year when disability community issues gained much awareness among state lawmakers. Many gains were made.

We hope similar gains, and the growing recognition of disability community needs, continue into this year. A projected, historic \$7.7 billion budget surplus will certainly bring opportunities as well as debate over what the dollars can be used for.

The state surplus will be a major factor in how the 2022 session proceeds. Debate over how funds can be used is well underway. We expect disability advocates to be front and center raising needs important to our community.

Having all 201 legislative seats and

state offices on the November ballot will also play into the session dynamic.

As in other even-numbered years, 2022's main focus will be the bonding bill. Bonding brings a long list of needs from around the state. In many cases the goal is to make existing buildings, parks, trails and other facilities more accessible or to improve facilities for people with disabilities.

Minnesotans with disabilities need to look at what requests are being made in their home communities and to see how those requests are cast. Have a critical eye on accessibility. Such requests can always be better informed and improved with public input.

Policy issues will also be a key focus this session. Dozens of disability-focused bills are already in the hoppers, so advocates can pick and choose what to support and follow. Find ways to get involved with the issues of your choice and make your views known.

Be mindful that this will also be another largely virtual year at the capitol. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to transform how our lawmakers do business. Many of us will be watching hearings and floor sessions remotely, and

may even be testifying remotely as well.

The capitol is open but don't expect the large rallies of past years. Many disability community rally days and advocacy events will remain virtual in 2022.

The Minnesota House has already announced that it will continue remote and hybrid operations at least through the end of the 2022 regular session.

Also, before venturing to the capitol complex, check ahead to see if various state buildings will be open to the public. Plan on masking up and following social distance measures.

We miss rallies and marches to the capitol. We miss meeting our lawmakers in person and seeing our friends from across the state. We miss being able to fill a room with advocates and making our presence known, no matter what the issue is. But maintaining health and safety are paramount.

We people with disabilities appreciate the ease of virtual government, and the ability to testify remotely. We do admit that not being to fill a hearing room with our advocates is missed, and we hope to be able to return to those times. Living with disability can be isolating as it is,

and another year of virtual government adds to that isolation. But for people who cannot easily get out, virtual proceedings are an amazing thing.

We have a fine group of public employees who tirelessly post bill updates and session news. They make it possible for us to watch committee and floor sessions. Those offerings provide a wealth of information for all and make it so much easier to follow what is going on. We appreciate and thank them.

Some of us are old enough to remember constantly trekking to the capitol during session, and looking through piles of paper for updates on bills. Thank goodness those days are gone.

But a virtual session can make it more challenging for people with disabilities to reach out to state lawmakers. If you are new to the ways of state government, many advocacy groups offer training sessions and online resources to help you share your story.

Resolve that 2022 is the year you get involved in the issues of your choice.

HISTORY NOTE

## Great Depression put a strain on families, the state's institutions

The Great Depression, which lasted from 1929 to 1939, is considered to be the worst economic downturn in the history of the industrialized world. By 1933, when the Great Depression reached its lowest point, 15 million Americans were unemployed. Nearly half the country's banks had failed. People lost everything.

One sad yet largely forgotten impact of the Great Depression was its dire impact on people with disabilities and their families. Up until the late 1920s, people with disabilities either lived at home, were placed in state institutions or lived at county homes or "poor farms."

The Great Depression left many families unable to care for loved ones with disabilities. That put more strain on the state.

In January 1932, newspapers reported that there were 1,350 people with developmental disabilities waiting to enter Minnesota institutions. Facilities were at or beyond capacity.

In addition 125 children with disabilities were waiting for admission to the Gillette State Hospital in St. Paul. Other places had similar wait lists.

By 1932 Minnesota had state institutions for people with an array of disabilities and chronic illnesses, overseen by the State Board of Control. The board, which was established in the early 20th century, had a vast and sweeping set of duties including oversight of public assistance programs, state institutions for people with disabilities, orphanages and correctional facilities.



State institutions housed people with disabilities, elders without resources and orphans. Children at the state school in Owatonna sat down for a meal.

Much of the work of overseeing state institutions fell to the state board and its longtime leader, Minneapolis resident C.J. Swendsen. In January 1932 he and the board presented a detailed report to Gov. Floyd B. Olson. Swendsen urged

that several institutional construction projects around the state keep on track so that adequate housing could be provided quickly.

Minnesota's 18 state institutions had almost 15,300 residents at the time. "All efforts are being made to rush

completion of the large building program of the state board of control to enable the state to care for additional inmates and to alleviate present crowded conditions in several institutions," an article from the *Winona Republican Herald* stated.

The large number of people waiting for could be traced to the "hard times" of the Great Depression, Swendsen told reporters. Families were unable to care for their children and adult family members with disabilities. Fewer people could adopt orphaned children. More children were given up for adoption. It was a huge dilemma for the state.

Although Minnesota's modern disability community would not approve of the institutional conditions of the 1930s, Swendsen brought a unique level of care and commitment to his role. He argued for better housing and better conditions. He served on the state control board for 22 years, appointed and then reappointed by four different governors. He would eventually work with five governors.

It would take a few years to provide the capacity needed to house more people. Alas, Swendsen wouldn't see the work completed. He died in October 1933 at age 72 and was widely mourned.

*The History Note is a monthly column produced in cooperation with the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. Past History Notes and other disability history may be found at [www.mnddc.org](http://www.mnddc.org)*

# ACCESS PRESS

MINNESOTA'S DISABILITY COMMUNITY NEWS SOURCE

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## BONDING BILL

From page 1

decade ago to accommodate a now-discontinued Volunteers of America program. Pollard has gotten a new roof and new windows during the past decade.

The dormitories at MSAB date from 1982, and have had few improvements since then. For both academics, improvements would include mechanical system work as well as physical improvements.

Ranked second is an ask for \$200,000 in pre-design funds for renovating existing spaces or establishing a student services/activities center at MSAB. The intent is to eventually replace two aging buildings and outdated/inaccessible facilities, including the gymnasium, athletic facilities, cafeteria, multi-purpose room, and other service areas. Lauristen Gym was built in 1931. Rodman Hall, which houses the cafeteria, was built in 1924.

Another pre-design funding request ranked third, with \$200,000 sought for MSAB pool renovations. The pool would eventually be put in a new location and replaced with a more accessible facility.

The fourth-ranked academies' request is for \$2.7 million in asset preservation funds to maintain and preserve buildings on both campuses.

The top-ranked of 14 human services requests is for \$17.8 million, for St. Peter Regional Treatment Center. This would fund the second phase of a project to design, remodel and construct, furnish and equip existing buildings for the Minnesota Sex Offender Program, to increase capacity and better serve clients in court-ordered treatment.

Another \$13.45 million is requested to pre-design, design, renovate, furnish and equip the north and south wings of



William O'Brien State Park is eyed for more accessibility improvements.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

the Miller Building at the Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center for residential treatment facilities for the mental health and substance abuse treatment division. That is the third-ranked human services request.

Accessibility for state parks continues to be a need. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) seeks \$20 million to improve the accessibility of state-managed lands and facilities. The request, which is ranked fifth by the DNR, would enable the agency to complete accessibility improvements to facilities at William O'Brien State Park. The park is along the St. Croix River. Improvements there received partial funding in 2020.

State officials want to use lessons learned from Fort Snelling State Park and two high-visitation wildlife

management areas, Carlos Avery and Whitewater. When complete, the project would include accessibility renovations of bathrooms, parking areas, showers, campsites, trails and a variety of other features.

For other state facilities, the Department of Administration seeks \$2 million to implement a centralized funding source for use by state agencies, boards, and commissions, the legislative and judicial branches of government, and constitutional offices to correct physical barriers in state-owned and state-leased buildings.

One newer funding request that would directly affect people with disabilities is Fairview's proposal to tear down Bethesda Hospital in St. Paul, to replace it with a 144-bed psychiatric and substance-abuse hospital.

The facility would be operated in partnership with Acadia Healthcare, a large national behavioral healthcare provider. The announcement was made in mid-December and would represent a plus-\$50 million investment.

While Bethesda is the preferred site, other sites in the St. Paul area have been looked at. The longtime hospital has had many uses in recent years, going from an acute-care facility to becoming a COVID-19 hospital during the pandemic. It closed as a hospital in fall 2020 and has been used by Ramsey County as a homeless shelter. That use ends in the spring.

Fairview is using the St. Joseph's Hospital in St. Paul for inpatient mental health care through June 2022. The healthcare provider has asked the state health department for a public interest review of the project. It would need legislative approval because state law blocks new hospital construction.

