

Minnesota Community Foundation – The Saint Paul Foundation – Fall 2010

# MNSIGHTS

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Because things are  
the way they are,  
things will not stay  
the way they are.

– BERTOLT BRECHT

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**3.1 BILLION** In 2009, 22.8 million baby boomers dedicated **3.1 billion** hours of service to communities across the country, a number that is expected to grow as more boomers enter retirement. On pages 4 and 5, you'll see how the Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration is helping nonprofits engage with these talented volunteers.

## Coming Together, Moving Forward

You need to spend only a few minutes with U.S. Census Bureau data to see that we Minnesotans are a very different group than we were just a few years ago. Our state is changing quickly as our population grows older and more diverse, and our approach to philanthropy needs to change right along with it. In this issue, you will read about how the Foundations are helping one organization better serve its evolving client groups, supporting nonprofits as they learn to engage baby boomers as volunteers, facilitating statewide conversations about race, and encouraging new ways to close the school achievement gap. The title of the Foundations' most recent annual report, "Coming Together, Moving Forward," could serve equally well as a slogan for our state—and as a reminder that the only way we will navigate significant change successfully is to do it in partnership.



**Carleen K. Rhodes**, President and CEO



### SAFETY NET FOR VETS

More than 400,000 Minnesotans have served in

the military—and approximately 4,000 of them are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless this year. On page 3, read about how the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans is helping to serve two fast-growing groups of clients: Vietnam-era veterans whose need for services is increasing as they age and younger veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

**CLOSING THE GAP** The 10,000 Minnesota high-school students who drop out every year severely limit their earning power—and cost the state economy more than \$10 billion over their lifetimes. On pages 6 and 7, read about research by the public-policy center Growth & Justice on how we can close the educational achievement gap and enable more Minnesotans to prosper.

**FIND US ONLINE** We invite you to connect with us online. Find the Foundations at [www.mncommunityfoundation.org](http://www.mncommunityfoundation.org) and [www.saintpaulfoundation.org](http://www.saintpaulfoundation.org).

 [www.facebook.com/twofoundations](http://www.facebook.com/twofoundations)

 [www.twitter.com/twofoundations](http://www.twitter.com/twofoundations)

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# Serving Those Who Have Served Us

The challenges facing Minnesota's only statewide nonprofit devoted to helping military veterans in crisis provide one snapshot of how our demographics are evolving. Since 1992, the Saint Paul-based Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) has helped veterans who need housing, employment and legal assistance. Historically, MACV has served mostly male veterans age 45 and older—but now, says MACV Executive Director Kathleen Vitalis, "it's a whole different game. We're serving a more diverse population that ranges in age from 18 to 92, and the number of clients we serve has increased nearly 60 percent since 2007."

Most of MACV's clients now fall into two quickly growing groups: Vietnam-era veterans who continue to experience physical and mental health challenges as they age, and veterans of the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan who need assistance with the issues faced by a younger population. Grants from The Saint Paul Foundation's Management Improvement Fund are helping MACV provide staff leadership training, expand its board of directors to better address the needs of its changing clientele and increase awareness of veterans' issues through community outreach.

## **VIETNAM-ERA VETS: HELP IN FACING THE PAST**

All veterans have earned benefits that the Veterans Administration (VA) provides—but, Vitalis says, many Vietnam-era veterans never pursued their benefits because of the way they were treated when they returned home, and many have remained reluctant to contact the VA for help. "As more and more of these veterans reach retirement age, many who have held it together for years are finally confronting issues that range from mild depression to post-traumatic stress disorder," she explains. "MACV helps veterans who aren't comfortable contacting the VA directly by providing referrals so they can access the services to which they're entitled."

One key to MACV's success is its collaboration with government and nonprofit agencies to ensure that it does not duplicate services already provided elsewhere. From regional offices in the Twin Cities, Duluth and Mankato, staff members connect veterans with county

Veterans Service Officers who can help them access the benefits they have earned. Also central to the MACV mission is providing direct support, like transitional housing, when veterans and their families are endangered by gaps in services related to housing, employment and legal issues. In 2009, MACV assisted 840 veterans and their families who were homeless or experiencing crises that could lead to homelessness.

