

Summer 2024

Mark Your Calendars!

**2025 Annual
Conference & Expo**

March 26-28
Minneapolis Convention Center

**2025 Virtual
Conference**

Live webinars Thursdays in April
and on-demand content through
June

“All (in) Together”

The important work of change-making is a collective effort. This year’s conference theme, *All (in) Together*, is focused on the importance of being *all in*—committing to your role in change-making—and being *all together*—collaborating with others in health and human services (and beyond!) to lead the way forward and make meaningful and lasting impact.

Attendee and sponsor registration opens at www.mnssa.org on December 6!

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 **MSSA** Minnesota Social
Service Association

The VOICE

Tell Us Your Advocacy Issues!

MSSA advocates at the Capitol for the issues YOU care about; your ideas are important to us. MSSA needs to hear from members year-round about what is, and is not, working in Minnesota’s health and human services.

We especially want to hear from you now! MSSA will be creating our agenda for the 2025 legislative session through the end of October; now is the time to share your ideas to influence the issues that MSSA will advocate on in the coming year.

ADVOCACY, continues on page 2.



ADVOCACY, continued from page 1.

Sharing your advocacy idea is easy!

Simply fill out our online form found at <https://bit.ly/MSSAPubPolicyAdvocacy>

As a health and human services professional, you have valuable knowledge! You don't need to be a policy expert to submit an idea—just tell us what you experience that is or is not working.

Every issue that MSSA advocates for comes directly from our members.

MSSA has worked with members to create new programs, change unjust policies, raise rates, and more. We can't do it without your help. What improvements to Minnesota's health and human services should be made?

After you submit your advocacy idea, check out our other ways to get involved in advocacy:

- **Sign up for MSSA's Action Alerts:**
Text "MSSA" to 52886
- **MSSA Region 3 Legislative Listening Session:**
October 8, 2024 (In-person, Duluth)
- **Save the Date for MSSA's Day at the Capitol:**
February 11, 2025 (In-person, St. Paul)
- **Consider joining MSSA's Public Policy and Advocacy Committee:**
Contact Michelle at msancartier@mnssa.org for more information. ■

Share Your Advocacy Idea!



bit.ly/MSSAPubPolicyAdvocacy

Lifeworks

A nonprofit serving people with disabilities

LIFEWORKS HAS IMMEDIATE OPENINGS FOR 245D BASIC SERVICES:

- Individualized Home Supports without Training
- Respite
- Night Supervision
- Homemaking

Get started today!
lifeworks.org | 1-866-454-2732



Now Seeking Presentations for MSSA's 2025 Annual Conference!

Calling all presenters to share today's trends, tomorrow's ideas, and what's working in health and human services (HHS) with our audience of more than 4,000 professionals and students!

We're looking for dynamic and engaging presenters to bring content inspired by this year's theme, *All (in) Together* to our in-person and virtual conference programs.

Why present?

- **Professional development:** Enhance your public speaking skills and receive free conference registration to earn continuing education hours.
- **Exposure:** Get in front of Minnesota's HHS workforce and build connections to advance your own work.
- **Support HHS in Minnesota:** Share your experience and expertise to improve the health and human services system in our state.

Learn more and submit your presentation at bit.ly/MSSA2025Presentations by September 27! ■



Nurturing and Supportive Family-Style Living

LSS Host Homes match individuals with a disability with licensed adult foster care providers who open their homes to offer personalized attention and support.



651.255.2363
lssmn.org/hosthomes/mssa



Minnesota Families Trust PICS

PICS handles the details of self-directed and licensed services for individuals with disabilities and older adults who receive waiver funds to remain in their own homes and communities.

PICS services:
CDCS | CSG | IHS | Private Pay

Your Choices. Our Support.
picsmn.org/mssa | 651.967.5060

PICS is a subsidiary of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.

Your Artwork at the Center of Our Conference!

We're seeking artists with a connection to health and human services to submit their original artwork inspired by our conference theme, *All (in) Together*. Your creation will serve as the visual centerpiece of the conference, appearing in print and digital materials.

Why submit your art?