Read the list of projects submitted for bonding at <https://mn.gov/mmb/>

## In Memoriam

### Mental health was her focus

Marcia Kay Taylor Lovejoy used her lived experience with mental illness to advocate for others, at the local and national levels. Lovejoy died in late 2021, She was 73 and lived in St. Louis Park.

Lovejoy grew up in the Twin Cities. While in her first year at the College of St. Benedict, she met a priest who encouraged her to travel to Mississippi to work with Head Start. She became involved in the civil rights movement and was part of the march known as Bloody Sunday in Selma, Alabama.

She returned to college for her sophomore year but was diagnosed with schizophrenia and had to leave school. She spent a decade in hospitals and residential facilities.

In 1978, through People Incorporated, Lovejoy started speaking to high schools and groups. She became a part of Project Overcome, a mental health advocacy and awareness group. At a conference in Washington, D.C., she met representatives of President Jimmy Carter's administration and was invited to be a consultant for the National Institute of Mental Health. That led to numerous public speaking engagements to educate others about mental health issues.

Lovejoy was later appointed by President Ronald Reagan to be on an executive committee focused on employment opportunities for people with disabilities. That led to the chance to attend international conferences on disabilities, and an appearance on the television show Nightline.

She is survived by cousins and their families. Services have been held.

### Loer was valued employee

Joel Loer marked 30 years' employment with Washington County in 2020, in a job he loved. He retired due to health reasons and died in fall 2021. He was 53 and lived in Maplewood.

Loer had Down syndrome and is believed to be the first person with developmental disabilities to be employed by Washington County. Coworkers remembered him as a sweet man, who worked hard and took his tasks seriously. He sorted papers, stamped envelopes, assembled urinalysis kits and assembled informational packets on adoption, aging, child support, chemical dependency, medical assistance, foster care and other county services.

He missed a month of work in July 2021 because of heart problems, but insisted on returning to work one month later.

Loer's job gave him a chance to form meaningful relationships and share his talents with the community, his mother Joan Loer told the *Pioneer Press*.

He enjoyed shopping, dressing up for work and collecting and wearing funny socks. Loer had many hobbies and very much enjoyed travel.

Loer is survived by his mother, a sister, a brother and nieces. Services have been held. Memorials preferred to Northeast Residence or Rise Inc.

### Pearson an early ARC leader

Curtis A. "Curt" Pearson championed many causes, including services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. Pearson died in late 2021. He was 94 and lived in Wayzata.

Pearson grew up in Madison, Minnesota, where he was a star athlete.

He enlisted in the U.S. Navy upon graduation from high school in 1945, after his older brother had been killed in action. He attended St. Olaf College and then transferred to the University of Minnesota. He later graduated from William Mitchell College of Law.

Pearson had a long career of civic and government service, serving on the St. Louis Park City Council and in private legal practice that included serving as a suburban city attorney. He represented the Bassett Creek Water Management Commission before Congress, in connection with a \$35 million flood control project.

In the 1960s, Pearson was one of the founders of the Minneapolis Association for Retarded Children, now part of Arc Minnesota. He served as its president for several years. He was a longtime supporter of Mount Olivet Rolling Acres in Excelsior.

Pearson was preceded in death by his wife Ramona and two sons. He is survived by three children and their families. Services have been held.

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disparities, championed by Legal Aid and the Minnesota Disability Law Center.

Promoting diversity, inclusion and equity is the second theme. The Minnesota Council on Disability is at the forefront with an employment and retention of state employees with disabilities package.

Arc Minnesota is focusing on inclusive higher education, as well as on two efforts for younger students. At a younger end of the education spectrum is a proposal called for recess for all, led by Maren Christenson and Arc Minnesota. Related to the recess initiative is a second proposal for bonding for inclusive playgrounds, championed by Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare, Arc Minnesota and the Multicultural Autism Action Network (MAAN).

Improving and protecting essential supports and services is a third theme, with another related package of bills, and people and groups behind them.

One is a request for a study on obesity for individuals with intellectual disabilities, which has been brought forward by self-advocate and activist Kayte Barton.

Another focus is Medical Assistance for Employed People with Disabilities (MA-EPD) and how to make changes in what can be a complex and frustrating program that many working Minnesotans with disabilities rely on for health coverage. AuSM, Arc Minnesota and Disability Law Center are involved in this work.

Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) work will be led by Fraser. Gillette will take the helm on rare disease access policy, and amendments to the recently approved rare disease council. Gillette will also work with Family Voices on a pilot program for complex pediatric patients.

A workforce solutions package will be a focus for the Minnesota First Provider Alliance and Gillette.

The theme of supporting individual empowerment and choice has an array of bills under its umbrella, with the focus of allowing people to stay in their homes and be part of their communities. Disability Law Center is working on legislation focused on supporting people to live in their own homes. Lutheran Social Services working on life sharing proposals, which is a longtime effort for that nonprofit.

A third proposal, which advocates had hoped would be solved in 2021, centers on PCA driving privileges. Limits on PCA driving and compensation have been an obstacle for many Minnesotans. The delay of CFSS last year complicated implementation of needed changes.

The tiers of legislation were set in November. Tiers are used to spell out where efforts should be placed.

Tier 1 items are those that MNCCD takes the most active role in championing, through work of a contract lobbyist and consortium members. Tier 2 items have their legislative lead groups, but also can rely on support from MNCCD in the form of help from volunteers and lobbyists. Tier 3 proposals also can get support from MNCCD, often in the form of signing on as a supporter or writing a letter.

The tiers of legislation are:

#### Tier 1

- Special education parent accessibility
- County and state service accessibility investigative workgroup

- Accessibility in housing bonding proposal

- Supporting people to live in their own homes
- Study on obesity for individuals with intellectual disabilities

- Workforce solutions package

#### Tier 2

- Life sharing proposal
- Minnesota employment and retention of state employees with disabilities package

- MA-EPD
- Sensory-friendly grant appropriation
- Sensory-friendly event licensing
- Plain language bill
- Inclusive higher education

- BCBA licensure
- PCA/CFSS rate framework
- Rare disease council amendment
- Rare disease access policy
- Pilot project for complex pediatric patients
- Recess for All

#### Tier 3

- Addressing student discipline disparities

- Courtroom accessibility legislation
- Emergency shelter accessibility legislation
- Legislative process accessibility workgroup

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FROM OUR COMMUNITY

# Weigh in this session on legislative topics of your choice

With the 2022 Minnesota Legislature gaveling into session soon, it's worth reminding everyone that *Access Press* welcomes letters to the editor and longer commentary pieces on proposed state law, funding and policy changes.

However, our status as a nonprofit publication brings some additional guidelines to follow. Because *Access Press* is a non-profit publication and must follow regulations on political partisanship, we cannot publish letters and commentaries that are politically partisan. We ask that writers explain issues in a manner that isn't an attack on one political party or another.

When the 2022 election campaign season starts, remember that political endorsement letters or letters opposing a candidate are not published in *Access Press*. That is true for candidates' endorsements as well as for ballot questions.

We welcome letters to the editor and commentary pieces from readers, on topics of interest to Minnesota's disability community. Letters should be no more than 450 words, with 750 words per commentary. Ask the

editor if more space is needed and that can be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

Letters and guest commentaries must be signed by the authors or authors. We do not published unsigned letters or commentaries.

If a letter is written on behalf of a group, organization or business, we would like the author or authors' affiliation(s) listed.

With letters, a writer's hometown is published but not a street address. Please send contact information, in the form of a phone number or email, in case the editor has questions about a letter or commentary.

Contact information isn't published unless the writer specifically requests that the newspaper do so. We need contact information to verify a writer's identify, especially if the writer isn't someone we have interacted with before.

Pictures of the author or content subject matter can be published with a guest commentary but aren't required.

*Access Press* asks that letters and guest commentaries be specifically written for this newspaper. Letters must have a focus on disability issues and ideally, a focus

on those issues as they affect Minnesotans. We don't want to publish form letters that have appeared in other publications. It is acceptable to send a letter published in *Access Press* to other publications after we have published it.

Let the newspaper staff know if accommodations are needed to submit a letter or commentary, and we will help you.

Letters and commentaries reflect the view of the authors and not the views of the staff and board of directors of *Access Press*. We reserve the right to reject submissions.

Be aware that due to space and news policy reasons, we do not publish regular columns at this time.

Deadline for the print edition of the newspaper is the 15th of each month, with publication the following month.

Before making a submission, writers are always encouraged to contact the newspaper to discuss ideas or to ask questions about From Our Community submissions, at 651-644-2133 or [access@accesspress.org](mailto:access@accesspress.org).



