Ripples seen statewide with care

The care crisis, with its health care worker shortage and rising rates of worker burnout, is having a ripple effect throughout the state. A Minnesota Department of Health survey and report, Minnesota’s Health Care Workforce: Pandemic-Provoked Workforce Exits, Burnout, and Shortages, highlights the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on most of the licensed health care workforce in Minnesota.

The report is a first-time effort, drawing on a survey given at the time of license renewal for “front-line” providers including physician assistants, respiratory therapists, pharmacists, nurses, physicians, mental health providers and others. Coupled with the shortage of personal care and direct support staff statewide, the MDH report is cause for alarm in Greater Minnesota.

Nearly one in five rural health care providers say they plan to leave their profession within the next five years, according to the survey. The largest projected losses are among physicians. One out of every three rural physicians report planning to leave their profession within the next five years.

“Those are going to need several approaches and solutions aimed at both recruiting the future workforce and retaining the current one,” said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Jan Malcolm. “We in government and health care must do more to prioritize retention, work with educational institutions to expand clinical training opportunities, and focus more broadly on the care team, including nurses, physicians, physician assistants, respiratory therapists and others.”

In almost every profession, more providers than in prior years reported that they planned to leave their profession within the next five years, and a much higher share of those exits is due to burnout.

The report indicates that vacancies have increased in nearly all health professions since their pre-pandemic levels, in some cases dramatically. The largest increases are in mental health and substance abuse counseling occupations, where one in four jobs is currently vacant and open for hire.

While burnout among nurses has been widely recognized, other providers are also struggling. Burnout or job dissatisfaction accounted for 26 percent of all physician assistant workforce exits, and 22 percent of all physician assistant exits is due to burnout.

Many questions are remaining as lawmakers eye session’s end

Many questions, tempered with very cautious optimism, swirl around the state’s unfinished business at the Minnesota Legislature entering its final days in May. Many disability community initiatives are still in the chase, in stand-alone bills or as part of larger omnibus packages. Worries remain about how deeply divided state lawmakers are, and whether or not Minnesotans will see agreements on taxes, policies and bonding. Two proposals still in play are brought forward by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and highlighted by the Minnesota Council on Disability (COD).

Trevor Turner, who leads legislative efforts for the council, included details in a recent council update.

Efforts to combat COVID-19 continue in state

Minnesota’s ongoing efforts to counter COVID-19 continue. As case numbers and variants change, state leaders urge Minnesotans with disabilities to be mindful of available resources.

One proposal is a study of disability as a health equity issue. The proposal includes increased data collection on health disparities and people with disabilities.

“Improved data collection on health outcomes for people with disabilities is crucial to providing equity. When we have data that does not accurately reflect the population, it is much more difficult to provide the assistance people need. Also, maintaining a single database of disability statistics, available to both the government and the public, can only improve the advocacy efforts of nonprofits and state agencies alike,” Turner said.

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Where are the young disability community voices?

A century ago, two Minneapolis schools served students with vision loss with accommodations, other schools in the city were overcrowded, and students were discouraged from attending state schools. Or children stayed home and get little if any education, and their families and go to state schools. Or even a city or town had a school, but the student had to walk to the school, and the school was overcrowded.

One factor may be the long-term shift to more virtual schools, leading to disability issues seen in their own light. A generation ago, the Disability History and Policy Project was established, and the first website was created, called A Century Ago, Minnesota's Schools Served Students with Visual Disabilities, 1922-1923. The History Note is a monthly column that highlights significant events in disability history.

Flynn spoke for integration of visually impaired students into the public school system, so that the children learned to take their places in the world.

One focus in the news story was a young woman with visual disabilities named Cora, who had progressed through the ninth grade without any help from the state. She learned to read and write, and her teacher praised her for her progress. Cora worked with a special teacher at Corcoran, with adaptations for the visually impaired, and was able to participate in the same activities as other students.

The collapse of our staffing system meant that students with disabilities needed perspective on what we face every day. The world is indeed run by those who show up, it's concerning to see fewer younger people taking active roles on our issues. It's their turn.

Some resources for self-advocacy training and information

The Arc Minnesota https://arcminnesota.org/

ACT Center for Disability Leadership: https://www.selfadvocacy.org/

Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities: https://www.mncdd.org/

Resources are also offered on the Minnesota Department of Human Services web page at, https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/people-with-disabilities/services/home-community/resources/web-advocacy.jsp

Partners in Policymaking is an annual leadership training program led by the Governor's Council on Developmental Disability. Part in History Notes and other disability history may be found at https://mn.gov/dhs.
Deaf community leaders are working to preserve, save Thompson Hall

Deaf community leaders are rolling up their sleeves for the Thompson Hall effort. A $2.9 million push to revitalize and improve St. Paul’s historic Thompson Memorial Church is moving forward.

