

MN Biz Vision: Asian Kaleidoscope



Features:

Hola Arepa & Hai Hai –
Christina Nguyen

Engagement Activities at
the SEARS Historical Site
Parking Lot

This monthly E-Magazine is published by the Asian American Business Resilience Network to highlight Asian American small businesses' accomplishments.

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Asian American Business Resilience Network

VISION

Envision a new reality that addressing historic inequities, and enhancing culturally/linguistically appropriate ways to thrive through resilience, sustainability, and inclusive growth for all members and the communities where they learn, live, play, and work.

MISSION

AABRN radically accelerates the pace of change by disrupting the status quo; providing resources, training, and support; building bridges across diverse ecosystems; and bringing together public health and business networks, in order to achieve sustainable growth along with an equitable future.

PROGRAMS

- Community Engagement and Translation Assistance, especially public health in nature
- Navigate local, state and national resources
- Access digital tools in advancing members' wellbeing
- Provide training to retain a healthy workforce
- Provide technical assistance in business operation and IT needs



Photo Courtesy: Matt Lien

HOLA AREPA & HAI HAI

CHRISTINA NGUYEN

Interviewed By Meejoo Choi

From DIY Food Truck to Award-Winning Chef: The Story of Christina Nguyen

From the bustling streets of food truck rallies to the glamorous stage of the James Beard Awards, Christina's culinary journey is nothing short of inspiring. On June 10, her dedication and creativity were celebrated as she won the James Beard Award for Best Chef, Midwest. The celebrated chef and owner of Hai Hai and Hola Arepa, Christina's passion for food ignited 13 years ago when she and her partner, Birk Grudem, launched the Hola Arepa food truck. The Hola Arepa food truck gained popularity throughout two to three years, prompting them to expand into a full-fledged restaurant. Their insatiable curiosity and love for Latin American and Southeast Asian cuisines led them on countless travels, immersing themselves in the rich food cultures of these regions.

Throughout her trips to Southeast Asia, Christina was inspired by the bold, tropical flavors of North, Central, and South Vietnam. As she traveled through Southeast Asia, trying new dishes and exploring more, she thought to herself that if she ever opened a Vietnamese restaurant, she would feature a variety of regional and special dishes—more than just pho. This vision led to the opening of Hai Hai. Inspired by their travels, Christina opened Hai Hai, a Southeast Asian restaurant that brings the diverse and exciting flavors of the region to Minnesota. Her mission is clear: to let her guests experience the same joy and discovery she found in her culinary travels, right in the heart of Minnesota.

A Taste of Heritage: Christina's Vietnamese-Inspired Culinary Journey

Christina's journey is a remarkable story of passion deeply influenced by her Vietnamese

heritage. Growing up under the care of her Vietnamese immigrant parents, she was immersed in diverse flavors, with various vegetables, ingredients, spices, and herbs. Her entrepreneurial spirit was kindled at 17 when she co-ran a bubble tea business with her mother. Her cultural heritage profoundly influenced Hai Hai, her Southeast Asian restaurant, which reflects the diverse foods she grew up with and the myriad fresh herbs and fish sauces she cherished. Christina's deep-seated love for food and her desire to delve into Asian culinary traditions shine through in every dish she creates, bringing a taste of her Vietnamese heritage and broader Asian influences to the heart of Minnesota.



Overcoming Inexperience: Christina's Food Truck Beginnings

Christina's biggest challenge was her lack of experience working in a restaurant when she and her partner first started their food truck. At the time, food trucks were not a big thing in Minnesota, so they truly started from zero, creating everything from scratch. They faced numerous struggles, from buying a truck and transforming it into a functional food truck to handling every detail themselves, including menu development, design, purchasing the right equipment, and registering for their first event. Throughout this journey, Christina had to continuously study and learn, adapting as she went along. What helped her most was maintaining faith in herself, drawing on the knowledge she gained from business school about how to control costs and run a business effectively, and staying eager to improve every day. Christina mentioned during the interview that despite the challenges, the experience was incredibly rewarding, as it allowed her to learn and grow, shaping her into the successful restaurateur she is today.

Building Connections: The Power of Community

When Christina first started, she had no knowledge or money, so she and her partner pooled their savings together to buy an old truck and transform it into a food truck. They did much of the work themselves, with help from a friend, DIY-ing many parts by hand.

With food trucks being a new concept in Minnesota at the time, they lacked connections and knowledge about the business. When they launched in downtown Minneapolis during lunchtime, where they met other food truck owners in the neighborhood. One of the neighboring food truck business owners walked into their food truck and gave some advice on structuring the kitchen, optimizing their order and food distribution systems, and maximizing space. She mentioned how helpful it was to have support from other truck owners and they gave them unsolicited advice on how to improve operations out of camaraderie and wanting us to succeed. This support from the community, step-by-step approach, learning from others, and building connections proved crucial in their journey to success.