- Receive an honorarium of \$800.
- Have your art viewed by tens of thousands of individuals and hundreds of organizations across Minnesota through promotional campaigns.
- Receive complimentary registration for our conference and a 1-year individual membership to MSSA.

Learn more and submit your artwork at bit.ly/MSSA2025Artists by September 13! ■

Congratulations to MSSA Scholarship Recipients!

MSSA scholarships are awarded to college and university students pursuing careers in health and human services. In 2024, MSSA is awarding 22 students scholarships totaling \$80,000.

Children and Families Impact Scholarship

This scholarship, funded by the Sauer Family Foundation, is awarded to BIPOC students interested in careers in preventive services.

The 2024-2025 recipients are:



Roseline Ameyaw
Metro State University

J. Nguyen
Augsburg University



Renee Booth
The College of St. Scholastica



Maychee Mua
Metro State University

Diana Pimentel
Saint Mary's University of Minnesota



Mariah Mirbel Nelson
University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Daniella Torres-Skendi
University of Minnesota Twin Cities



Wonjoon Hwang
University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Samirra Glass
University of Minnesota Duluth



Hilda Cervantes Cardona
University of North Dakota

Diversity Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to students who are passionate about reducing disparities in the health and human services system.

Recipients at the graduate level are:



Natalia Johnson
University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Nisha Narpaul
Saint Mary's University of Minnesota



Chinwenwa Anyamele
Metro State University

Natalie Gasser
Augsburg University



Recipients at the undergraduate level are:



Nathan Alabi
St. Cloud State University

Angie Hurtado Rivera
University of Minnesota Twin Cities



Purvaja Kavuru
University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Graduate Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to graduate students pursuing careers in health and human services.

Recipients for the 2024-2025 academic year are:



Mason Schlieff
University of North Dakota

Faiza Sheikhmohamed
Saint Mary's University
of Minnesota



Allison Joslin
Augsburg University

Undergraduate Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to undergraduate students pursuing careers in health and human services.

Recipients for the 2024-2025 academic year are:

Aparna Thiagarajan
University of Minnesota
Twin Cities



Samantha Smith
Winona State University

The purpose of the MSSA Scholarship Program is to build and support Minnesota's health and human services system through a qualified, committed, and passionate workforce in Minnesota and the greater Midwest.

Applications for the 2025-2026 school year will open on November 1, 2024. For more information, including eligibility criteria, visit www.mnssa.org. ■



LSS Supported Decision-Making, Guardianship Options and Pooled Trust

LSS can act as:

- Conservator
- Guardian
- Health Care Agent
- Personal Representative of the Estate
- Power of Attorney

LSS Trusts

Managing and administering Special and Supplemental Needs Trusts for individuals with disabilities

- Special Needs Pooled Trust
- Supplemental Needs Pooled Trust
- LSS can act as trustee for established Individual Special or Supplemental Needs Trusts

For more information call:

888.806.6844

lssmn.org/MSSA

MSSA Agency Member Spotlight

MSSA spoke with Kallie Wolseth, Marketing Coordinator at MRCI, to learn more about the agency that has been an MSSA member since 2002 (22 years!).



Brief overview of your organization and its mission:

MRCI is a prominent provider of disability services in Minnesota. Our mission is to create innovative and genuine opportunities for people with disabilities or disadvantages at home, at work, and in the community. We are proud to offer Self-Directed Services, Employment Programs, and Day Services.

Within our Self-Directed Services, we operate as a Financial Management Service provider and help participants direct their own care throughout 10 different programs. We offer various Employment Programs that aim to help participants find and maintain gainful employment that suits their interests and individual needs. Day Service programs are offered in three ways: community based, center based, and virtually.

Most of our programs are offered throughout Southern Minnesota and the Twin Cities Metro area, though we do offer some programs in other counties. Please contact us for availability: referrals@mymrci.org.

An organizational highlight or achievement you're proud of:

In 2023, MRCI was ranked the 7th largest civic non-profit organization in Minnesota and had a total economic impact of over \$119 million dollars. We were able to help over 3,000 participants self-direct their care, supported over 900 individuals with their employment journeys, and offered day service programming to more than 300 participants.