Work will start this spring on the iconic structure, which is the nation’s oldest social hall for the deaf, deaf/blind and hard of hearing. A restored front porch and balcony and other exterior improvements are planned. Future work will include a needed elevator addition to improve access to the three-story building as well as renovated restrooms and other interior work.

The Thompson Hall Board of Trustees, Deaf Equity Board and members of the community are working together to save Thompson Hall. Since July 2017, a team has met twice monthly to create plans and raise funds for the work. Along with improving accessibility, they also want to preserve the landmark building for future generations of deaf and wider community members.

There have been several meetings to craft a plan and to seek financial support. In April a neighborhood meeting heard project details and encouraged hall backers to move ahead. The committee may later vote to provide a letter of support for the project.

Any exterior changes will have to go to the State Heritage Preservation Board. Thompson Hall is on the State Register of Historic Places and has both local and national historic designation, so building additions and extensive work require the board’s review and approval before permits can be issued.

Club leader Herman Fuchtmann gave an overview of the structure’s needs and its management. The three-story structure at 1824 Marshall Ave. was built in 1916 and has served the deaf community. It is managed by volunteers who own the oldest deaf clubs in the world.

Hall namesake Charles Thompson was then a wealthy banker. He himself was a successful businessman. He met his future wife, Margaret Brooks, at an event for hearing-impaired people. Club history indicates that the Thompsons shared a passion for fostering social interaction for deaf people, using their homes in St. Paul and Alexandria as social hubs.

Also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease, ALS is a neurodegenerative disease that affects the motor control of voluntary muscles affecting approximately 200 Americans each year. Over 5,000 new cases are diagnosed every year. At any one time, there are over 30,000 Americans living with ALS and 90% of ALS cases are thought to be sporadic. One ALS disease is 100 percent fatal and there is no known cure.

“A state is making real progress in the fight against ALS,” said Walz. “By investing in ALS research and caregiver support, we are moving together toward finding a cure for this disease and better care for Minnesotans living with ALS and their families.”

The ALS legislation is one of a handful of bills signed into law in May. Other progress was made in programs to avoid avian flu. But measures including tax credits, rebates, public safety, front-line work compensation and unemployment insurance taxes remained as key sticking points.

Even-numbered years are typically when lawmakers focus on bonding and policy measures. One big question mark is what will happen with the state’s historic $9.25 billion budget surplus. Another question is how another $1.2 billion in pandemic relief should be spent.

Also, with disabilities, the extra dollars have been eyed as possible resources to shore up a collapsing personal care and staffing system, to add housing options and to address a wide array of program and policy needs. But 2022 is not a budget year, as the HPC met past with a deficit budget and found the potential for lengthy conference committee and floor sessions is on many minds. One lobbyist described the process as a “long slow train to nowhere.”

But as April drew to a close and business began moving to conference committees, many disability advocacy groups were frustrated. The Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD), Minnesota Council on Disabilities and many disability-specific advocacy groups saw priority bills still alive, many wrapped into omnibus bills.

Education, human services and other bills were on the move across the Easter/Passover break, as were bills covering agriculture and broadband needs. One bright spot in the House version of education is spending $1.15 billion of the state surplus on schools, with focuses including student mental health and special education. But worries remain that the omnibus bills from House and Senate are very far apart in some areas.

Track bills, watch committee and floor sessions and get legislation contact information at https://www.leg.state.mn.us. Read more about state budgets at the Minnesota Budget Project, a nonpartisan initiative of the Minnesota Council on Nonprofits, at https://www.minnbudgetproject.org/
Coverage of disability community is focus for ethics panel

by Paula Weber

News coverage of issues centered on people with disabilities needs less on “pity stories,” and more on accomplishments and issues affecting community members. That was a key message during the 2022 Journalism Ethics Week Panel, One in Four. The panel, held at the University of Minnesota’s Twin Cities Campus, is sponsored by the Center for Disability and Development. The panel focused on the importance of respectful, inclusive reporting on people with disabilities.

A central theme was to move away from “pity stories” and focus on more executive leadership. Many panelists focused on the need for better representation and training in the news media.

The panelists talked about the ongoing challenge of media representation of people with disabilities.

“While progress has been made, we need to do more to ensure that people with disabilities are represented accurately and respectfully,” said Ken Libin, executive director of Access Press.

Another panelist, Laura Tressel, who helps lead the Partners in Policymaking program at the University of Minnesota’s Institute on Community Integration, said that 2% of U.S. adults have a disability, and just 1% of news stories include people with disabilities. The panelists emphasized the importance of training journalists to cover disability issues.

“We need to do more training to ensure that journalists are able to cover disability issues in a way that is respectful and inclusive,” said Tressel.