Photo Courtesy: Tyson Crockett

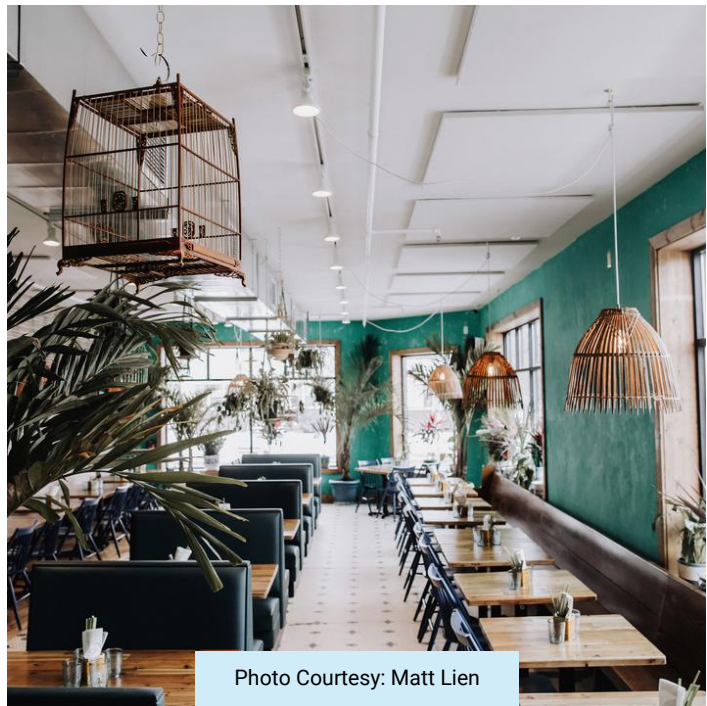


Photo Courtesy: Matt Lien

Starting Small, Growing Big: Christina's Tips for New Restaurateurs

Christina offers invaluable advice for anyone looking to start their own restaurant or food truck. She emphasizes the importance of keeping initial investments low, understanding the temptation to buy everything brand new, but recommends starting with second-hand equipment and incorporating some DIY solutions. This approach helps avoid debt in the crucial first year, as financial stability is key when navigating the uncertainties of a new restaurant business. She advises ensuring a quick turnaround to profitability to avoid accumulating debt, highlighting how starting with second-hand equipment allows for gradual upgrades as the business becomes profitable. From her experience, avoiding debt and not relying on investors provided her and her partner the flexibility to run their business on their terms and make decisions independently. Ultimately, she emphasizes how rewarding the experience is once everything starts to work out.

Home Sellers is located at 2353 Rice St. Suite 118, Saint Paul, MN 55113. For more information, view their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/homesellerinc/>



Preface: The Asian American Business Resilience Network has teamed up with Asian Media Access to co-develop the St. Paul Sears Site, we will publicize a series of articles to highlight our progress.

Series of SEARS Redevelopment - Article #7

LISTENING TO COMMUNITY VOICES: ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AT THE SEARS HISTORICAL SITE PARKING LOT

Asian Media Access (AMA), the Asian American Business Resilience Network (AABRN), and Frogtown/Rondo Black Church Alliance have jointly supported the Asian Street Food Night Market on June 8-9 at the historic Sears parking lot. The night market event showcased an interactive 3D model of the Sears site and a vaccination pop-up for the community. Attendees interacted with the 3D model, rearranging elements to express their visions for utilizing the extensive parking lot area, fostering community engagement, and ensuring community input in the development process.

Participants Shared Key Ideas for SEARS Redevelopment Project

The discussion activity had an impressive turnout, with 63 participants over the two days. The community members were diverse in age, race, gender, and background. Some participants mentioned that they bike or run almost every afternoon around the

Sears site and state capital area. On average, participants spent 10-15 minutes engaging in the discussion and survey, with some staying longer to passionately share their thoughts and perspectives on the project. During the 3D discussion activity for the SEARS redevelopment project, important messages and voices were heard. This article will highlight three main ideas shared by the community.

Transforming the Parking Lot into Diverse Community and Family Areas

First, community members actively voiced their desires for the redesign of the parking lot area into multipurpose, diverse community, and family spaces. Suggestions included dividing the parking lot into smaller, more connected sections and integrating housing, schools, parks, grocery stores, food courts, play areas, offices, and retail spaces while ensuring sufficient parking remains for operational needs. Participants suggested transforming the area with vibrant green spaces, including gardens, water features, fountains, and sculpture gardens inspired by Como Park and Phalen Park. They emphasized the need for amenities such as public seating, restrooms with water filters, small businesses, grocery stores, coffee shops, and affordable housing. Furthermore, the community expressed a desire for family-oriented areas that could host gatherings, after-work hangouts, and other communal activities.



Enhancing Connectivity: Focus on Public Transportation

Secondly, improving connectivity and public transportation emerged as a significant highlight of the community discussion activity. Participants identified current challenges they experienced, such as accessibility issues, particularly the difficulty of connecting from parking lots to the state capitol. While the current public transportation is adequate, communities feel that it is neither well-maintained nor convenient, and safety concerns persist.

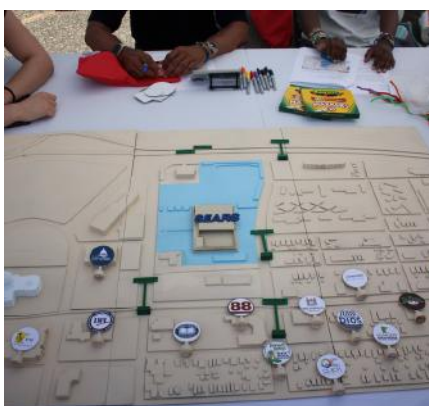
Additionally, there are limited walking and biking trails. To address these issues,

participants suggested enhancing the convenience and accessibility of public transport, improving walkability by creating pedestrian-friendly walkways, and developing more walking paths and biking trails. They also emphasized the need for improved safety measures, including better lighting and security cameras, to ensure a safer environment for all.