## **IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETS: NEW KINDS OF NEEDS**

While Vietnam-era veterans made up the largest share of MACV clients for the organization's first dozen years, Vitalis says that she and her staff are now serving an increasing number of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, 12 to 15 percent of whom are women and 30 percent of whom have children. To serve them effectively, MACV staff members have had to educate themselves about a wider range of services, including affordable child-care resources and legal assistance with child-support issues.

"The Saint Paul Foundation grants have helped MACV do that and more," Vitalis says. "The grants have allowed us to take the time to focus on organizational development issues that might otherwise get overshadowed by the criticality of the work we do. Staff and board development and community outreach and awareness are just as crucial—because when we work as effectively as we can, we better support the veterans we're here to serve."

 **Log on to Learn More** [www.mac-v.org](http://www.mac-v.org)

Minnesota's population demographics have changed considerably over the last century—and they are changing even more rapidly now. One hundred years ago, the population was more than 99 percent white; by 2030, 25 percent of Minnesotans will be people of color. In 1910, 4 percent of our population was 65 and older; by 2030, more than 24 percent will fit that range. **As our state's population changes, our approaches to everything from volunteerism to race to education need to change too.**

# The Changing Face of Minnesota

Engaging a graying—and growing—volunteer force

**FROM NOW UNTIL 2030**, according to the Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota will be aging like never before. As the first wave of baby boomers hits retirement age, the population of Minnesotans 65 and over has become our fastest-growing age group and will make up 24 percent of the state's population within 20 years.

This demographic trend is one that nonprofit organizations are watching closely—not only because an aging population may need more human services, but also because it represents the largest pool of potential volunteers in our nation's history. Corporation for National and Community Service research shows that baby boomers have the highest volunteer rate of any age group, and they volunteer more than

past generations did at the same age. At the same time, says Mary Quirk of the Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration (MAVA), boomers want different things from the volunteer experience than traditional volunteers.

"It's extremely important to baby boomers to see the impact of their volunteerism right away," she says. "Boomers don't volunteer simply because 'it's a good thing to do' or an organization says it needs help; they really want to see the difference they make right away." This means that most boomers want to spend time with nonprofit staff to figure out the best way their talents can be used. "Traditional volunteering often meant that you signed up to volunteer and the nonprofit slotted you wherever

they needed help,” Quirk explains. “Boomers are much more likely to want to use their specific skills, and to put them to work in project leadership roles,” developing partnerships that can be incredibly fruitful for both nonprofits and volunteers—but that can also be very time-intensive for nonprofits whose staffers are stretched thin in these difficult economic times.

Giving nonprofit staff the tools they need to attract baby-boomer volunteers and maximize their contributions is one of the goals of MAVA’s Advanced Leadership in Volunteerism program, which trains nonprofit staff in how to engage most effectively with volunteers. The Saint Paul Foundation is supporting the program (which also trains nonprofits in how to engage communities of color in volunteerism) for the third consecutive year in the belief that

enabling Minnesota nonprofits to access our state’s extraordinary pool of social and human capital will benefit residents.

MAVA has developed a set of 12 best practices for nonprofits to use in engaging baby-boomer volunteers as well as younger volunteers, who say that they want many of the same things from the volunteer experience. Suggestions include focusing volunteer interviews on learning the prospective volunteer’s passions, offering a wide range of volunteer opportunities in all aspects of the organization’s operations, and moving more volunteers into project leadership roles. “These ideas will inevitably take some time for organizations to understand and implement,” Quirk says, “but the key is to invest that time up front in order to reap the considerable benefits.” •

## Volunteer Rates

Measured at ages 46–57

SOURCE: Corporation for National & Community Service



25.3%

The Greatest Generation

(born 1910–1930)



23.2%

The Silent Generation

(born 1931–1945)



30.9%

The Baby Boomers

(born 1946–1964)

## Expanding the conversation about race

**HOW DO WE TALK** honestly about race and work toward racial equity? That question carries new urgency as the racial makeup of Minnesota changes. The Minnesota State Demographic Center’s 2009 projections say that all regions of the state will become more racially and ethnically diverse over the next 25 years. The numbers of Latino, African-American and Asian-American Minnesotans are projected to more than double, while the white population is projected to grow much more slowly and will actually decline in some parts of the state.