The Minnesota State Fair was back but not everyone got together.



Self-advocates fought a funding cut to spinal cord injury research.

## YEAR IN REVIEW

From page 1

Nina Harrison was crowned Ms. Wheelchair Minnesota.

### April 2021

Rick Cardenas was mourned as a fearless champion for people with disabilities after his death. Cardenas was a fixture at the state capitol and a mentor to many other activists.

It was the end of an era in Minnesota disability circles with the retirement of Bob Brick: co-founder of the Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD), public policy expert, board member and leader of various disability service organizations including ALLY People Solutions.

### May 2021

Clifford "Cliff" Poetz's many accomplishments were recalled after he passed away. He was the first person with a developmental disability to testify before Congress and was a well-known and eloquent self-advocate.

A May 17 bill deadline was looming at the capitol as advocates and state lawmakers raced toward the regular session finish line.

Lutheran Social Services and St. Paul-based Lifetrack Resources prepared for a summer merger. Lifetrack began in 1948 as the St. Paul Rehabilitation Center.

### June 2021

The clock ran out on the Minnesota Legislature with no budget or major bills passed, so it was off to a summer special session. The best Gov. Tim Walz and state lawmakers could do was reach agreement on general budget targets.

Minnesota remembered a pioneer in recreation. James Alan "Jim" Christy was remembered after he lost a long battle with cancer. Christy was considered to be one of the fathers of adapted prep sports in Minnesota.

### July 2021

Health and human services and public safety measures went down to the wire at the state capitol during a special session. Worries about a government shutdown briefly loomed but the result was major gains on a number of disability community issues, for one of the most productive legislative sessions in recent years.

The Americans with Disabilities Act was commemorated with a virtual event featuring speakers and music.

Disability Hub celebrated 15 years of service.

### August 2021

After one year's hiatus the Minnesota State Fair returned. But not everyone went to the Great Minnesota Get-Together. The Minnesota Council on Disability announced it wasn't bringing back its large information booth, citing pandemic and health concerns.

New assisted living licensing changes took effect August 1. Residents of assisted living facilities and their families were urged to seek information on the changes, which affected residents with brain injuries and community access for disability inclusion waivers.

### September 2021

As school bells rang, COVID-19 vaccine and testing options for students were announced. Health officials urged students, especially those in activities, to get vaccinated.

*Access Press* partnered with Ramsey County elections to provide information about the upcoming elections, early voting, voting with accommodations and becoming an election judge.

The late activist Ron Franke's work on behalf of the MS Society and MNCCD was recalled, as was his long friendship with the "MS Gang."

### October 2021

Delays in implementation of the Community First Services and Supports (CFSS) program raised red flags for Minnesotans with disabilities. The earliest possible implementation date was pushed back to June 1, 2022.

Personal care assistant (PCA) workers in Minnesota saw higher wages and other new benefits, starting October 1. The statewide minimum wage for PCAs rose from \$13.25 to \$14.40 per hour effective Oct. 1, then increases again to \$15.25 on July 1, 2022.

### November 2021

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continued to greatly affect Minnesotans with disabilities. The news that children ages 5-11 can get vaccinated was welcomed. But the National Guard was told that they would be helping at long-term care facilities as needed.

The Institute on Community Integration announced the move of the Masonic Institute for the Developing Brain, from the University of Minnesota's Pattee Hall. The move was to the former Shriners Hospital campus near the Mississippi River.

### December 2021

Accessibility on many levels and in many forms was again seen as a theme at the state capitol for Minnesotans with disabilities. Organizations were hammering out final details of bills and legislative agendas, as the clock ticks toward the January 31 start of session.

Minnesotans were urged to prepare for winter weather, in areas ranging from travel and home safety to getting sidewalks shoveled for better access. Many apps can help with needed alerts.

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## At mid-year, Partners in Policymaking class reflects on work



Ruby Parker

Minnesota's Partners in Policymaking program creates a supportive and educational environment to help individuals change habits, expectations and attitudes about themselves and their loved ones with developmental disabilities. The free program equips people with leadership skills to take back to their communities, through workshops, group interactions and meetings with leaders.

Individuals in the 2021-2022 class have unique stories of their learning experiences in advocacy in the education, social service and medical systems. Pictures of all class members and a longer story appear on the *Access Press* website.

Jane Anderson, Lakeville, has a teenage son with several disabilities. She values waiver programs that have allowed her son to be happy, healthy and connected to the community.

Roby Block, Good Thunder, has a brain injury that can bring on headaches, balance and memory issues. She uses a seizure response dog, conducts a brain injury support group and believes that staying positive is the best healing of all.

Innocent Chitulangoma, Lake Elmo, has a child with cerebral palsy. Chitulangoma seeks information about quality services for his son, but found many don't meet his standards. He wants to join with other advocates to improve how individuals with disabilities live, work and learn.

Blaine resident Theresa Edelman, her husband and their four children have dwarfism. Some of the children have other disabilities, keeping the family busy with appointments and therapies.

Tara Ellis, St. Paul, has anxiety, long-term depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Her child has fetal alcohol syndrome and other disabilities. Finding caregivers is difficult. Ellis wants a better understanding of waiver services, and improved advocacy skills for herself and her family.

Suniket Fulzele, Plymouth, has a young daughter with cerebral palsy. She requires hands-on attention for daily living activities. Caregivers are hard to find. Often overwhelmed by confusing and incomplete information, he is hoping the class will guide him and help him be an advocate for others.

James Heinecke, Appleton, has a son with autism spectrum and other disabilities. The family has struggled to find information on available services. Heinecke wants information on inclusivity and normalizing education experience and acceptance at school and social settings, as well as more details on first responder training.

Arbdella Hudson, St. Paul, has had brain injuries and concussions. She wants to learn more about her injuries, and educate and help others.

Cassie Kallis, Plymouth, has three children with fragile X syndrome. She and her husband had to thoroughly research and strongly advocate for services. Kallis wants to learn more about services, public policy, and making schools more inclusive, with the goal of being a full-time advocate.

Sareen Dunleavy Keenan, Minneapolis, has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and anxiety, and represents a "sandwich



Roby Block



Suniket Fulzele

generation" of care. She is raising four children with disabilities. Keenan lives with and supports her mother and her sister, both of whom have physical disabilities. Educational arrangements for her children are complex as safety, transportation and inclusivity need to be considered. Keenan hopes to learn more about inclusive employment and waived services, and become more effective in caring for her family.

Nicole Laudont, Maple Grove, has a young son with autism. She is finding many barriers to school inclusion, and a lack of community resources. She is seeking Hennepin County waiver supports and finds that social services provide little help.

Yang Liang, Woodbury, has a son with autism who needs constant supervision for all activities. Liang is interested in school inclusion and future employment for her son, and is concerned about his future. She wants to learn effective advocacy skills.

Maple Grove resident Joel Liestman has a 10-year-old son with William's syndrome and pother disabilities. Liestman describes his son as "incredibly kind and curious about the world ... his natural empathy is admirable." Liestman is concerned about waiver issues, school and social inclusion, and planning for his child's future.

Nicole Lucas, Albertville, is guardian for her twin sister who is deaf and lives with multiple disabilities. Lucas advocates for respectful attitudes and interactions with those with disabilities. From her work experience in special education, Lucas seeks changes in state and national laws that would have a positive impact on how students are treated.

Darlane Miller, who lives in rural Minnesota, has two daughters with fetal alcohol syndrome disorder and other disabilities. Her daughters benefit from alternative services and equine therapy. Miller is interested in helping others understand invisible disabilities as well as the challenge of educational and employment options for people in rural Minnesota.

Christopher Nelson, Lakeville, has a daughter with epilepsy, autism and other disabilities. He considers parenting the biggest joy and challenge, multiplied when the child has special needs. He describes his daughter as bright, energetic and loving



Christopher Nelson



Usha Ramakrishnan

"but we still have a long way to go and a hard road to get there." He is interested in helping other parents navigate school special education programs and autism services.

Ruby Parker, Maplewood, lives with anxiety and depression. Her goal is that individuals with disabilities are treated with respect and communicated with on an adult level, not as children. She is employed in two separate training facilities and is proud of overcoming her addiction to drugs. Parker is interested in understanding local politics and how she can have a bigger voice in the community.

Yesmean Ragheb, Plymouth, is raising a child with Down syndrome, who needs costly and complex therapies. Ragheb is a family connector for the Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota, helping families navigate resources.