Expanding Parks and Recreation Facilities while Ensuring Safety

Lastly, the discussion highlighted the need for more parks, recreation facilities, and outdoor exercise amenities that are accessible to all community members. Currently, there are not enough parks, playgrounds, and sports fields, and the existing ones are not well-maintained, safe, or well-lit. Participants recommended increasing the number of parks and recreational facilities, including soccer fields, dog parks, playgrounds, sports courts, and outdoor gyms. They also suggested expanding green spaces and improving maintenance, as cleanliness is crucial. Emphasizing the importance of safety, they mentioned that they would like to feel safe when using the facilities.

Regarding outdoor exercise facilities, participants noted limited access to amenities such as tracks, tennis courts, and basketball courts. Not all existing facilities are clean, safe, or accessible. To address this, they recommended improving the cleanliness and safety of these areas, ensuring they are well-lit and available for use in the mornings and evenings, and making them affordable for all community members.



Connecting with Community

During the event, we met a delightful couple who were unfamiliar with the project despite living right next to the Sears site and biking or taking daily afternoon walks around the area. They mentioned how they always wondered what would happen to this vast but highly potential space. After learning more about the project, they enthusiastically joined the 3D model discussion. This couple was not the only one who learned about the SEARS redevelopment project through this outreach effort. It was gratifying to meet community members and raise awareness about the project. AMA and AABRN will continue working on communication and engagement through articles, events, social media, and our website to update neighbors' feedback for the Sears Redevelopment project. Visit [our website](#) for more information.



FOSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH: WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON AA AND NHPI SUMMIT RECAP

On July 2nd, the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders hosted the AA and NHPI Economic Summit at Metropolitan State University's St. Paul campus. The Minnesota Economic Summit is the seventh event in a series of regional gatherings that began in Philadelphia in January 2023. The AA and NHPI Economic Summit aimed to link community members and small businesses with critical resources and federal leaders.

The Economic Summit provided a valuable platform for direct engagement with policymakers, fostering economic growth and development within the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities. The morning started with a Federal Resource Fair where each resource table and its representatives provided information about who they are, how they can be helpful, and answered any questions that people had. Attendees were able to learn about a wide range of federal resources and services available to them. The summit was open to the public, with over 300 community members in attendance. Asian American Business Resilience Network participated in the event to share our concerns of lacking the support for AA and NHPI community developers, and to gain knowledge about initiatives and resources for the AA and NHPI community and to connect with other community members.

Inspiring Messages from Leadership for AA and NHPI Community

Opening remarks were led by Krystal Ka'ai, the Executive Director of the White House Initiative and President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. This was followed by keynote speakers and a panel discussion featuring senior Biden-Harris administration officials: U.S. Trade

Representative Ambassador Katherine Tai and U.S. Office of Management and Budget Deputy Director Nani Coloretti.

During the event, opening remarks and the panel discussion underscored key community impacts and important messages for the AA and NHPI community in Minnesota. U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar, the first woman elected to represent Minnesota in the United States Senate, highlighted the growing AA and NHPI population, the expansion of small businesses within this community, and the decreasing unemployment rate in the state. She emphasized her trust in smart immigration reform and noted that the economy in Minnesota is growing and improving every day. Concluding the panel discussion, Erika L. Moritsugu, the Deputy Assistant to the President and AA and NHPI Senior Liaison, asked the panelists to share the key message they wanted to deliver to the community. Ambassador Katherine Tai left a profound message to everyone: "The Biden-Harris administration cares about you. We stand by you. Your success is our success."



Empowering Young Entrepreneurs: Insights from the National ACE and SBA

The remainder of the event featured breakout rooms offering information and resource sessions. Each room had a specific focus, such as: 1) Business Track, providing no-cost counseling and training resources for your business; 2) Community Track, hosting the President's Advisory Commission on AA and NHPI's listening session; and 3) Young Entrepreneurs & Students Track, offering Financially Fearless training.

During the Young Entrepreneurs & Students Track, National ACE and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) led a session aimed at empowering young entrepreneurs and students with resources and information on achieving financial

strength, accessing capital, and managing finances effectively. The session emphasized the critical role of personal financial understanding in starting, acquiring, or expanding small businesses. Participants learned about various resources, grant opportunities, and loans available to new business starters. Additionally, they received training on understanding credit scores, their importance, and how to monitor them. Hannah Hollingshead, Outreach and Marketing Specialist at the U.S. Small Business Administration, shared invaluable insights into building a strong credit. She stressed that 'understanding your credit and establishing a healthy credit profile can significantly enhance your financing options.

If you are interested in starting your own business and are looking for pitching competition opportunities, grants/loans, training sessions, and resources feel free to visit their [website](#) and sign up for their [newsletter](#).



Testimony to the White House

Greetings from John Yang, the Executive Director of the Asian American Business Resilience Network. The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant economic and social impacts on Asian Americans. Two in five respondents reported that anti-Asian racism affected their businesses, impacting all Asian American businesses regardless they are restaurant owners or not. This negative impact extends beyond Asian Americans who own and/or work at these businesses, affecting their families and communities as well.

In Minnesota, Asian Americans face similar challenges, such as: anti-Asian hate, high healthcare costs, and high inflation. Despite these economic pressures, local Asian American business owners have pooled financial resources to establish lending circles, build credits with partners, and provide business technical support, etc. Notable achievements include the successful establishment of Asia Mall by Chinese American members, the opening of Burnsville and Blaine Malls by Vietnamese Americans, and the creation of two Hmong Marketplaces along with the acquisition of Maplewood Mall and Brooklyn Center Plaza by Hmong American business groups. Additionally, the Asian American Business Resilience Network, ourselves in collaboration with Asian Media Access, purchased the former Sears lot near the State Capitol.