The Saint Paul Foundation’s Facing Race initiative aims to get Minnesotans talking about how members of all communities can work together to create more equitable, just and open regions in which everyone feels safe, valued and respected. After five successful years facilitating such conversations in the East Metro, Facing Race is now expanding statewide thanks to a \$1.8 million “America Healing” grant from the Michigan-based W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Facing Race grew out of a 2004 study by The Saint Paul Foundation on public attitudes toward and experiences with racism in Dakota, Ramsey and Washington counties. The results were sobering: all groups reported some discomfort around people of other races, and more than 40 percent said that people of other races do not want to get to know them because of their race. Nearly one out

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of five people said they sometimes feel guilty or anxious about their beliefs about people from other races. And just 60 percent of people felt comfortable speaking out in defense of a victim of racism.

The survey showed that racism is alive and well, and it also revealed that many Minnesotans want to discuss the issue. With the help of community members, the Foundation launched Facing Race as a way for people and organizations to discuss racism—and take action to end it. More than 5,000 East Metro residents have taken part in dialogues that use the discussion tools, “New Conversations About Race and Racism” and “New Conversations About White Privilege,” developed as part of Facing Race. Now, with the Kellogg Foundation’s support, the Foundation has the resources to take those tools statewide.

Kellogg Foundation staff sees Facing Race as an excellent investment for a number of reasons, says Alice Warner, program officer for racial equity with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. “We saw that Facing Race engages a wide range of populations and works both at the human level and at the level of the policies that reinforce structural racism,” she explains. “It’s also clear that Facing Race builds successfully on The Saint Paul Foundation’s strong relationships with nonprofits and other funders.” Important, too, is the knowledge-sharing partnership that is already developing between the foundations. “The fact that we can be co-learners as colleagues in philanthropy is very exciting to us,” she adds. This grant to The Saint Paul Foundation was one of the largest in the Kellogg Foundation’s “America Healing” initiative, which received more than 900 applications for 119 grants.

Part of the Kellogg Foundation grant will be used to take Facing Race dialogue tools and its “train the trainer” curriculum to organizations statewide. Another portion will go into The Saint Paul Foundation’s Management Improvement Fund, which will make grants to help nonprofits across the state re-imagine their work in ways that foster greater equity and reduce racial disparities. To begin that process, the Foundation is bringing nonprofits together to discuss the most effective ways we can help them increase their reach and impact in the area of racial equity. •

## Making smart investments in education

**THE COMBINED EFFECT** of Minnesota’s growing racial diversity and aging population has significant implications for our state’s economic future. Dr. Tom Stinson, Minnesota’s state economist, says that the growth of the state’s labor force is about to slow sharply, with the number of Minnesotans over age 65 surpassing the number of school-age Minnesotans by 2020.