The panelists also talked about the importance of identity-first language and how that has evolved over time.

“Identity-first language is language that puts a person before their disability,” said Tressel. “We need to move away from ‘a person with a disability’ and focus on ‘a person who uses a wheelchair’ or ‘a person who is deaf’.”

The panelists also discussed the need for more representation of people with disabilities in news media roles. They emphasized the importance of hiring people with disabilities in newsrooms and ensuring that they have opportunities to lead and influence news coverage.

“We need to do more to ensure that people with disabilities have opportunities to be leaders in newsrooms and to influence news coverage,” said Libin.

The panelists also discussed the importance of training for journalists on covering disability issues.

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Duluth celebrated Daniel Durant Day in April, to honor the hometown hero who was a star of Academy Award Best Picture winner “CODA.” Durant wiped away tears as dozens of fans, friends and family members threw their hands in the air to applaud in American Sign Language during Duluth Mayor Emily Larson’s declaration.

“I am thankful to all of Duluth,” said Durant after the mayoral declaration. “That’s really where all this started emerging.

“We are grateful, and we are proud of you,” said Larson. “Your work in CODA is just so beautiful and powerful. You helped us to see our community differently.”

The celebration was co-hosted by Larson and Duluth City Councilor Mike Mayou, who represents the council district home of Durant and his mothers Lori Durant and Mary Enges. The ceremony included remarks from five people who worked with Durant as he was discovering his acting talent during his Duluth childhood. Larson saluted Durant as a person “whose passion and advocacy in CODA contributed significantly to its success”.

Durant himself said, “I just loved to be on stage with an audience there and be able to tell stories, and be able to act and put on a performance.”

Daniel Durant

work as an actor has captivated and engaged a global community.” She concluded, “Before you were the world’s, you were our’s. Duluth is so proud of you and thrilled that millions of people around the world know of your work.”

Pat Castellano, a retired educator who worked with Durant at the Duluth Children’s Museum, earned a big laugh when she asked Durant to autograph her souvenir magnet from "A Nurse, A Child, and A Bear.” That 1999 play, written by teacher Rayna Carlson, starred a young Durant and was a tour-ignite for speakers.

“It was done at the Playhouse in the Depot,” said Durant, speaking with media before the ceremony. “To have that role at nine years old, I just loved to be on stage with an audience there and be able to tell stories, and be able to act and put on a performance.”

June 10 performance.

Off-Leash Area is a Minneapolis-based dance and theater company with 23 years of creating original interdisciplinary performance works, including "Psst! The Award winning Past," and designing unique community programs. Off-Leash Area champions independent, diverse, and distinct voices in local performing arts, artist-creators of original works, and conducts its collaborations with integrity, respect, and a commitment to high quality production. Throughout its history, Off-Leash Area has built strong relationships within the disability community. From its collaboration with Blind Inc on its production, Now Eye See You Now Eye Don’t, to having a created fully accessible venue with the Off-Leash Art Box, Off-Leash Area has put individuals and organizations among the disability community at the center of its creative and organizational work. Learn more and get information about performances at https://offleashart.org.

Appointees named to groups

Gov. Tim Walz and Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan have announced appointments to nine commissions that work on disability and aging-related issues.

The new appointees were reappointed to the Minnesota Council on Disability. Myra Peterson, Grand Rapids; Ted Temple, Marshall; Jennifer Foley, St. Cloud and Nichole Villavicencio, Maplewood, were all reappointed. Villavicencio was reappointed as council chair.

PEOPLE AND PLACES to Page 9

TRELLIS MANAGEMENT MAY BE ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING AFFORDABLE HOMES:

Albright Townhomes
Minneapolis
612-924-6605
1 & 2 BR
Cornerstone Creek Apartments
612-333-0027
St. Paul
1 & 2 BR

Diamond Hill Townhomes
612-736-9341
St. Paul
2 & 3 BR

Elliot Park Apartments
612-339-3166
Minneapolis
1 & 2 BR

Alvin Lane Apartments
612-340-1264
Minneapolis
1 & 2 BR

Hillman Manor
612-274-5499
Minneapolis
1 & 2 BR

Hofius Village Apartments
612-938-5767
1 & 2 BR

Lincoln Place Apartments
612-653-0640
1 & 2 BR

Olson Towne Townhomes
612-376-8013
Minneapolis
1 & 2 BR

Park Plaza Apartments
612-377-3552
1 & 2 BR

Prairie Meadows
612-722-1552
1 & 2 BR

Raspberry Ridge
612-938-3290
1 & 2 BR

Sitter Square Apartments
612-346-1264
1 & 2 BR

Spirit on the Lake
612-932-2547
1 & 2 BR

Talman Green
612-673-0247
1 & 2 BR

Talia Apartments
612-271-2512
1 & 2 BR

Unity Place
763-560-7563
1 & 2 BR

Vashon Highlands
612-853-4672
1 & 2 BR

Visitation Place
612-647-7539
1 & 2 BR

Willow Apartments
612-639-9080
1 & 2 BR

Woodward Apartments
888-302-0312
1 & 2 BR

HOUSING FOR VETERANS AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS
Veteran’s East Apartments
612-208-1712
Veterans’ & Community Housing
612-333-0027