These efforts demonstrate the resilience and collaboration within the Asian American communities, but more federal resources and relief are needed to amplify these initiatives. We urge the government to:

- Allow flexibility to better support BIPOC-led development and a group of BIPOC community development investment entities to grow together. Larger capital infusions are needed to move beyond small-scale operations and take on larger risks and returns.
- Adopt a different approach to outreach, underwriting, and risk management for entrepreneurs of color and other business owners with limited collateral and lower credit scores. This approach should focus on cash flow and flexible credit rather than asset-based collateral and borrower equity. "Give people fish, and they eat for a day. Teach people to fish, and they eat for a lifetime. But what's really important is who owns the boat!" We see opportunity in the current crisis to help create pioneers who can be new boat owners.
- Integrate cultural factors into conventional investment systems. Many businesses, especially within Pan Asian and Pan African communities, are hesitant to take on debt without trust. AABRN is well-positioned to incorporate cultural considerations into community development investments. There is an opportunity to diversify ownership of development projects, which are currently dominated by white males. Supporting BIPOC communities with government resources, along with venture capital equity financing, is crucial to avoid replicating existing ownership structures.

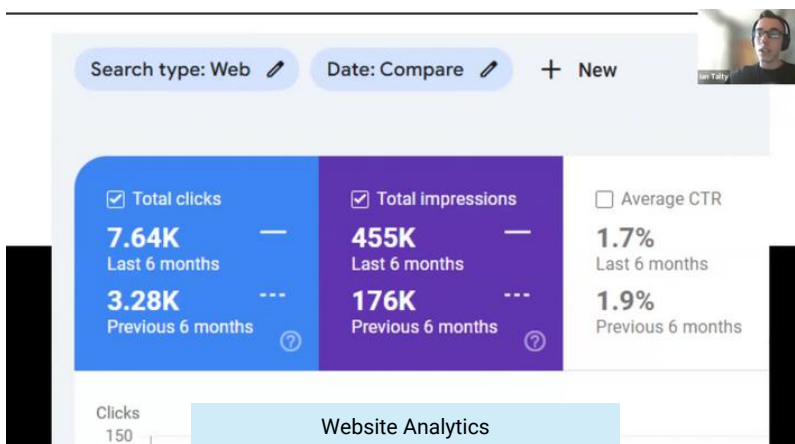
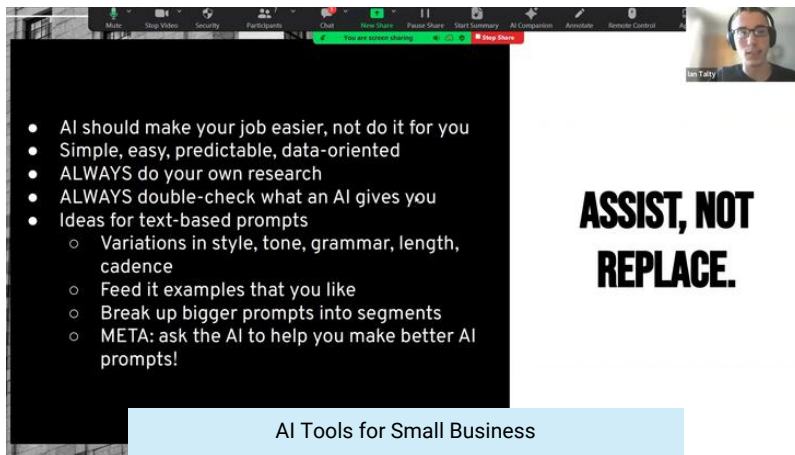
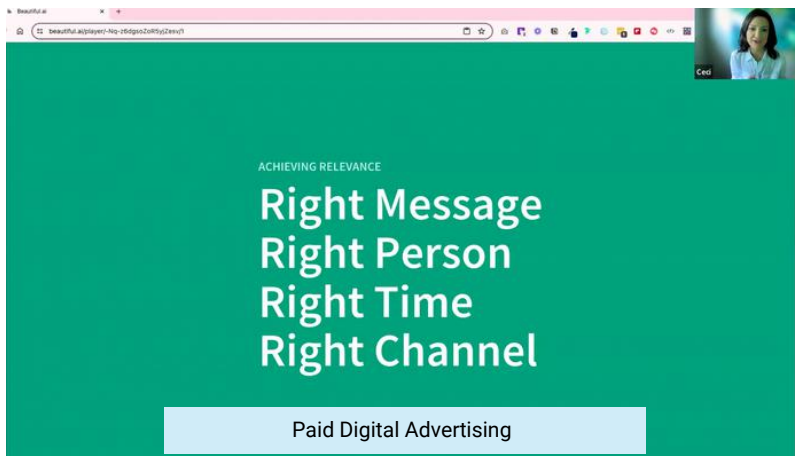
AABRN aims to bridge federal funding with BIPOC developers, leveraging firsthand knowledge and reliable heuristics to ensure the success of community development projects, led by Asian Americans, your favorable consideration would be much appreciated.

Ange Hwang and John Yang
Asian American Business Resilience Network

April 17 ~ June 05

ELEVATE HENNEPIN DIGITAL SOLUTION ONLINE WORKSHOP

We hosted a Small Business Digital Solution Workshop beginning on April 17th. This workshop aims to assist small business owners with expert IT training and support in leveraging technology to expand their market share.