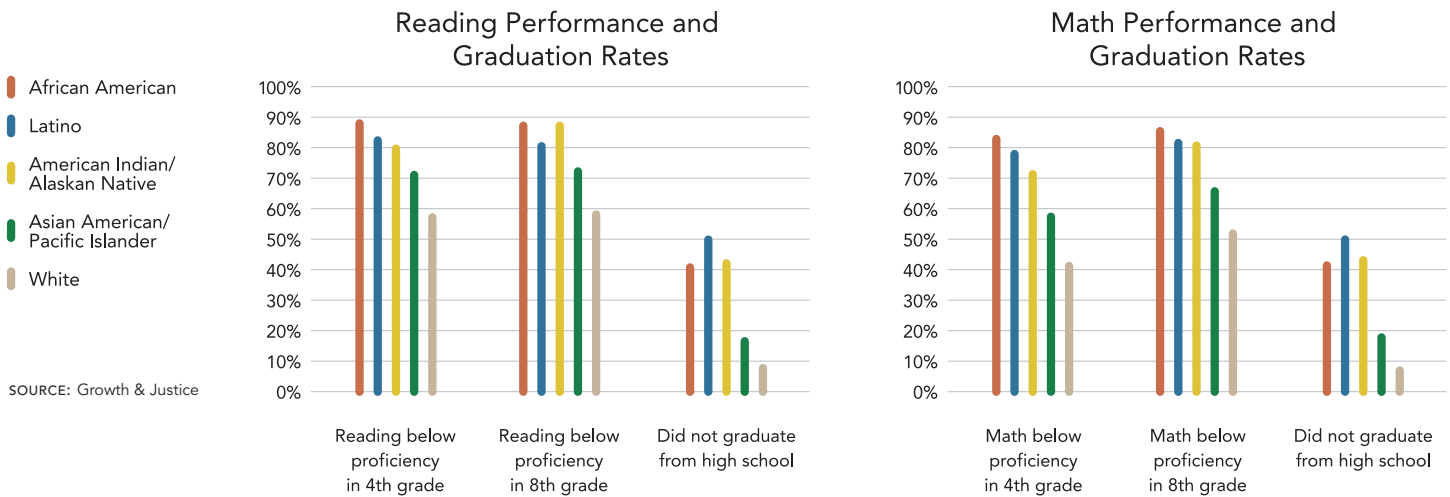
At the same time, Minnesota has one of the nation’s largest educational achievement gaps: at every grade level and in every subject, students of color score lower on proficiency tests than their white counterparts, and only 42 percent of African-American and Hispanic students graduate

from high school in four years. Those statistics, already alarming, become even more so in light of the fact that by 2035, students of color will make up 25 percent of Minnesota’s school population. To ensure that Minnesota has a well-educated, well-prepared work force for the future, closing that gap is critical. “Education has been the key to Minnesota’s productivity and prosperity,” Stinson told an audience of nonprofit leaders in June, adding that future economic growth will depend more and more on increasing productivity, which in turn will depend on the educational investments we make now.

Growth & Justice, a Saint Paul-based public

# Below-Proficiency Performance and Graduation Rates

Based on below-proficiency performance on National Assessment of Educational Progress reading and math skill exams.



policy center, has researched ways to invest Minnesota’s education spending to close the gap and boost Minnesota’s economic well-being. Its “Smart Investments in Minnesota’s Students” initiative commissioned economists and education finance scholars to examine strategies that have been proven to work and lays out a goal for the next decade: boost by 50 percent the number of Minnesota students who finish some form of post-secondary education. To get there, Growth & Justice recommends investing in the whole student from birth through college with evidence-based approaches that have been proven to work cost-effectively. The interventions it recommends include nurse home visits, high-quality early childhood education options, intense monitoring and tutoring for students who begin to fall behind, increased tuition aid and transforming cultures that impede higher-education attainment.

“This economy-building goal of improving post-secondary degree attainment transcends partisanship and ideology,” says Growth & Justice President Dane Smith, whose organization’s 25-member board of directors includes Republicans, Democrats and Independents from business, labor, government and nonprofits. Increasing the number of

students who succeed all the way from pre-K through post-secondary education means that Minnesota companies will see billions more dollars in increased productivity and human creativity every year, and Minnesotans with more education will be better citizens who are healthier and earn more income, Smith says. Growth & Justice research shows a net lifetime difference of about \$1 million per person—in higher income, more revenue for the state and lower public costs—between a post-secondary degree holder and a high-school dropout.