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Young Dance is inspiration for book

A book with ties to St. Paul-based Young Dance has been nominated for a Panda Book Award. The book I Will Dance is by Nancy Bo Flood. It is nominated in the category of Best Young Readers, picture books for children ages five to eight years. I Will Dance was inspired by a real dancer from Young Dance and was written by Flood and illustrated by Julianna Swaney. The story follows a young girl with cerebral palsy named Eva.

Eva wants very much to dance, not just watch others onstage. She learns of a place, Young Dance, which has created a class for dancers of all abilities. Readers learn how Eva becomes more confident and attains a sense of belonging as her dream of dancing becomes reality.

Flood is a counselor, teacher, and parent. She has conducted workshops on child abuse, learning disabilities, play therapy, and creative writing. Flood has lived in Malawi, Hawaii, Japan, and Saipan. She has written several books for readers of all ages.

Swaney has illustrated several children’s books. She is a native of Michigan, went to college in Maine, and now lives in Oregon. The Panda Book Award, initiated in 2008 by librarian Nadine Dewit Rosevear, invites students and teachers from participating international schools in China and beyond to vote for their favorite book published that year.

MOHR Life Enrichment Awards honor an array of providers

“Active and better lives” is the theme of the Fifth Annual 2022 MOHR Life Enrichment Awards. Five winners were selected from around Minnesota and honored this spring.

Epic Enterprise, Dundas/Northfield, is honored for In Community Life Enrichment. Staff in May 2020 planned ways to overhaul service delivery, to better assist individuals with disabilities, look at changes to direct support, and minimize spread of COVID-19. That meant looking at everything from staffing to transportation changes.

“The biggest challenge was that staff had to think in a new paradigm,” said Senior Program Manager Stephanie Osman. “This particular change was to make services more self-directed. Individuals made suggestions about volunteer options and staff shared ideas as well. Clients are finding new places to be active, volunteer and connect with others.”

Hubbard County Day Activity Center, Park Rapids, is honored for its art program. The center brought in visiting artists to teach clients. They with a variety of media and in performing arts. Some produced art for sale.

Improved self-confidence has allowed people to get creative and decide what projects they want to do next,” said Laura Johnson, executive director of the center. The idea is to help individuals to find their passion, which can help them live more fully in the community, and take part in the area’s annual Art Leap.

ProAct, in Eagan, Red Wing, Shakopee and Hudson, Wisconsin, is honored for its virtual enrichment services. When COVID-19 kept participants at home, virtual enrichment services grew almost fivefold over just seven months, reaching 117 participants. Increased technology skills, newfound confidence and new friendships were developed. Popular gatherings are offered more often.

“We’ve received praise, gratitude and much appreciation for providing this service,” said Senior Program Manager Stephanie Osman. “This particular team of instructors is really the best the business has to offer and are so creative and eclectic with their talents.”

WACOSA, Waite Park, St. Cloud, Sauk Centre, is honored for its art program. WACOSA has developed a variety of art experiences over the past decade. WACOSA First Ave. began in 2018; working with people who have complex disabilities and are often overlooked, said WACOSA Executive Director Steve Howard. WACOSA secured funding for program expansions due to increased complexity.

I Will Dance

written by Nancy Bo Flood

illustrated by Julianna Swaney

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Hood brings determination to Ms. Wheelchair Minnesota role

by Jan Willms

Running marathons. Climbing mountains. Traveling the world as part of a career. Volunteering for the Olympics. All of these activities ended suddenly for Linda J. Hood on May 19, 2018, when she was stricken with Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS), a rare neurological disorder in which the body’s immune system mistakenly attacks the peripheral nervous system.

Hood was on a trip from her home in Woodbury to Killeen, TX, when her legs suddenly became weak. “I was thinking I was just tired,” she said. But when she experienced pain in her legs, tingling feet and trouble walking, she went to the hospital. She became totally paralyzed and was unable to speak. She struggled to breathe and was put on a ventilator. She was unconscious for 10 days. Hood spent eight months in intensive care and remained in the hospital for 15 months.

“The doctors were not sure I would survive and called my family,” she said. “But I had run 60 marathons, and I had a lot of stamina.”

It was determined that the cause of her illness was from eating some contaminated chicken. Hood survived, but it was a struggle with surgeries and anesthesia and constant pain. “At least twice I communicated to the hospital staff that I wanted to die,” she said.