June 08

THE "BETWEEN WATER AND THE CLOUDS" DANCE DRAMA - A SUCCESSFUL COMPLETE STREET DEMO

Asian Media Access has taken the lead to host a Street Performance - "Between the Water and Clouds," at the outdoor Peavey Plaza to increase attention for area Completed Street needs, and to improve the public transportation designs. The Dance Drama showcases grassroots effort to use pop up arts to highlight that STREET should be shared with wider purposes beyond cars and engage with neighbors in physical activities discussion. Additionally, we hosted a Blue Line public transportation "Hope and Concern" survey to further inspire more ideas for the public transportation improvements.





June 08~09

ASIAN STREET FOOD NIGHT MARKET

We have organized and collaborated with our partner - Asian Media Access to support the Asian Street Food Festival by hosting a Vaccine Clinic and a Sears Redevelopment Interactive Demo at the St. Paul Sears Site. We collected insights about the future of Sears, hoping that our development will help connect more with the Frogtown Neighborhood and create a memorable site for the Rondo Community.



June 15

SEARS JUNETEENTH EVENT

Celebrated Juneteenth in the Twin Cities with Frogtown Rondo Black Church Alliance and Asian Media Access at the Sears Parking lot. The event featured local business booths, performances, cultural food truck, an inflatable balloon playground, a vaccination pop-up, and demonstrations of the Sears Site 3D model.



June 21

FORTUNE TALES MUSIC FEST & DANCE COMPETITION

We have supported the Fortune Tales Music Fest in St. Paul Union Depot with partners. The event featured talented Gen-Z musicians and dancers. We have set up an information booth with demonstrations of the Sears Site 3D model, vaccine educational materials, and more.



June 29&30

HMONG FREEDOM FESTIVAL

We participated in the Hmong Freedom Festival at Como Park. Thanks to our colleague Kloud Ly for capturing all the sports activities. From volleyball to the traditional Southeast Asian game Sepak Takraw, the event truly showcased the spirit of freedom for everyone.



July 2

AA AND NHPI ECONOMIC SUMMIT

We participated in the AA and NHPI Economic Summit at Metropolitan State University's St. Paul campus. The AA and NHPI Economic Summit aimed to link community members and small businesses with critical resources and federal leaders. It provided a valuable platform for direct engagement with policymakers, fostering economic growth and development within the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities.



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS FLYERS

Karen Organization of Minnesota has created flyers to support Mental Health Awareness Month to recognize and support our youths. There's help if you need it. Call, text, or chat 988.



[Check out the full images here](#)



BUILD A TRAUMA-INFORMED WORKPLACE CULTURE

According to [Katharine Manning](#), author of *The Empathetic Workplace*, trauma is defined as “an emotional injury that affects performance and well-being.” A trauma-informed organization is “one that operates with an understanding of trauma and its negative effects on the organization’s employees and the communities it serves and works to mitigate those effects.”

Trauma can result from many things, including racism, sexual harassment, bias, a severe illness or injury, death of a loved one, and more. The past few years have been incredibly traumatic for many employees. We’ve all faced trauma resulting from factors such as a global pandemic, racial tension, political upheaval, and more.

Traumatic events can happen within and outside of workplaces. Regardless of where trauma occurs, it has implications for people’s abilities to work. Left unaddressed, trauma may prevent employees from addressing problems, communicating effectively, and generating solutions, all factors that impact organizational functioning.

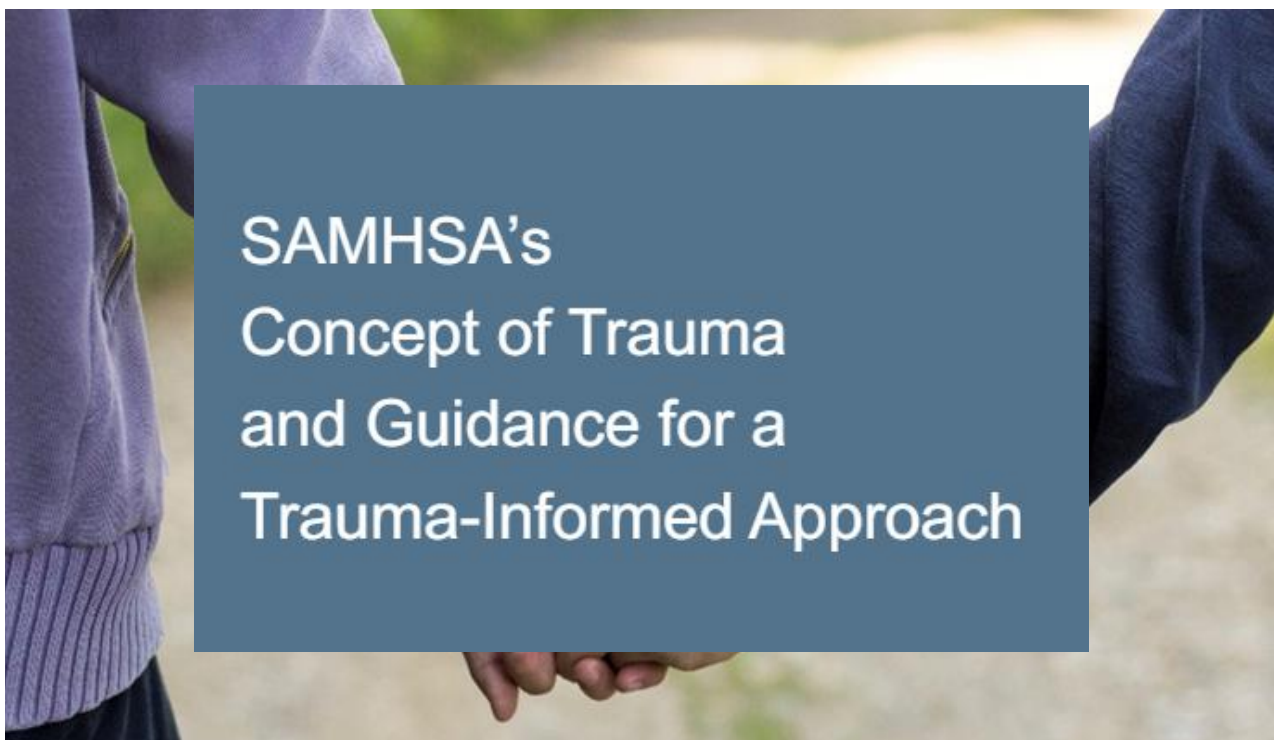
The workplace is changing rapidly, and it has never been more important for organizations to be aware of the potential impact of trauma on their employees. Awareness around mental health and the proven benefits of a supportive work culture also continues to grow. Trauma-informed leadership can result in:

- enhanced team cohesion and trust,
- less workplace conflicts,
- less absenteeism,
- increased productivity, and overall well-being.

Tips for coordinators

Adopting a trauma-informed approach is not accomplished through any single technique or checklist, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). It requires constant attention, caring awareness, sensitivity, and possibly a cultural change at an organizational level. Ongoing internal organizational assessment and quality improvement, as well as engagement with community stakeholders, will help to imbed this approach which can be augmented with organizational development and practice improvement. Consider the following tips:

1. To gauge your organization's readiness to implement a trauma-informed approach, use this [Trauma-Informed Organizational Self-Assessment](#).
2. To learn about the four Rs used to describe a trauma-informed organization, read this resource from the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association \(SAMSHA\)](#).
3. Consult this [Policy Guidance for Trauma-informed Human Resources Practices](#) as a guide to becoming a trauma-informed workplace.
4. Promote mental well-being and raise awareness about trauma through educational campaigns, such as Paths to Positivity. Health@Work recently offered this campaign coordinator training to equip worksite wellness professionals with the tools need to launch the five-week campaign in their workplace. To access the free campaign materials, contact [Kelly Harjes](#).
5. Share the handout "[Lets talk about trauma](#)", to help your employees learn more about trauma and why it's important to talk about.





SDEIS PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

METRO Blue Line Extension

ABOUT

The Metropolitan Council and the Federal Transit Administration have prepared a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the METRO Blue Line Extension Project. This document evaluates the potential social, economic, and environmental benefits and impacts that may occur because of the design, construction, and operation of the Blue Line Extension and outlines potential measures to avoid or reduce those impacts.

The SDEIS is available on the project website at [BlueLineExt.org](https://www.bluelineext.org) and printed to view at the following locations:

- Blue Line Extension Project Office, 6465 Wayzata Blvd., Suite 600, St. Louis Park, MN 55426
- Brooklyn Park Library, 8500 W Broadway, Brooklyn Park, MN 55445
- Rockford Road Library, 6401 N 42nd Ave., Crystal, MN 55427
- North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Ave. N, Minneapolis, MN 55411

UPCOMING VIRTUAL MEETING

Thursday, June 27, 2024
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Visit the project website at [BlueLineExt.org](https://www.bluelineext.org) for the link to join the virtual meeting.



COMMENTING ON THE SDEIS

Comments received during the SDEIS comment period will inform the Supplemental Final EIS and commitments to address impacts. Personal information, if provided, may be published in environmental documents that are publicly circulated. **The SDEIS comment period is open until August 5, 2024.**

OPTIONS FOR PROVIDING COMMENTS

OFFICE HOURS

METRO Blue Line Extension project staff will be hosting office hours to answer questions about the SDEIS and accept written comments at various times and locations throughout the comment period.

Visit [BlueLineExt.org](https://www.bluelineext.org) for office hours and locations.

PROJECT HOTLINE AND EMAIL

- Call the SDEIS project hotline at 612-373-3970 and leave a message to submit a verbal comment.
- Email BlueLineExt@metrotransit.org to provide an emailed comment.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Written and verbal comments will be accepted at anticipated public hearings:

Tuesday, July 16, 2024 from 5–7 p.m.

1256 Penn Ave. N, Minneapolis, MN 55411
(Northpoint Conference Center), Suite 5200 (5th Floor)

» Free parking is available in the ramp.

Tuesday, July 23, 2024 from 10 a.m. – noon

Brooklyn Park Library – Mississippi River Room
8500 W Broadway Ave., Brooklyn Park, MN 55445

PROJECT WEBSITE

Submit comments anytime online at [BlueLineExt.org](https://www.bluelineext.org)



Visit [BlueLineExt.org](https://www.bluelineext.org)



If you need assistance to participate in public meetings or have general accessibility inquiries, please contact **Kaja Vang** at Kaja.Vang@metrotransit.org. Requests for special assistance should be made a minimum of seven business days in advance of the scheduled meeting.

[Learn more](#) about this document and ways to comment.



**Grants and loans helping disadvantaged businesses reach their full potential.
APPLY NOW!**

WHAT IS THE MN PROMISE ACT?

The Providing Resources & Opportunity & Maximizing Investments in Striving Entrepreneurs (PROMISE) Act is a new small business revitalization program that will provide grants and loans to disadvantaged businesses located in certain areas of Minneapolis, Saint Paul and greater-Minnesota.

PROMISE ACT GRANT PROGRAM

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) will oversee the Providing Resources & Opportunity & Maximizing Investments in Striving Entrepreneurs (PROMISE) Act approved by the Minnesota State Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Tim Walz.