Usha Ramakrishnan, Woodbury, has a son with multiple disabilities. She is concerned about accommodations for her son and is interested in educating herself to be able to give him the best possible care.

Dollie Richmond, St. Paul, is blind in one eye. She is interested in educational opportunities and transportation services for those with disabilities. She wants to become a public speaker, to help improve the quality of life for others.



Sareen Dunleavy Keenan



Yesmean Ragheb

Kayle Schmidt, Otsego, has a son with severe anxiety and autism who requires continual care, and a daughter with disabilities. Schmidt wants more information about waiver services and school inclusion, and wants to help other families facing similar challenges.

Jaxson Seguin, Proctor, has Asperger's syndrome. He has struggled with others judging him and not being friendly. A good case manager, the courage to put himself in social situations and getting involved at school have made a difference. A recent high school graduate, he would like to be involved in politics.

Minneapolis resident Danielle Smith is raising a child with autism. Her child benefits from positive supports at school, and she describes him as a "kindhearted gentleman." She grew up with family members with autism, and wants to connect with other parents and learn from their experience.

Amanda Llamas Tyrell, Burnsville, lives with autism and an anxiety disorder, as does one of her five children. Her son is the reason she wanted to participate in this class. She hopes to find her voice to become a stronger advocate and set an example for her son to become a strong self-advocate as he moves into high school and adulthood.



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## Provider organization achieves independence

As of January 1, St. Paul-based Altair Accountable Care Organization (ACO) is an independent 501(c)(3) organization.

Altair ACO began in 2013 with six home and community-based providers who joined together to share best practices, resources and information to provide better outcomes at less cost for individuals with disabilities. George Klauser was executive director and Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota served as fiscal agent.

The collaborative has grown to 14 providers who support more than 20,000 Minnesota individuals with disabilities who have waived services.

“Our vision early on was to create integrated health and social service models that would deliver higher quality outcomes for people with disabilities at less cost. Altair has grown and thrived to make this vision a reality,” said Klauser. He is chief executive officer of the new organization.

The ACO has developed a variety of services to improve outcomes, including a community care program that matches a care coordinator with staff in 700

supported community homes who provide direct care to people with disabilities. Together, they help identify and implement the best care strategies and interventions for the unique circumstances of each individual.

A key tool for Altair is the LifePlan that provides a person-centered blueprint designed around the hopes and dreams of individuals. Each plan considers housing options, who caregivers will be, school and employment goals, care interventions that can improve personal health, and community involvement.

In addition to Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, providers include Hammer, Fraser, Lifeworks, Living Well, REM Minnesota, Dungarvin, Volunteers of America Minnesota, Mains’l, Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare, Geritom Medical, HealthStar Home Health, Accord and Residential Services Inc.

Altair funding was provided by member providers and public and private grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Minnesota Department of Human Services, Minnesota Department of Health, the Schulze Foundation, the George Family Foundation and Bigelow Foundation.



George Klauser

## State champions are crowned

Lakeville/Burnsville/Farmington Blazing Cats and Robbinsdale/Hopkins/Mound Westonka Robins are the 2021 Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) adaptive soccer champions. The tournaments, held at Stillwater High School, were the first held in two years. The 2020 tournament was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Blazing Cats defeated Dakota United 6-3 for the CI Division crown, which is for athletes with cognitive disabilities. Sophomore Caden Roseth got the Blazing Cats on the board first with a goal assisted by teammate Miller Hertaus. They would not look back from there, holding onto a lead for the remainder of the game.

In the third place game, the Park Center Pirates defeated Chaska/Chanhausen/Shakopee/Prior Lake in a 14-5 shootout. The host Stillwater Area Ponies topped

South Suburban 14-6 for the consolation crown. Other teams in the CI tournament were St. Cloud and South Washington County.

in the PI Division for athletes with physical disabilities, perennial power Robbinsdale/Hopkins/Mound Westonka won its first division adapted soccer state tournament championship in seven years. The Robins topped Dakota United 7-5.

South Washington County was defending champion.

The game was close until Jose Leon Estrada got the momentum with some of his four goals. Fiona Sitzmann sparked a second-half rally for the Hawks but it wasn’t enough.

Dakota United was the 2019 defending champion.

Anoka-Hennepin won third place, 9-0 over Rochester. Other teams in the tournaments were Minneapolis South and St. Paul Humboldt.

All-tournament team members for the CI Division are Gabe Imafidon, South Suburban; Mason Mora-Clark, Stillwater; Luis Rudolph and Drew Hennen, Chaska/Chanhausen/Shakopee; John Klick and Gaetano Sanders, Park Center; Kyle Johnson, Thomas Christopherson and Mark Manwarren, Dakota United; and Caleb Garvin, Miller Hertaus and Caden Roseth, Lakeville/Burnsville/Farmington.

PI Division All-Tournament team members are Charlie Burnes, Minneapolis South; Joe Hansen and Stuart Betterson, Rochester; Garman Neal and Austin Swanson, Anoka-Hennepin; Fiona Sitzmann, Alex Jorgenson and Sam Getten, Dakota United; and Edgar Kinanya, Ava Hetteen and Mark Cleveland, Robbinsdale/Hopkins/Mound-Westonka.

## Sacred Grounds provides a gathering space

By Noelle Olson

Hidden in the Shoreview Village Mall is the Sacred Grounds Coffee House, a nonprofit creative community space meant to plant seeds of understanding so that equity and healing may flourish for all.

Shoreview resident Sarah McGuiness, the founder and director of Sacred Grounds Coffee House, said it is part of a 10-year vision of building relationships and partnerships. The nonprofit opened its doors in July 2021 with hopes of expanding in the near future.

“Our mission is to honor marginalized peoples’ lives for the arts and trauma-informed togetherness,” McGuiness said. “Seventy-five percent of our partners are artists, musicians, authors and organizations from underrepresented communities, and 25 percent are strong allies. We have partnerships with Minnesota Peace Building Institute, Cow Tipping Press and Peace Coffee.”

McGuiness said they have an art store led by persons with disabilities, a small space that is right next to the Overflow Community Thrift Store. “The money we raise there all goes back into our basic operational costs, as we are volunteer-led and all of our artists represented in the store are from Minnesota,” she said.

Because of the tiny store, Sacred Grounds Coffee House utilizes the hallway space with tables and chairs, a counter, one Keurig coffeemaker and guitars. “We have such a great relationship with the other businesses here, and they don’t mind us using the hallway for our programs,” McGuiness said.

Sacred Grounds Coffee House has a program called Connecting Community Through the Arts, where people can create, listen and connect with local volunteer musicians, artists, authors and other community partners. The program runs from 3:30 to 5 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday; its cost is free and donations are welcomed.

“Everything that we do is geared toward people with and without disabilities coming together to celebrate diversity, promote equity and build resilience through the arts together,” McGuiness said. “We try to keep everything free and donation-based so that access to the arts is not limited by financial resources.”

While the coffeehouse is supported in part with donations for snacks and art supplies from the local community, it recently received a grant from the Metro Regional Arts Council. McGuiness said the bigger vision of Sacred Grounds Coffee House is to eventually have a real coffee bar.

“Behind the wall of the store is a vacant space that used to be a restaurant. When we can afford it, we’ll break down the wall and have an actual coffee bar, not just a Keurig,” McGuiness said. “When we do have that real coffee bar, we want to give priority to people

with disabilities — especially developmental disabilities — to work as baristas. The persons with disabilities population don’t have a whole lot of visibility after they age out of school, and they don’t have a lot of opportunities.”

Hours for the Sacred Grounds Coffee House store are noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday; noon to 4 p.m. Wednesday; and noon to 6 p.m. Thursday and Friday. People can check the website for changes in hours and special events.

For more information on Sacred Grounds Coffee House, visit [www.sacredgroundscoffee.org](http://www.sacredgroundscoffee.org) or Facebook at Sacred Grounds Coffee House Minnesota.

Noelle Olson is a reporter for Press Publications. This article is reprinted with permission.



Sarah McGuiness



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# REGIONAL NEWS



## Access issues raised at university

Hamline University students with disabilities are raising concerns about access issues on the St. Paul campus, claiming institutional ableism, barriers and inaccessibility. One student told the *Oracle* student newspaper that she is transferring due to problems with access.

Students claim inaccessible facilities, lack of advocacy and institutional ableism. Elevators and door paddles go unrepaired. Students who need first-floor dorm rooms get placed on higher floors.

Max Lakso is a disabled first-year student who was initially able to secure some accommodations through the Residential Life and Disability Resources offices. However, he said that throughout the semester, he has had bad experiences with the Hamline administration. Others said they have experienced ableism and struggled to get accommodations.