With the help of a grant from The Saint Paul Foundation, Growth & Justice is sharing its research with Minnesota policymakers and educating the public about how best to invest education dollars. Staff members are writing op-ed pieces for statewide publications, hosting roundtable discussions for business and civic leaders and forums for gubernatorial candidates, and using social media and blogging to get the word out and get more Minnesotans focused on building a skilled work force for the future. •



## Log on to Learn More

[www.mavanetwork.org](http://www.mavanetwork.org)

[www.wkkf.org/what-we-support/racial-equity.aspx](http://www.wkkf.org/what-we-support/racial-equity.aspx)

[www.growthandjustice.org](http://www.growthandjustice.org)

## Foundations' News and Notes

### Give to the Max Day 2010

Nonprofits throughout the state will once again ask Minnesotans to display their generosity during the second annual "Give to the Max Day" on **November 16**. During last year's Give to the Max Day, more than 38,000 donors logged on to GiveMN.org\*. The result: more than \$14 million for 3,434 Minnesota nonprofits whose missions range from feeding the hungry to protecting the environment to promoting the arts. This year's goal is to inspire more than 40,000 donors to give in 24 hours; incentives include \$10,000 and \$20,000 grants for the nonprofits that attract the largest number of individual donors. Visit [blog.giveMN.org](http://blog.giveMN.org) for more.

\*GiveMN is an independent 501(c)(3) organization.

### Community Economic Relief Fund Update

Last year, the Foundations responded to the economic downturn by creating the Community Economic Relief Fund for strategic projects proposed and crafted in cooperation with established nonprofits. One recent grant, to the **Emergency & Community Health Outreach (ECHO)** collaborative of public-health and nonprofit groups, has helped thousands learn to navigate the American healthcare system: public-television broadcasts, YouTube videos and websites in English, Hmong, Spanish and Somali have reached nearly 23,000 Minnesotans since July 1. Another recent grant to a joint project between Ramsey County and the City of Minneapolis will help recruit and train 500 disadvantaged Twin Cities residents to work in higher paying renewable-energy-related jobs.

### Community Sharing Fund: Serving the Community for 30 Years

A small financial setback can turn into a major catastrophe for an individual or a family struggling to make ends meet. The Community Sharing Fund is a unique resource that provides small, one-time grants to East Metro residents who need a hand to stabilize their housing or employment so they can retain their economic independence and self-sufficiency. Over the past 30 years, the program has touched more than 60,000 lives by giving **\$8.8 million** in small grants to those who need them most. Help us ensure that thousands more will remain self-sufficient and secure for years to come by giving a gift to the Community Sharing Fund at [www.saintpaulfoundation.org/csf](http://www.saintpaulfoundation.org/csf).

### Grant a Wish Makes Wishes Come True for Nonprofits

Since 1991, the Foundations have asked donor advisors to help put together a very special holiday wish list. Donor advisors recommend nonprofits that have specific wishes grantable for **\$2,500 or less**, and the Foundations compile the recommendations into the Grant a Wish catalog, mailed to all donor advisors. Last year's wishes ranged from an irrigation system for a community garden to a refrigerator for youth cooking classes to assistive listening devices for seniors. Watch for the 2010 Grant a Wish catalog to arrive soon; you can grant a wish online by clicking on "Access Your Accounts" from either Foundation's home page or by mailing in the form enclosed with the catalog.

#### About MNSights

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#### Staff Announcements

##### We welcome:

**Kathy Morgan**, executive assistant, May 17

**Rebekah Peterson**, VISTA project manager, Saint Paul Public Schools Foundation, July 26

**Amy Bellevue**, senior accountant, August 1

**Kara Noran**, research associate, Saint Paul Public Schools Foundation, August 9

**Julie Umhauer**, program assistant, Grants & Program, August 24

**Melissa Pelland**, controller, September 20

##### We congratulate:

**Kathleen Foley**, promoted to finance assistant, April 12

**Lisa Hansen**, promoted to grants administration manager, April 17

**Che Xiong**, promoted to general accountant, August 23