This program, through a series of statewide partner organizations, will award grants to eligible businesses in specific communities. A total of \$86,480,000 million will be awarded as grants in multiple rounds.

Grant funds can be used for working capital to support payroll expenses, rent or mortgage payments, utility bills, equipment, and other similar expenses that occur in the regular course of business. [Learn More](#)

Earn your degree
TUITION FREE

That's the **NORTH STAR PROMISE**

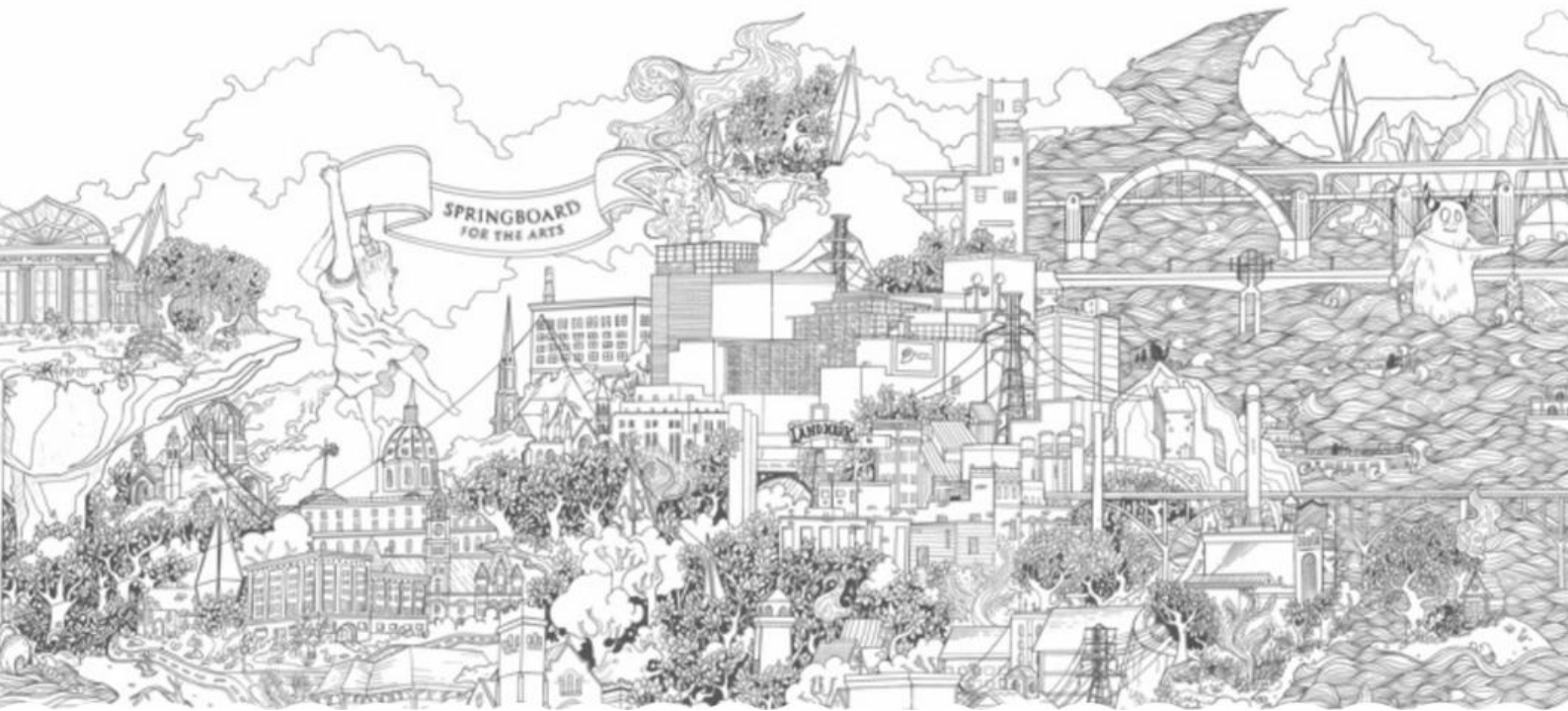


NORTH STAR PROMISE (NSP) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AND EARN YOUR DEGREE FREE

The North Star Promise (NSP) Scholarship program is set to revolutionize higher education in Minnesota, beginning in the fall of 2024. This innovative initiative will provide a tuition and fee-free pathway for eligible Minnesota residents attending participating institutions. As a "last-dollar" program, NSP will cover the remaining costs of tuition and fees after other financial aids like scholarships, grants, stipends, and tuition waivers have been applied. By making college more accessible and affordable, NSP aims to stabilize enrollment at public institutions, drive economic growth by preparing a skilled workforce, and open new educational opportunities for many residents who previously viewed college as unattainable. The program is anticipated to support 15,000-20,000 students in its inaugural year, marking a significant step towards a brighter future for Minnesota.

To qualify for the North Star Promise (NSP) Scholarship program, students must meet specific eligibility criteria. Applicants must be Minnesota residents with a family Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) below \$80,000, as reported on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Minnesota Dream Act Application. Eligible students must attend a Minnesota public higher education institution or Tribal College and must not be in default on any state or federal student loans. Additionally, they need to be enrolled in at least one credit, maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards, and should not already possess a baccalaureate degree, including those obtained internationally. Furthermore, students must be enrolled in a program or course of study that leads to a degree, diploma, or certificate.