"People forget that I'm disabled because I don't have a wheelchair, I don't have a cane," said Kimia Kowsari, a Hamline sophomore with cerebral palsy.

Dean of Students Patti Kersten acknowledges this inaccessibility. "Hamline is the oldest campus in the state of Minnesota and yes, there are buildings that are not fully accessible to someone with limited mobility; however, arrangements are made to ensure that all programs and



offerings of the university are accessible ... Hamline provides all reasonable accommodations."

The university has an online degree program and disability services to help students.

"I've experienced ableism all my life ... structural ableism exists here on our campus, as it does in many parts of our society, but we are making progress towards a more accessible campus for all," Director of Disability Resources Steve Anderson said.

(Source: *Oracle*)

current available forms of medical cannabis," said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Jan Malcolm.

Coming in March 2022, registered medical cannabis patients will also be eligible for dried raw, smokable cannabis, which was approved by the 2021 Minnesota Legislature. Rulemaking for dried raw cannabis is also currently in process.

No new conditions were added this year. As in past years, MDH conducted a formal petition and comment process to solicit public input on potential qualifying medical conditions and delivery methods for medicine. Since 2016, petitioners have requested anxiety disorder or panic disorder as a qualifying medical condition. Each year it was denied due to lack of clinical evidence and the desire to avoid any unintended consequences. This year at the request of Malcolm, the MDH Office of Medical Cannabis conducted an in-depth review, which included a research review of anxiety disorder as a qualifying medical condition. Ultimately the addition was not approved due to a lack of scientific evidence to support effectiveness as well as concerns expressed by health care practitioners.

When the Minnesota Legislature authorized the creation of the state's medical cannabis program, the law included nine conditions that qualified a patient to receive medical cannabis. Since then, the list of conditions has grown to 17. According to state rules, the commissioner of health each year considers whether to add conditions and delivery methods.

(Source: *Minnesota Department of Health*)

## Residents sue over evictions

A group of tenants with disabilities has sued a Newport landlord, claiming they were evicted illegally.

The 45-page lawsuit was filed in Washington County District Court by the nonprofit Housing Justice Center, on behalf of six residents of the Wings of Newport. They allege fraud, retaliation, exploitation of vulnerable adults, and violations of the state's Human Rights Act and Deceptive Trade Practices Act.

They're asking for the court to block landlord Christopher Onken from evicting them, impose a fine against him and appoint an administrator to oversee the building. They also want the services promised when they moved into the apartment complex.

Onken has countered that he is continuing to work with tenants and hasn't filed eviction notices. He needs to have apartments vacated so repairs can be made, to the tune of about \$100,000. About 30 tenants were asked to move so repairs could be made.

The four-story, 200-unit Wings building opened in September 2020. Some tenants with disabilities moved in with need to use services paid for Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADMI) waivers. The waiver program allows states to get Medicaid matching funds for the services, and to support people who would otherwise need to live in institutions.

A change earlier this year to the state's licensing regulations forced Onken to file for a new type of license, one that would see the building's units go from 100 percent assisted and supported living to just 25 percent.

(Source: *Pioneer Press, Star Tribune*)

## Minneapolis crisis unit hits the streets

Minneapolis launched its long-awaited behavioral crisis response program in December, prepared to deploy unarmed mental health professionals to certain emergencies rather than police.

Two-member teams can now respond to 911 calls about behavioral or mental health-related crises to provide crisis intervention, counseling or a connection to support services.

The city's Office of Performance and Innovation developed the program as part of the City Council's 2020 Safety for All Plan. It uses money originally budgeted for Minneapolis Police Department to fund alternative approaches to addressing public safety. In July, the office

awarded Canopy Mental Health & Consulting a two-year, \$6 million contract to provide the staff for the teams.

The program was scheduled to launch in August, but faced delays.

"By using a design process that requires all solutions to problems be co-built with residents, who are also the end users, we are confident that we are now providing another alternative police response that will be trusted, impactful and supported by the people that need these services," said Brian Smith, director of the Office of Performance and Innovation.

911 dispatchers will decide whether an incident is eligible for such a response. The news release said the teams won't respond to incidents involving firearms or violent behavior, and police will be sent only if the dispatcher determines a need to clear the scene or the response team requests assistance.

Part of what the community wants, he said, is 24-hour service from the response teams. As of the launch, two mobile units will operate 7:30 a.m. to midnight, Monday through Friday. Each unit consists of two Canopy-provided responders.

Smith said Canopy is hiring additional staff so that the city can eventually offer 24-hour service. As of early December, the provider had a staff of two supervisors, a program manager and 14 responders.

Minneapolis residents can recognize the behavioral crisis response teams by their casual, navy blue uniform: a T-shirt that reads "behavioral crisis response," all capitalized, and a matching quarter-zip pullover and beanie, featuring the Canopy Roots and city logos.

(Source: *Star Tribune*)

## Minnesota's medical cannabis program adds edibles

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has announced that it will approve infused edibles in the form of gummies and chews as a new medical cannabis delivery method in the state's medical cannabis program.

The new delivery method will become effective August 1, 2022. A rulemaking process that will outline requirements for labeling, safety messaging, packaging, and testing will launch this month. Current permitted delivery forms include pills, vapor oil, liquids, topicals, powdered mixtures and orally dissolvable products, like lozenges.

"Expanding delivery methods to gummies and chews will mean more options for patients who cannot tolerate

## Providers highlight staffing shortages

Organizations that offer disability support services are desperate for help, recently signing onto a newspaper editorial outlining their plight. One of the organizations highlighting the care crisis is Residential Services, Inc. (RSI), which is located in Duluth, Virginia and North Branch.

If RSI had full staff, it would employ 550 people. Right now, they have 440. That's meant waiting lists and major adjustments for families.

"When you depend on other people to help you with your day-to-day living, the lack of people in the workforce right now presents a real challenge," said Jon Nelson, executive director of RSI.

Direct support professionals, or DSPs, help people with all kinds of disabilities do all kinds of things, from getting dressed in the morning to managing their money.

Nelson said the staffing issue has reached a crisis level. But it began before the pandemic. The way he describes it, "The state built this industry on poverty-level wages."

The state sets rates, so organizations like RSI don't have as much say in what they can pay workers.

"And then COVID came, and it just blew up in our face because what we were expecting to come over the next few years came in one year," Nelson said.

Amanda Clark feels the crunch. She is the program coordinator for RSI's in-home family and respite care. She arranges for children, teens, and young adults who live at home to be cared for every other weekend to give their full-time caregivers a break.

"I've had moms and dads that have had to quit their job or ... all their vacation time has been spent covering the shifts that we're not able to," she said.

"We've got a large group of very committed and passionate staff who love what they do," he said. "They do it because they love it. They love the people they're working with. And it just pains me to see how much we're stretching them."

And if the staffing problem continues to worsen, the alternative is concerning.

"People would have to move back home if they've got a home to go to. Or if they don't have a home to go to, where would they go? And that's a big question," Nelson said.

He said nursing homes used to be considered a fallback. But with nursing home staff also stretched thin, he doesn't see that as a viable option.

(Source: *WDIO TV*)

## TRELLIS MGMT. MAY BE ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS for our accessible waiting lists at the following affordable communities



<b>Albright Townhomes</b>	Minneapolis	612-824-6665	1 BR
<b>Cornerstone Creek Apartments</b>	Golden Valley	763-231-6250	1 & 2 BR
<i>(for developmentally disabled individuals)</i>			
<b>Diamond Hill Townhomes</b>	Minneapolis	612-736-9341	2 & 3 BR
<b>Elliot Park Apartments</b>	Minneapolis	612-338-3106	2 BR
<b>Franklin Lane Apartments</b>	Anoka	763-427-7650	1 & 2 BR
<b>Hanover Townhomes</b>	St. Paul	651-292-8497	1 BR
<b>Hopkins Village Apartments</b>	Hopkins	952-938-5787	1 & 2 BR
<b>Village Apartments</b>	Hopkins	952-938-5787	1 & 2 BR
<b>Lincoln Place Apartments</b>	Mahtomedi	651-653-0640	2 BR
<b>Olson Towne Homes</b>	Minneapolis	612-377-9015	1 BR
<b>Park Plaza Apartments</b>	Minneapolis	612-377-3650	1 & 2 BR
<b>Prairie Meadows</b>	Eden Prairie	952-941-5544	2 & 3 BR
<b>Raspberry Ridge</b>	Hopkins	952-933-3260	1 BR
<b>Slater Square Apartments</b>	Minneapolis	612-340-1264	EFF & 1BR
<b>Spirit on Lake</b>		612-724-3029	1 & 2 BR
<b>Talmage Green</b>	Minneapolis	612-623-0247	2 BR
<b>Trinity Apartments</b>	Minneapolis	612-721-2252	1 BR (sr)
<b>Unity Place</b>	Brooklyn Center	763-560-7563	2 BR
<b>Vadnais Highlands</b>	Vadnais Heights	651-653-0640	3 BR
<b>Visitation Place</b>		651-647-2550	1, 2 3 BR



We may be accepting applications for our large number of mobility impaired accessible units. Please call us for more information.