Hood persevered and is now back home in Woodbury. She has regained some movement in her head and arms and can now speak, although with difficulty. She said she has a permanent misalignment of her teeth from having a tracheotomy tube inserted for so long. “I am still unable to completely close my lips together, and my tongue movement is extremely slow.”

GBS has affected her heart, her movements, her swallowing, and her facial muscles—so many parts of her body. But it has not affected the determination, the perseverance and the dedication that Hood embodied before her illness. She now uses a wheelchair.

Hood has completed seven graduate-level courses in clinical research at St. Cloud University, earning mostly As and one B. She regularly attends speech, physical and occupational therapy. And in February of this year Hood was crowned Ms. Wheelchair Minnesota. Ms. Wheelchair Minnesota is part of the Ms. Wheelchair America Inc. organization, which empowers women of achievement through leadership, advocacy and education.

Hood brings the same zeal she has used throughout her life in running marathons, volunteering, traveling and working across the country to her reign as Ms. Wheelchair Minnesota.

She is strongly advocating for changes in public bathrooms to make them more adaptable for people with disabilities. Hood said that currently, most bathrooms do not have adult changing tables for her and others to use. “There’s no place, so I have to stand or my personal care assistant has to have me be on the floor,” she said. “It’s terrible.”

As Ms. Wheelchair Minnesota, Hood is advocating across the state for colleges, malls and airports to build more accessible bathrooms. She said there is not only the need for adult diaper tables. Many bathroom doors cannot be opened by someone in a wheelchair. Soap dispensers cannot be reached. “There are so many people affected by this, and I am trying to get a bill passed to make these changes. That is what I am trying to accomplish.”

She said she makes it a point to talk to management of these facilities, and it is a task she will continue on a wider scale if she is selected as Ms. Wheelchair America in the August competition.

“I would like to see these changes made worldwide, and I would have a stronger platform as Ms. Wheelchair America,” Hood said.

Meanwhile, she advocates for others like herself and continuously strives to strengthen her body. She said she hopes to return to work remotely, and she is working diligently toward a full recovery “no matter how long it takes.”

Hood has written a book about the “good, bad and ugly” experiences of her lengthy hospital stay and is looking for a publisher and also an opportunity to tell her story on television.

If others would like to join in her advocacy for more accessible bathrooms, she can be reached at lindajhood9@gmail.com

MOHR
From page 6

winning artist, to work on acrylics with 20 adults who have severe cognitive and physical disabilities. Adaptive tools are employed. Their work was displayed on murals at the facility.

WorkAbilities, Golden Valley, is honored for its volunteer program. WorkAbilities focuses on individual contributions by people with disabilities to projects that help others. Clients see themselves as givers of service. They realize they’re part of a broader community and gain a deeper sense of personal value.

Overcoming perceptions that clients with unappreciated abilities and skills couldn’t achieve success was important, said Board President Kathy Steffen. Clients choose from many volunteer options where they can grow their own skills and abilities. Improvements in cooperation, leadership, crafting and dexterity combine with enhanced social skills to benefit the people involved.
North Memorial faces sanctions

Minneapolis-based North Memorial Health has settled civil rights law which it failed to hire an applicant whose deafness on referral because of her disability and failed to accommodate her in the workplace. The settlement followed a complaint filed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) on behalf of a woman who applied for a position as a greeter at North Memorial Health’s St. Joseph’s Hospital. The EEOC alleged that North Memorial failed to accommodate and hire the applicant because of her disability. The settlement agreement requires North Memorial Health to pay $15,000 to the applicant and to provide her with reasonable accommodations in the workplace. It also requires North Memorial Health to provide the applicant with an accommodation for her hearing loss and to train its employees on their obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The settlement also requires North Memorial Health to pay $15,000 to the EEOC.

Fairview Health Services’ plans to close its inpatient mental health unit in downtown St. Paul have raised concerns from some community members, raising questions about the future of mental health services in the area. The company announced plans to close the unit in August 2022, citing financial pressures and the need to increase revenue. Fairview Health Services is a not-for-profit hospital system with more than 70 locations in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

PTSD-related claims soar

Hundreds of Minnesota police officers in PTSD-related claims soared in the past two years, with some filing for disability pensions. The Minnesota Police Officers Retirement System (PERA) reported that 78 police officers filed for disability pensions in 2021, compared to just 20 in 2020. This represents a 390% increase in the number of officers seeking disability pensions in the state.

MDHR investigates.

A woman has filed a complaint with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR) alleging that Fairview Health Services, a Minneapolis-based hospital system, violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) when it refused to provide her with reasonable accommodations in the workplace. The complaint alleges that Fairview Health Services failed to accommodate a woman with a hearing impairment who applied for a job as a greeter at North Memorial Health’s St. Joseph’s Hospital. The woman was denied the job and was later offered a job at another hospital, where she was unable to perform her job duties.