Eligible institutions for the North Star Promise (NSP) Scholarship program include all Minnesota public higher education institutions and Tribal Colleges. This encompasses all Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, all University of Minnesota campuses, and all Tribal Colleges. Specifically, the program includes Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, Leech Lake Tribal College, Red Lake Nation College, and White Earth Tribal and Community College. By covering a broad range of institutions, the NSP ensures that students across the state have access to affordable higher education opportunities. Visit the website for more detailed requirements, eligibility, and application process: www.ohe.state.mn.us/northstarpromise. If you have any questions, please contact them at NorthStarPromise.OHE@state.mn.us.



Springboard for the Arts Calendar of Events - Professional Development

- July 16, 2024 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm - Art-Train Individual Artist Training
- July 17, 2024 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm - Minnesota Sales and Use Tax for Springboard for the Arts
- July 23, 2024 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm - Art-Train Agency/Organization Training
- August 2, 2024 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm - Work of Art: Recordkeeping – Madison Art and Innovation Center (Madison, MN)
- August 2, 2024
- 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm - Work of Art: Career Planning – Art of the Lakes (Battle Lake, MN)
- August 6, 2024 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm - Art-Train Individual Artist Training
- August 20, 2024 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm - Art-Train Agency/Organization Training
- September 6, 2024 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm - Work of Art: Portfolio Kit – Art of the Lakes (Battle Lake, MN)

Learn more and register at: <https://springboardforthearts.org/events/>

Tax Tips from the IRS



- [Here's what taxpayers need to know about business related travel deductions](#)
- [Companies who promise to eliminate tax debt sometimes leave taxpayers high and dry](#)
- [Get an Identity Protection PIN.](#)
- [Tax Resources for Members of the Military](#)



JULY
11
12pm~1pm

GREAT Storytelling

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

JULY
17
12pm~1pm

The Power of Networking and Partnerships

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

JULY
23
1pm~2pm

Make Your Brand Memorable

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

JULY
26
12pm~1pm

Practical Tools for Effective Time Management

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)



July

31

2pm~3pm

Ensure User Engagement in a Crowded Market

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

AUG

6

9am~10am

Doing Business with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Troop Support

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

AUG

14

1pm~2pm

Discover Your Unique Superpower

Business Webinar

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

AUG

30

9am~4pm

Boots to Business Reboot

In-Person Business Event

[LEARN MORE >>](#)



Visit Our Website for More Upcoming Events

[OFFICIAL WEBSITE >>](#)



You're invited!

**Hmong Community
Explore Your Parks!**

Saturday, July 13 from 1– 4 p.m.

Centennial Park, 6301 Shingle Creek Pkwy, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430

This event welcomes the Hmong community to Centennial Park in Brooklyn Center to explore opportunities for recreation, walking, biking, and healthy living.

Events and activities include:

- Hmong games, music artists, dance performances, art projects, and more!
- Fun activities for the whole family: Rec on the Go, corn hole, flag football
- Three Rivers Parks archery and activities
- Family-friendly story-time with author Tony Ervy
- Visit the Free Book Buggle
- FREE bike safety tune-ups, and bike activities (bring own bike)
- Hennepin County Library story strolls, free books, Teen Tech Squad, lawn games
- Local organizations tabling
- Health information
- Food trucks!

COVID-19 vaccination clinic

- Vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) for 6 months +
- 65+ eligible for additional booster
- No need to register!
- \$25 Incentive for ages 18+ who receive a vaccine on-site.

For more information about the vaccination clinic, contact:
Aslan Media Access, 612-376-7715



[Learn More >>](#)



SEE YOU AT

**IMAGINE
FROGTOWN & RONDO**

JULY 14 | 11-5PM
CENTRAL VILLAGE PARK

[our streets](#)

[Learn More >>](#)



BIPOC
Entrepreneur
Day 2024
Conference
Program

THURSDAY, JULY 18TH

*Things I wish
I knew as an
Entrepreneur*

VAN VOLUNTEER ACCELERATOR NETWORK

UNIVERSITY OF St. Thomas

[Learn More >>](#)



**THAI SUNDAY MARKET
JULY 7TH - AUGUST 25TH**

[Learn More >>](#)

37th PHILIPPINE DAY

Saturday | July 20, 2024
3-8 PM
Ojibway Park
Woodbury, MN

Enjoy parade, food, crafts, music, dance, games & prizes & the first ever Little Miss Philippine Day Pageant!

FOR MORE INFO
philippineday.csfamn.org

AERO ASSEMBLIES INC. **CORAL** **BEST BUY**

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IAM
 INDIA ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA

www.iamn.org
 IndiaAssociationofMinnesota
 @iamnorg

FREE EVENT!

India FEST

Experience India in a day!

Date : Saturday, August 17th, 2024
 Time : 11am to 9pm
 Place: State Capitol Grounds, St Paul, MN

- Traditional dance forms
- Indian Food
- Bollywood dances
- Indian Bazaar
- DJ Night
- Fun Activities and MORE!

[Learn More >>](#)

ASIAN STREET FOOD NIGHT MARKET

TALENT SHOW . FOOD . ARTS . BEER GARDEN
LION DANCE

FREE ENTRY TO THE EVENT

AUG 17TH - 18TH 2024

TIME:
 3PM-11PM AUG 17TH
 1PM-10PM AUG 18TH

FOR VENDER APPLICATIONS, VOLUNTEERS, & ARTIST
 PLEASE CONTACT KA VANG AT 651-302-6218

LOCATION:
 425 RICE ST SAINT PAUL, MN 55103

Looking For a Real Estate expert?

DR DIVERSIFIED REALTY

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