### Housing for Veterans at risk of homelessness

<b>Veteran's East Apartments</b>	Minneapolis	612-208-1712	EFF
<b>Veteran's &amp; Community Housing</b>	Minneapolis	612-333-0027	EFF

# RADIO TALKING BOOK

## Use an app to hear programs

The sampling published monthly in *Access Press* doesn't represent the full array of programming. More programs and books are available.

Radio Talking Book is not just for listeners with visual disabilities. It can be an asset for people whose disabilities limit hand movements, making it difficult to read a book.

Enjoy programming anytime and anywhere on a hand-held mobile device, for either iOS or Android. Visit the Apple App Store for iOS, or Google Play for Android, and download the Minnesota Radio Talking Book app. It provides a convenient way to tune in wherever and whenever.

Books broadcast on the Minnesota Radio Talking Book Network are available for loan through the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library in Faribault. The catalog is at [www.mnbtbl.org](http://www.mnbtbl.org), click on the link Search the Library Catalog. Call the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library at 800-722-0550, Mon-Fri, 9 am-4 pm CST for details.

Persons living outside of Minnesota may obtain copies of books via an inter-library loan by contacting their home state's Network Library for the National Library Service.

To find more information about Minnesota Radio Talking Book Network events go to the Facebook site, Minnesota Radio Talking Book. Audio information about the daily book listings is also on the National Federation for the Blind (NFB) Newsline. Register for the NFB Newsline by calling 651-539-1424.

The NFB-NEWSLINE service provides access to more than 500 magazines and newspapers, plus information on COVID-19 in the "Breaking News" section. To learn more, visit [www.nfb.org/programs-services/nfb-newsline](http://www.nfb.org/programs-services/nfb-newsline).

Donate to the State Services for the Blind at [mn.gov/deed/ssbdonate](http://mn.gov/deed/ssbdonate)

Listen to RTB's live or archived programs online at [www.mnssb.org/rtb](http://www.mnssb.org/rtb)

## Chautauqua\*

### Monday - Friday 6 a.m.

*A Walk Around the Block*, nonfiction by Spike Carlsen, 2020. A simple walk set Minnesota journalist Spike Carlsen off to investigate things we take for granted - from manhole covers and recycling bins to bike lanes and stoplights. Read by Yelva Lynfield. Thirteen broadcasts; begins Wed, Jan. 5.

*Sharks in the Time of Saviors*, fiction by Kawai Strong Washburn, 2020. In 1995 seven-year-old Nainoa falls from a ship, only to be rescued and returned to his parents by sharks. Though Nainoa is called a "miracle boy," the family faces a tragedy that tests them to the breaking point. Read

by Jack Rossmann. 12 broadcasts; begins Mon, Jan. 24.

## Past is Prologue\*

### Monday - Friday 11 a.m.

*Last Boat Out of Shanghai*, nonfiction by Helen Zia, 2019. Shanghai has been China's richest, most modern, and most westernized city. But after Mao's revolution citizens with money fled to Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the US. Read by Stevie Ray. 19 broadcasts; begins Wed, Jan. 12.

## Bookworm\*

### Monday - Friday noon

*A Painted House*, fiction by John Grisham, 2001. In Arkansas, Luke Chandler's family must do what it takes to bring in the cotton crop. But Luke witnesses things that could threaten his family's entire community. Read by Karen Ray. 14 broadcasts; begins Thu, Jan. 13.

## The Writer's Voice\*

### Monday - Friday 1 p.m.

*Beeswing*, nonfiction by Richard Thompson, 2021. British singer, songwriter, and guitarist Richard Thompson recounts his rise to influential rocker with Fairport Convention; to the duo he formed with his ex-wife Linda; and as a solo artist. Read by John Potts. Nine broadcasts; begins Wed, Jan. 5. - L

*It's Garry Shandling's Book*, nonfiction by Judd Apatow, 2019. From writing TV comedies, to a career as a standup comedian, to creating and starring in two groundbreaking TV series, Garry Shandling's comic genius inspired fans and fellow performers alike. Read by Scott McKinney. Nine broadcasts; begins Tue, Jan. 18. - L

*The Milk Lady of Bangalore*, nonfiction by Shoba Narayan, 2018. A writer returns to India from Manhattan and forms a friendship with the local milk lady. Read by Esmé Evans. Eight broadcasts; begins Mon, Jan. 31.

## Choice Reading\*

### Monday - Friday 2 p.m.

*Murder at Cape Three Points*, fiction by Kwei Quartey, 2014. A drifting canoe found in the Gulf of Guinea contains the bodies of two murdered people. Detective Darko Dawson learns there's no shortage of those who wish them ill. Read by Jim Gregorich. 10 broadcasts; begins Tue, Jan. 4. - L, V

*The House of Rust*, fiction by Khadija Abdalla Bajaber, 2021. Aisha, a Kenyan girl, goes to sea to find her missing father. Accompanying her is a wise, skinny, and very talkative cat, Hamza. After Aisha brings her father back to land, she sets out again to track down Hamza. Read by Holly Sylvester. 10 broadcasts; begins Tue, Jan. 18. - L, V

## Afternoon Report\*

### Monday - Friday 4 p.m.

*Thinking, Fast and Slow*, nonfiction by Daniel Kahneman, 2011. Psychologist Daniel Kahneman summarizes recent decades of research on intuition and systematic thinking, to show the immense complexity of ordinary thought and reveal the gatekeepers in our minds. Read by Lannois Neely. 21 broadcasts; begins Mon, Jan. 3.

## Night Journey\*

### Monday - Friday 7 p.m.

*In the Blood*, fiction by Lisa Unger, 2014. Lana Granger is haunted by her mother's murder. When she takes a job babysitting for 11-year-old Luke, she feels a strange bond with the boy who surprisingly knows far more about her past than he should. Read by Carol McPherson. 12 broadcasts; begins Mon, Jan. 3. - L, V

*A Man Came Out of a Door in the Mountain*, fiction by Adrienne Harun, 2014. Young girls are disappearing in western Canada, and it's unclear why or who's responsible. Young Leo and his friends are barely touched by these disappearances - until enigmatic strangers arrive in their mountain town. Read by Tom Speich. Eight broadcasts; begins Wed, Jan. 19. - L, V

*The Dime*, fiction by Kathleen Kent, 2017. Betty Rhyzak is from a family of Brooklyn police detectives. But her city street wisdom will take her only so far when she relocates to Dallas, and her first investigation goes sideways. Fiction read by Pat Kovel-Jarboe. 11 broadcasts; begins Mon, Jan. 31. - L, V

## Off the Shelf\*

### Monday - Friday 8 p.m.

*Jack of Spies*, fiction by David Downing, 2014. In 1913 Jack McColl performs missions for British Intelligence during overseas business trips. But when he meets Caitlin Hanley, an American journalist, he must choose between his assignment and the woman he's fallen for. Read by David Zierott. 11 broadcasts; begins Tue, Jan. 4. - L, V

*Abundance*, fiction by Jakob Guanzon, 2021. Single father Henry has less than \$100 and plans to spend it on his son's eighth birthday present: a night in a hotel with a real bed and cable TV, instead of sleeping in Henry's truck. Read by Jack Rossmann. 10 broadcasts; begins Wed, Jan. 19. - L, V

## Potpourri\*

### Monday - Friday 9 p.m.

*American Baby*, nonfiction by Gabrielle Glaser, 2021. Journalist Gabrielle Glaser describes how the adoption industry removed children from their birth mothers and placed them with families,

All times listed are Central Standard Time.

Abbreviations

V - violent content R - racial epithets  
L - strong language S - sexual situation G - gory descriptions

fabricated stories about infants' origins and destinations, then closed the door firmly between the parties forever. Read by Jan Anderson. 10 broadcasts; begins Tue, Jan. 18.