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REGIONAL NEWS

From page 8

Public officials say many of the police officers who are leaving and getting the payouts could instead get treatment to help them recover from PTSD and go back to work. The Minnesota Legislature is considering a bill that could make that happen with state lawmakers urging treatment.

(Source: Star Tribune)

Projects include student supports

Sen. Tina Flint Smith (D-Minn) has announced funding of several special projects in the Minneapolis and St. Paul metro area, for a total of almost $4 million.

“All of these projects are critical investments in communities across the Twin Cities metro area,” said Sen. Smith. “Investing in Native health care and job training, expanding STEM education, and supporting students with disabilities, and spurring economic opportunity for the Black community are all important ways to support the diverse communities that call the Twin Cities home.”

Funding allocations include $400,000 to expand access to STEM education and supporting students with disabilities. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

(Source: Star Tribune)

PEOPLE AND PLACES

From page 5

Nimo Ahmed of Columbia Heights is a new council appointee, replacing Christy Caz Claudico. The Council on Disability advises and aids the governor, state agencies, and the public on policy and the administration of programs and services for people with disabilities in Minnesota.

The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) works collaboratively with the Centers for Independent Living to create, monitor, review, and evaluate the activities of the SILC and its partners.

The Governor’s Council on an Age-Friendly Minnesota has the following members: Chairman Faron Jackson, St. Cass Lake; Diana Lopez, Alexandria and Saint Cloud; Mohamed Mounsea-Ahlf of Woodbury, return to the council. The Governor’s Council on an Age-Friendly Minnesota works to elevate the voice of older adults in developing the vision and action plan for an age-friendly state.

The council also works to engage with community, identify opportunities for and barriers to collaboration and coordination among services and state agencies, promote equity and make progress towards equitable outcomes, and catalyze age-friendly work at the local level.

The Ombudsman Committee for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities has new and returning members. Robert Haight, St Peter was reappointed, Haight is a member of the medical review subcommittee, as a fellow reappointed Jennifer Olson, Golden Valley. New member is Angelique Quinn Strobl, Ramsey, who will also serve on the committee’s medical review subcommittee.

The Ombudsman Committee for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities advises and assists the ombudsman in developing policies, plans, and recommendations to benefit persons with mental illness, developmental disabilities, chemical dependency, and other disabilities.

Grants are awarded

The Minnesota Historical Society is pleased to announce the newest recipients of 42 Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Small Grants ($10,000 or less), totaling $35,452 in 23 counties.

Smalls grants are awarded quarterly to help nonprofits, educational organizations, government units and federally recognized tribes to preserve and share Minnesota history. Two small grants have ties to disabilities.

PACER Center, Minneapolis, received $9,655 to hire a qualified consultant to conduct primary source research on the history of PACER Center, Inc., from its founding in 1976 to the present.

Tower-Soudan Historical Society, Tower, received $1,500 to support public accessibility at the 1895 Tower Fire Hall and better comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
Chautauqua

Monday – Friday 6 am


Past is Prologue*

Monday – Friday 11 am

Not the Man She Married, All That Power rebroadcast, nonfiction by Armos Bahadur, 2019. The most powerful person we always elected our officials or civic leaders, but instead are the influential figures who wield control from the shadows. Read by Tom Speich. Eight broadcasts; begins Wed, May 4.

Sensational! The Hidden History of America’s ‘Got Talent Reporters*, nonfiction by Kim Todt, 2021. In the waning years of the 20th century, women journalists across the U.S. risked reputation and their own safety to expose the hazardous and inspiring work that many Americans lived and worked. Read by Carol McPherson. 14 broadcasts; begins Mon, May 16.

Bookworm*

Monday – Friday 12 noon

Bowlaway rebroadcast, fiction by Elizabeth McCracken, 2019. At the turn of the 20th century, a mysterious woman opens a bowling alley in a small Massachusetts town and provokes the community for decades to come. Read by Don Lee. 12 broadcasts; begins Mon, May 2.

Outlawed fiction by Anna North, 2021. The crucible meets True Grit in this riveting adventure story of a fugitive girl, a mysterious gang of robbers, and their dangerous mission to transform the Western frontier. Read by Bird Lindsog. 10 broadcasts; begins Wed, May 18.

The Writer’s Voice*

Monday – Friday 1 pm

Year of the Monkey rebroadcast, nonfiction by Patti Smith, 2019. Musician and author Patti Smith tells the story of the “year of the monkey,” when she hitchhiked across the U.S. Read by Edy Elliott. Five broadcasts; begins Thu, May 12.