What sets your organization apart:

MRCI is a person-centered organization. We aim to help every individual we work with live a happy, healthy, fulfilled life. MRCI takes great pride in being able to offer these programs within our communities. We aim to be as innovative as possible, always striving to improve upon our offerings and offer the highest quality of services across Minnesota. We value the significance of advocacy and have a strong presence in disability advocacy groups and frequently advocate disability needs at a legislative level.

How MSSA members can learn more about your organization:

To learn more about MRCI, please visit www.myMRCI.org (employment & day service programs), www.MRCICDS.org (self-directed & Financial Management Services), or call us at 800.829.7110. ■

A Day in the Life of an MSSA Member

MSSA members come from all parts of Minnesota and work in all areas of the health and human services field. We caught up with MSSA member Rachel to see what a typical day looks like in her work.

Rachel Swenson

Where do you work and what is your job title?

Therapist and Owner,
Rachel Swenson Counseling
in Gaylord, MN.



Overview of your involvement in the HHS field

I am a mental health therapist in private practice in rural Minnesota. I have been working in the health and human services field since 1997. I opened my own private practice in 2022. I primarily work with individuals and families, but I also have the opportunity to collaborate with my clients' team members, which can include county case managers, school social workers, medical doctors, and group home staff.

Typical daily schedule

I see clients for individual therapy and family therapy sessions from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekdays. Therapy sessions last 30, 45, or 60 minutes, depending on their need. Most of my clients come into my office in-person, while some are seen via video telehealth. I usually schedule between 25-30 client appointments per week. I am a one-person operation, so that means that I spend the remaining time being my own receptionist, scheduler, biller, bookkeeper, records department, and office manager. For a typical day, this includes a lot of responding to phone calls and emails from my clients, referral sources, and people seeking services; filing insurance claims; documenting sessions; and writing assessment reports.

UNIFIED WORK
Bridging People & Business

Unified Work, powered by MDI, is the driving force behind our vision of meaningful employment for ALL.



Our holistic approach bridges career training for individuals with disabilities and specialized consulting services for employers.

Our vision is to provide meaningful employment for all people with disabilities.

Looking to get your organization started with our FREE training?

Learn more at UnifiedWork.com



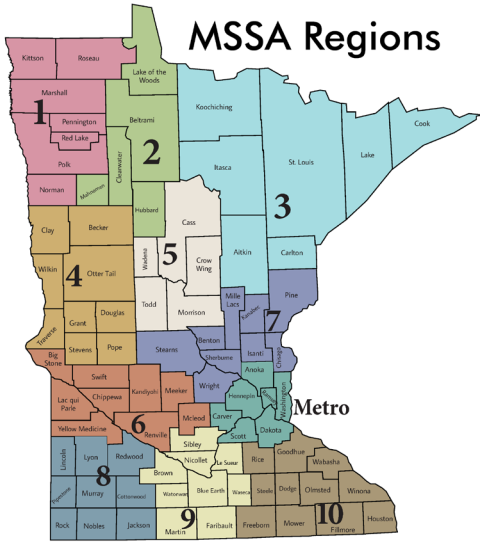
The worst part of my job is that I sometimes have to waste a lot of time on the phone (on-hold) with insurance companies. My favorite part is the actual time spent meeting with my clients. Working for myself in private practice allows me total control over my own schedule and caseload.

What drives your passion for your work?

We go into the health and human services because we want to help people. There are so many great jobs and roles in this field. I believe that people do best when they feel understood and have healthy supportive relationships. As a therapist, I get the privilege of seeing my clients grow, feel, and do better. I love being a part of that process. I live in outstate Minnesota and I see that there is a desperate NEED for therapists in rural communities. My schedule is always full and I always have more people calling. Seeing this demand in my community is what drove me to open my private practice and makes me passionate about this work. ■

125 Charles Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103-2108

Address Service Requested



LOOKING FOR CEUS?

MSSA has you covered!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- SEPT. 19 Region 9 Fall Conference (North Mankato)
- SEPT. 26 Regions 6 & 8 Fall Conference (Redwood Falls)
- OCT. 4 Region 7 Fall Conference (Big Lake)
- OCT. 23 Region 4 Fall Conference (Fergus Falls)
- OCT. 24 Metro Region Fall Conference (St. Paul)



www.mnssa.org