## Good Night Owl\*

### Monday - Friday 10 p.m.

*The Ruthless Lady's Guide to Wizardry*, fiction by C.M. Waggoner, 2021. Dellaria Wells runs petty cons to keep a roof over her head and look after her mother. She's also a talented fire witch. Soon she joins a team of women tasked with protecting their wealthy charge from unknown assassins. Read by Laura Young. 14 broadcasts; begins Mon, Jan. 3. - L, S

*The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, fiction by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows, 2008. In 1946 British author Juliet Ashton is tired of covering the sunny side of the war's aftermath. But soon Guernsey farmer Dawsey Adams finds Juliet's name in a used book and invites neighbors to write her with their stories. Read by Carol McPherson. 14 broadcasts; begins Mon, Jan. 24.

## RTB After Hours\*

### Monday - Friday 11 p.m.

*The Sweetness of Water*, fiction by Nathan Harris, 2021. George Walker grieves his son Caleb who he believes was killed in the Civil War. George meets up with two young brothers, Prentiss and Landry, who had been slaves at the house next door. The three start a peanut farm, until Caleb returns to disrupt the household. Read by Therese Murray. 13 broadcasts; begins Mon, Jan. 17. - L, V

## Weekend Program Books

**Your Personal World, 1 p.m. Sat**, presents *On Compromise* by Rachel Greenwald Smith (L), read by Beverly Burchett.

**Rated R, 11 p.m. Sat**, presents *The Kids Are Gonna Ask* by Gretchen Anthony (L), read by Scott McKinney.

**For the Younger Set, 11 a.m. Sun**, presents *Expelled* by James Patterson and Emily Raymond, read by John Mandeville.

**Poetic Reflections, noon Sun**, presents *Leonard Cohen: Poems and Songs* (L), read by Scott McKinney.

**The Great North, 4 p.m. Sun**, presents *Gunflint Burning* by Cary J. Griffith, read by Tom Speich.



## AROUND THE DIAL

*Access Press* is interested in listing regularly scheduled broadcast, cablecast or podcast programs by and for people with disabilities. Programming needs to have a tie to Minnesota or the

Upper Midwest.

Around the Dial is published on a space-available basis. Anyone with questions can contact [jane@accesspress.org](mailto:jane@accesspress.org)

## Disability Viewpoints

Disability Viewpoints is an award-winning public access television show by and for people with disabilities. Mark Hughes and his team of co-hosts feature current news, interesting people and groups, and events in Minnesota's disability community. The show is produced by volunteers at St. Paul Neighborhood Network. Some shows are archived on YouTube, so search for Disability Viewpoints on that web channel to find past shows. Visit the show's Facebook page, and [www.spnn.org](http://www.spnn.org)

## Disability and Progress

KFAI Radio, 6-7 p.m. Thu. Host Sam Jasmine and her guests explore a wide range of topics that are important to people with disabilities. Shows are now available on podcast.

Ask the smart speaker to play Disability and Progress podcast for the latest episode. For easier access, download the

app to a smart phone and hear shows on demand. Or hear Disability and Progress stream live, just tell the smart speaker to play KFAI radio.

KFAI is at 90.3 FM in Minneapolis and 106.7 in St. Paul. Listeners outside of the Twin Cities, or those looking for a past show, will find the show's archives online at [www.kfai.org](http://www.kfai.org)

Email [disabilityandprogress@samjasmine.com](mailto:disabilityandprogress@samjasmine.com) with questions and suggestions, or call 612-341-3144. Postal mail can be sent to KFAI, 1808 Riverside Ave. S., Disability and Progress, Box 116, Minneapolis MN 55454.

## Disability Channel Minnesota

Disability Landscape/Disability Channel Minnesota is available on a YouTube channel. Mark Knutson, Charlie Brose and their team are regularly posting shows. They are looking for contributors to the channel. Contact them at [disabilitychannelmn@gmail.com](mailto:disabilitychannelmn@gmail.com)

## Conor's Corner

Conor's Corner by Conor O'Meara can be heard at 10 a.m. Mon, replayed 8 a.m. Sat, at 94.1 or WFNU.org Frogtown Community Radio. The show can also be found on Spotify and Mixcloud. Find the radio station at [www.wfnu.org](http://www.wfnu.org)

The on-air studio line, offered 10-11 a.m. Mon, is 651-313-5125.

O'Meara conducts a wide range of interviews, talks about what is going on in his life and even sings a little Elvis Presley when the time is right. T-shirts from the show are for sale at the St. Paul Highland Park Lund's & Byerly's store.

## HoodWave Disability Radio

Daniel and Leah Hood produce HoodWave Disability Radio. They work with Conor's Corner and are looking for organizations and people with disabilities who want to have their shows air on the online station. Anyone who wants to be a part of HoodWave can contact them. Find HoodWave radio at <https://www.hoodwave.org/p/hoodwave-disability-radio-live/> or [www.hoodwave.org](http://www.hoodwave.org)

## Make the news!

Receiving an award?

Joining a board?

Moving to new space?

Winning a race?

Filling a top post? Send us your

"boast"! Marking a key date?

**Please don't be late!**

*Access Press* welcomes submissions for the People and Places pages. Submissions are due by the 15th of each month.

Questions?

Call 651-644-2133

or email [access@accesspress.org](mailto:access@accesspress.org)

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**ENJOY!**



Koi fish by Danielle Day

**Fresh Eye Gallery offers Rainbow-ish**

Fresh Eye Gallery presents an exhibition exploring joy and exuberance. Throughout history and in many cultures, rainbows have represented optimism, promise, and hope. With all of the daunting challenges that face humanity worldwide; COVID-19, climate change, racial and economic inequality, optimism seems to be in short supply. The exhibition features work that is bright, colorful, and generated for the sheer joy of creating something from nothing. Exhibiting artists are Danielle Day, Deja Day, Dede Decker, Ryan Suckow and Lucas Williams. All are self-taught artists supported by Fresh Eye Arts, a progressive art studio supporting artists with disabilities. An opening reception is 6-8 pm. Jan. 21. Free. The gallery is at 4238 Nicollet Ave., Mpls. FFI: [www.fresheyeartgallery.com](http://www.fresheyeartgallery.com)

**Springboard hosts access discussion**

Springboard for the Arts hosts a virtual workshop and social time for artist with disabilities, on the topic of accessing mainstream spaces. The free event, Accessing Mainstream Spaces, is 6-8:30 pm. Jan. 18. The workshop will center the experiences and concerns artists with disabilities when working with mainstream art institutions, including requesting accommodations, arranging supports for collaborators, and impacting Minnesota's cultural landscape. FFI: <https://springboardforthearts.org/events/artists-with-disabilities-virtual-social-and-discussion-accessing-mainstream-spaces/>

**Save the date for Fetching Ball**

Save the date of Sat, Feb. 26 for the Can Do Canines Fetching Ball Gala, at the DoubleTree Hotel, Bloomington. Enjoy dinner, entertainment, games and silent and live auctions – all benefiting the organization. Master of ceremonies is Rena Sarigianopoulos, KARE 11 reporter/anchor. FFI: Melissa Herman, 763-331-3000, ext. 115, [mherman@candocanines.org](mailto:mherman@candocanines.org)

benefiting the organization. Master of ceremonies is Rena Sarigianopoulos, KARE 11 reporter/anchor. FFI: Melissa Herman, 763-331-3000, ext. 115, [mherman@candocanines.org](mailto:mherman@candocanines.org)

**2022 Arc Gala**

The Arc Minnesota has set its gala date for March 5, 2022 at the Depot, Mpls. Save the date and join in for a night of celebration, acknowledgement, and commitment. Proceeds support Arc and its many statewide advocacy efforts and activities. Plan to attend the Arc Gala in person by purchasing tickets, or attend virtually for no charge. Tickets start at \$175. Sponsorships available. FFI: [www.arcminnesota.org/](http://www.arcminnesota.org/)

**Call for performers**

Off-Kilter is a new community program of Off-Leash Area to highlight and support performance work by artists with

disabilities. Artists are sought to present work at Off-Kilter Cabaret June 9, 10, 11 and 12 at the Barbara Barker Center for Dance at the University of Minnesota, a fully accessible black box theater with a floor-level stage. The event will include accessibility accommodations such as sign language interpreting, captioning and audio description, as well as current health protocols. Artist proposals are sought on the theme of "organ recital," pieces should be five to 10 minutes in length and are due Feb. 14. Seven artists or artist groups will be selected. FFI: [www.offleasharea.org/off-kilter](http://www.offleasharea.org/off-kilter).