Days Like Smoke, nonfiction by Jon Hasse1, 2016. Beloved Minnesota novelist Hassel left the manuscript for one important story unfinished when he died. Read by Scott Neamy. These are his memories of his youth in rural Minnesota during the 1930s and 1940s. Read by Carol McPherson. Five broadcasts; begins Thu, May 12.

Orwell’s Roses, nonfiction by Rebecca Solnit, 2007. A reflection on George Orwell’s passionate gardening and the way that his involvement with plants and the natural world illuminates his other commitments. Read by Lannoo Neeles. 10 broadcasts; begins Thu, May 12.

Choice Reading*

Monday – Thursday 2 pm

Late in the Day rebroadcast, fiction by Tessa Hadley, 2019. The 32-year bond between two couples comes apart when a group of friends dies unexpectedly. Read by Judy Woodward. Nine broadcasts; begins Mon, May 2. – L

Are We There Yet? Fiction by Kathleen West, 2021. Alice Sullivan feels like she’s finally found her groove in middle age, but it only takes one moment for her perfectionist nature to unravel. Among fake Instagram pages and long-buried family secrets, one suburban motherACHNURHS to find herself. Read by Pat Muir. 13 broadcasts; begins Mon, May 16.

Afternoon Report*

Monday – Friday 4 pm


We’re Still Here, nonfiction by Jennifer M. Silva, 2021. The economy has brutal to American workers for several decades. Sommers dissects this reality and widespread disenfranchisement of workingclass people in Pennsylvania’s coal region. Read by Jon Lee. 10 broadcasts; begins Tue, May 17.

Profit and Punishment, nonfiction by Tony Messenger, 2021. As a journalist, Messenger exposes injustice that is agonizing and infurating in its mundane cruelness. A novel of the rights and dignity of some of the most vulnerable Americans. Read by Michele Potts. Eight broadcasts; begins Tue, May 31.

Night Journey

Monday – Thursday 7 pm

The Poisoned Paw, fiction by Peggy Briggs, 2011. A woman, fleeing from vacation only to discover that his estranged wife is dead and that he’s the main suspect. Read by Jack Rossmann. Ten broadcasts; begins Mon, May 2.

He, Transistor, fiction by Hannah Morrissey, 2021. A police transitcom believes that her adoptee could be her only ticket out of the frozen helicopter of Wisconsin’s most crime-ridden city, but her life isn’t exactly brimming with inspiration until she begins...
Can Do Canines hits milestone

Can Do Canines has reached a milestone, certifying its 800th assistance dog team. Carden Olson, who has moved to Chicago, was the 800th recipient, including with mobility assist Dog Viggo, a three-year-old black Labrador Retriever.

"I went from Chicago, the city I'm trying to move out of my house and I'm in graduate school, so I'm living on my own doing a lot more. I realized I wanted to help me feel so much safer and give me more stability," Olson said. Viggo performs the six tasks of skills training, including tugging off socks and slippers, retrieving items, closing drawers, turning on a light, assisting with laundry and pressing access buttons and more.

Carden Olson and mobility assist Dog Viggo

While he wouldn't use Viggo in this way, Viggo already has a job. Olson would depend on the support and confidence his sweet counterpart offers to introduce others to similar experiences. He said, "I'm really interested in doing things for other people, especially people with disabilities and using animal-assisted therapy as a way to interfere with trauma, like medical trauma. Dogs have always been therapeutic presence in my life, and I feel like having a certified community could benefit from that too."

The Viggo-Olson team was celebrated at a gala ceremony earlier this spring. Eleventh other teams also graduated.

Graduations are held three times each year. In 2021, Can Do Canines certified 41 teams. This year, the organization is on track to certify at least 50. The first team for this organization certified in 1988, when two other teams were also certified. For more information about Can Do animals, visit candocanines.org.

Several members were reappointed to the Minnesota Council on Disability. Mercy McPhee, Grand Rapids, Minnesota; Marshall, Jennifer Foley, St. Cloud; and Nichole Villavicencio, Maplewood, were all reappointed. Villavicencio was reappointed as council chair.

Wingspan leadership

Wingspan Life Resources is celebrating 49 years of serving adults with developmental and mental disabilities in the greater Twin Cities area. Executive Director Therese Davis is celebrating a milestone of 40 years, with 45 years of service to Wingspan.

Davis marked the milestone on April 27. She was also honored recently as a Minnesota Vikings Health Care Heroes feted by Minnesota Vikings, Paul Business Journal. Davis will write the publication’s June cover story at the organization’s annual Gala and be honored at a June event.

May be My Health Awareness Month

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) also is celebrating the month, with its chapters and other organizations involved in community education about mental illness, including creating awareness that effective treatments are available and that people can and do recover.