**Open Flow Forum**

The Artists with Disabilities Alliance meets via Zoom 7-9 p.m. the first Thu of the month. Upcoming dates Thu, Jan. 6, Feb. 3 and March 3. Virtually join artists with disabilities and supporters to share visual art, writing, music, theater and artistic efforts or disability concerns. Facilitators are Tara Innmon, Kip Shane and Springboard for the Arts. The gatherings are fully accessible. Anyone needing special accommodations should contact Andy Sturdevant at host organization Springboard for the Arts. Funding is available for access needs. FFI: 651-294-0907, [resources@springboardforthearts.org](mailto:resources@springboardforthearts.org)

**Less to Enjoy!**

Restrictions have eased in the entertainment world, but with spikes in COVID-19 cases, arts organizations can change schedules. Check on events and activities before heading out. Some museums, arts and theater groups that typically have listings in the Access Press Enjoy! calendar have moved to online services or are offering in-person services with social distancing and safety measures. Please check with a venue or organization before making plans. See what is available through the Minnesota Access Alliance and its calendar, at <https://mnaccess.org/>

**OPPORTUNITIES**

**Advocate**

**2022 virtual legislative forum**

The Minnesota Council on Disability 2022 Legislative Forum is noon-2 p.m. Thu, Jan. 13. Disability advocates will interact with state officials via Zoom. The 2022 Virtual Forum is an opportunity for the council to present priorities for the 2022 legislative session.

MCD is looking for people to share stories related to its 2022 legislative agenda items. Review the public policy agenda online and visit the council's events page for more information. Stories cannot be taken the day of the forum so plan in advance. FFI: <https://www.disability.state.mn.us/events/>

**Apply to serve the state**

Many state boards, commissions and committees actively seek members with disabilities, to bring lived experience to the table when policies, budgets and programs take shape. Groups work on issues focused on specific disabilities or aspects of everyday life. The Minnesota Olmstead Plan office has information on groups that seek members, at <https://mn.gov/olmstead/> Or check the Minnesota Secretary of State's website. FFI: <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/boards-commissions/>

**Resources**

The Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities has announced three new products to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Council's formation. *The New Stargazers: 50 Years of Bold Achievements* is a short documentary that describes the major milestones of the council's work across the last half century. Brittanie Hernandez-Wilson, council member and Partners in Policymaking graduate, is host.

Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities: *50 Years of Empowering Advocacy, Expanding Capacity and Envisioning Systems Change* is a book that organizes the council's work around the federal Developmental Disabilities Act requirements of advocacy, capacity building, and systems change. The second publication, entitled *inVISIBILITY*, depicts the progress made from 1905 through 2021 in a series of photo collections. FFI: [www.mncdd.org](http://www.mncdd.org)

**Children & Families**

**PACER workshops sampling**

Many useful free or low-cost workshops and resources for families of children with any disabilities are online and livestreamed at this time. Advance registration is required for all workshops. At least 48 hours' notice is needed for interpretation. Check out PACER's website and link to the newsletter of statewide workshops that allows participants to pick and choose sessions designed for their needs.

Effective Communication with the IEP Team is noon-1:30 p.m. Mon, Jan. 10. Parents will gain tips to become comfortable speaking up to share ideas, ask questions, and voice concerns or objections to what the school is proposing, and overall, building more effective communication skills with a child's IEP team.

Special Education: What Do I Need to Know is 6:30-8:30 p.m. Tue, Jan. 11. Parents will gain an understanding of special education, how to resolve disagreements, and discover the role of parents in the process.

Uncovering the Mysteries of VRS and Work is 1-2:30 p.m. Thu, January 13. Learn about rights to services from Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) and State Services for the Blind (SSB). Information will be presented about the Minnesota Disability Law Center's Client Assistance Project. Co-sponsored by the Minnesota Disability Law Center

Tech for Teens Club: Building Websites is 10-11:30 a.m. Sat, Jan. 15. The workshop will introduce teens with disabilities to a method of designing websites using the free online tool at Weebly.com. Students will learn how to use template designs and insert small amounts of code to customize and publish their

own websites online. This is an extension of the coding websites workshop but past attendance isn't required. FFI: PACER, 952-838-9000, 800-537-2237, [www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org)

**Info & Assistance**

**Online and In Person Support Groups in suburbs**

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) sponsors free support groups for families and friends of individuals living with a mental illness. Groups are offered virtually and in person. Led by trained facilitators who also have a family member with mental illness, the support groups help families develop better coping skills and find strength through sharing their experiences. An online Washington County support group meets on the second and fourth Wed of each month, from 6:30-8pm. FFI: Dan, 612-341-8918.

NAMI also offers an in-person family support group that meets on the first and third Mon of each month, from 6:30-8:00 p.m., at the Bayport Public Library, 582 4th St. N., Bayport. Group members are required to wear masks and follow COVID-19 protocols.

Starting Mon, Jan. 10, a support group will be offered in West St. Paul for families and friends of individuals living with a mental illness. The group meets 6:30-8pm second and fourth Mon at Augustana Lutheran Church, 1400 S. Robert St. Group members are required to be vaccinated, wear masks and follow COVID-19 protocols. FFI: Joanne, 651-815-9556.

Starting Thu, Jan. 13, a support group will be offered in Eden Prairie for families and friends of individuals living with a mental illness. The group meets 6:30-8 p.m. second and fourth Thu at St. Andrews Lutheran, 13600 Technology Dr., Room 207A. Group members are required to be vaccinated, wear masks and follow COVID-19 protocols. FFI: Carol, 518-331-8099, or [crwebster45@gmail.com](mailto:crwebster45@gmail.com). FFI: [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

**New website announced**

The System of Technology to Achieve Results (STAR) Program has a new website for its library of loanable devices. Visit Minnesota Assistive Technology for All (MNAT4ALL) at <https://mn.at4all.com/> and check out the new database. The STAR Program team has developed a site which features images of devices and links to manufacturer websites. MNAT4ALL allow users to create their own account, track the history of items they have borrowed, request loans, request demonstrations, and complete surveys. Feedback is sought on the new database. FFI: 651-201-2640; 1-888-234-1267; MN Relay: 711 or toll free at 800-627-3529

**Online mental health support**

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) offers a variety of free online peer support groups for adults and young adults living with a mental illness, their families, friends, spouses/partners, as well as parents of children and teens. Led by trained peer facilitators, the support groups help individuals and families learn coping skills and find strength through sharing their experiences. The groups are specifically for those individuals suggested by the group's title. For example, Family Support Group is only for family members and NAMI Connection is only for those who live with a mental illness and are over 18 years old.

Find a complete list of NAMI Minnesota support groups, meetings and how to join in by going to [namimn.org](http://namimn.org) and clicking on support groups. FFI: <https://namimn.org/support/nami-minnesota-support-groups/>.

**Three new groups are offered:**

BIPOC Connections Support Group: A peer-led support group for people in BIPOC (Black, indigenous, people of color) communities who live with mental illness. Meets 10-11:30 a.m. 2nd and 4th Sat.

Young Adult Family Support Group: A young adult peer-led support group for families and friends of a person living with a mental illness. Meets 5-6:30 p.m. the 4th Wed.

BIPOC Family Support Group: A peer led support group in BIPOC (Black, indigenous, people of color) communities for families and friends of a person living with a mental illness. Meets 5-6:30 p.m. 1st and 3rd Sat.

Find a complete list of NAMI Minnesota support groups, meetings and how to join in by going to [namimn.org](http://namimn.org) and clicking on support group. FFI: <https://namimn.org/support/nami-minnesota-support-groups/>

**Centers for independent living statewide**

Minnesota centers for independent living statewide have gone to more in-person operations. Typically centers offer an array of classes, training programs and other services tied to independent living. Centers that providing PCA, homemaker and other staffing for clients continue to do that in person. Check with a local center for open hours. FFI: [www.macil.org/](http://www.macil.org/)

**Classes offered online**

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) has set up a wide variety of free online mental health classes. Choices include Hope for Recovery, Transitions, Ending the Silence, Understanding Early Episode Psychosis for Families, In Our Own Voice, Family to Family, Positive Psychology, Creating Caring Communities, a suicide prevention class called QPR – Question, Persuade and Refer, a special QPR class for Agricultural Communities and many more.

The classes are designed for family members and caregivers, persons living with a mental illness, service providers, and also the general public. Find a complete listing of these classes and how to join in by going to [namimn.org](http://namimn.org) and clicking on "Classes" or go straight to <https://namimn.org/education-public-awareness/classes/scheduled/>

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