NAMI will offer free online events all month including classes, panels and a talk. For a full listing of all events, visit naminow.org.

NAMI Minnesota is invited to attend to learn more about mental health from experts and to sign up for any of these free events, classes or workshops. The website includes information about managing stress, receiving emotional support, understanding mental health conditions and much more. CEUs for social workers are offered for some events.

Online events are available for people in and out of state and in-person peer support groups for adults and young adults living with a mental illness. NAMI also provides one-on-one counseling and support for children and teens, and African-American mental health advocacy.

You are not alone. To join NAMI Minnesota for any of these free events, classes or workshops, please go to naminow.org or call 651-645-2498.

Can Do Canines open house

Potential clients, volunteers, or anyone with an interest in supporting the organization is invited to attend to learn how an assistance dog changes the life of a person with a disability. Through a self-guided tour, attendees will be able to watch a trainer working with an assistance dog, talk with a Puppy Program volunteer and volunteer staff members, pose questions and get answers about the application process, and meet graduates from each of the five types of areas Can Do Canines trains dogs in: hearing, mobility, seizure, diabetes and childhood autism.

Pre-registration is not required: Noon-2 p.m., Sat. May 21 at its Can Do Canines campus, 9440 Science Center Drive, New Hope. For info, visit www.candocanines.org.

Conferences

Free bipolar symposium

NAMI Minnesota and M Health Fairview host a bipolar symposium 1-3 p.m. Thu., May 5, at University of Minnesota’s Cowles Auditorium, 301 19th Ave. S., Mpls. The free event will feature two presentations and can be joined either in person or online. The featured speakers include a distinguished professor of psychiatry and endowed chair in early onset bipolar disease at the University of Pittsburgh, who will present on controversies in the diagnosis and course of early bipolar disorder. Professor Sue Cotton, Dr. Arvin Ribeck and Dr. Craig Johnson, who is the Early Psychosis Prevention and Intervention Center at the University of Minnesota, Australia, will present on their early stage bipolar disorder program. The 2022 Bipolar Symposium is in memory of Linda Stein Tangel-Wey-Steinberg, who was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and died in 2020.

Open Flow Forum

The Artists with Disabilities Alliance meets via Zoom 7-9 p.m. Upcoming events will feature artists with disabilities and supporters to share visual art, writing, music, theater and other creative expressions.

Facilitators are Tara Immon, Kip Shane and Springboard for the Arts. The gathering is free and open to all. For more information or someone needing special accommodations should contact Andy Sturdevant at Springboard for the Arts. Funding is available for access needs. For info, call 651-294-0907, resources@ springboardforthearts.org.

Enjoy!

Opportunity Partners Gala

Annual gala at 5:30 p.m. Sat., May 14 is an in-person event, with a free livestream for those who wish to attend virtually. The gala will be held at the Opportunity Partners-Koch Campus, 5500 Opportunity Dr. in Apple Valley. The gala’s evening’s emcee will be Ian Leonard, chief meteorologist at FOX 5. Leonard is a tireless supporter of the disability community and Special Olympics Minnesota. Events start with a reception and silent auction, followed by a 7 p.m. dinner, program, Fund-an-Opportunity and live auction with Glen Fladeboe. It is the nonprofit’s largest fundraising event of the year. For more information about Can Do Canines, visit candocanines.org.

Enjoy!

RADIO TALKING BOOK
From page 10

to experience mysterious symptoms that doctors find un-diagnosable. Read by Holly Wynn

Eighth Grade

May 23.

RTB After Hours

7 p.m.

The One Real Thing rebroadcast, fiction by Samantha Young. 2016. A doctor in a woman’s prison goes about her business, including with love letters and sets out to a small town to deliver them. Read by Anne Obst. 12

broadcasts; begins Mon., May 2 - 1, 5, 8

The Forbidden Orchid rebroadcast, fiction by Peng Shepherd. 2018. The adventures of a British girl in 1861 China, hunting for the orchid that will save her family. Read by Lyndie Kayser. 12 broadcasts; begins Wed., May 18 - 5

Weekend Program Books
Your Personal World, 1 p.m. Sat., presents How Healing Works by Wayne Dyer, M.D.; read by Beverly Burchett; as well as Feel Good by Norman Vincent Peale, read by Andrew Bell. 6

RATED R, 11 p.m. Sat., presents American Gospel by Liz Enger, read by Scott Mathis.

For the Younger Set, 11 a.m. Sun., presents The Museum of Us by Tara Wilson Reed, read by Esme Smith. 5

Poetic Reflections, noon Sun., presents The Poetry Remedy by William Sieghart, read by Such Coly. 3

The Great North, 4 p.m. Sun., presents Wild and Rare by Adam Regn Arvidson, read by Andrea Bell. 5

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ADA 32
Americans with Disabilities Act

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