



Minnesota Alliance  
on Problem Gambling

**FY2023**

**MNAPG**

**ANNUAL**

**REPORT**

## To the MNAPG Community,

Fiscal 2023 is well behind us, and I'm happy to share the highlights of another productive and inspiring year.

MNAPG initiated a refresh of its 2018 strategic plan. With the fast-paced changes occurring in the gambling industry, the board of directors reviewed all aspects of the organization and the work we've been doing. It's an opportunity to revisit our mission and our goals, and to ensure our work plans are all in alignment.

Rather than convey our work by numbers, this year we've asked some of our stakeholders to speak directly to some of the services MNAPG offers. Problem gambling treatment providers Lisa Vig Johnson and Amy Dady expressed their appreciation for our continued efforts in connecting treatment providers through monthly calls as well as connecting them to financial advisors who can work directly with them and/or their clients to determine next steps to a healthier relationship with their money. The providers who treat those with gambling addictions and their families deserve our heartfelt gratitude for their work, commitment and passion in helping those who lost their way in their addiction discover healthy ways to enjoy their lives.

I also want to give a shout out to our communications team. We spend a great deal of time discussing and implementing awareness messaging. We use all forms of social media, along with our long-standing relationships with the *Star Tribune* and *The Phoenix Spirit*. Preston Spire and One Simple Plan were once again invaluable partners. Preston Spire helped create our most current public service announcement (PSA) depicting the relationship between gambling addiction and substance use disorder, highlighting the message that gambling addiction is real, and reminding viewers that there's help, it works and it's free. One Simple Plan boosted our presence in local and outstate media, placing opinion pieces and awareness stories. We were also honored to receive the top NCPG affiliate award for best newsletter and website. It was such a joy to have our efforts recognized by our national peers.

We are always humbled by the many encounters we have throughout the year. This further inspires and informs the programs we support and the communications we create to better educate Minnesotans on the risks associated with gambling.

It is a privilege to advocate for those impacted by gambling addiction. We continue to listen, learn and respond to the varied needs. We know there is plenty more to accomplish before we can confidently declare we've reached our goal of fewer Minnesotans experiencing gambling-related harm. It's the goal that keeps us motivated and focused to do all that we can.

Thank you to all of our stakeholders who support our work throughout the year.

With gratitude,



Susan Sheridan Tucker

## MNAPG Mission

The Minnesota Alliance on Problem Gambling improves the lives of those affected by problem gambling through advocacy, education, training and research.

## MNAPG Values

- **Neutrality** – We are neither for nor against legalized gambling.
- **Accuracy** – We strive to ensure that all information we provide is accurate and complete.
- **Compassion** – We recognize that problem gambling does not result from moral failings and that those with a gambling problem are not inherently bad people.
- **Diverse interests** – We believe that the interests of those affected by problem gambling are best served by inviting perspectives from a wide range of people, including those with lived experience, family members, treatment professionals, the gambling industry and other professionals providing services to people with gambling-related problems.
- **Affiliation** – As an affiliate of the National Council on Problem Gambling, our relationship is one of mutual benefit. We have direct access to NCPG's national and international expertise, and we contribute to large-scale policy efforts.

# ELEVATING COMPETENCIES AMONG GAMBLING TREATMENT PROVIDERS

**The need to ensure there's an adequate number of gambling treatment counselors in Minnesota is one thing.**

Ensuring that these counselors have the opportunity to collaborate and learn best practices to be successful is another.

To ensure a level of quality control among counselors, MNAPG subsidizes a state-wide supervisory process whereby a certified gambling treatment counselor in one corner of the state can learn from a colleague in another part. Twice each month, providers gather virtually to meet each other and learn. "It's a chance to network, connect, encourage and be a mentor for new people in the field," says Lisa Vig Johnson, gambling addiction counselor at Soul Solutions Recovery Center and the North Dakota Behavioral Health Division.

**"Newer providers need role models who can let them know about resources and tools to help them, such as videos, books, lectures or PowerPoint presentations"**

says Lisa. Seasoned providers can also help less experienced counselors with specific strategies and approaches when they encounter situations with clients that are challenging to treat effectively.

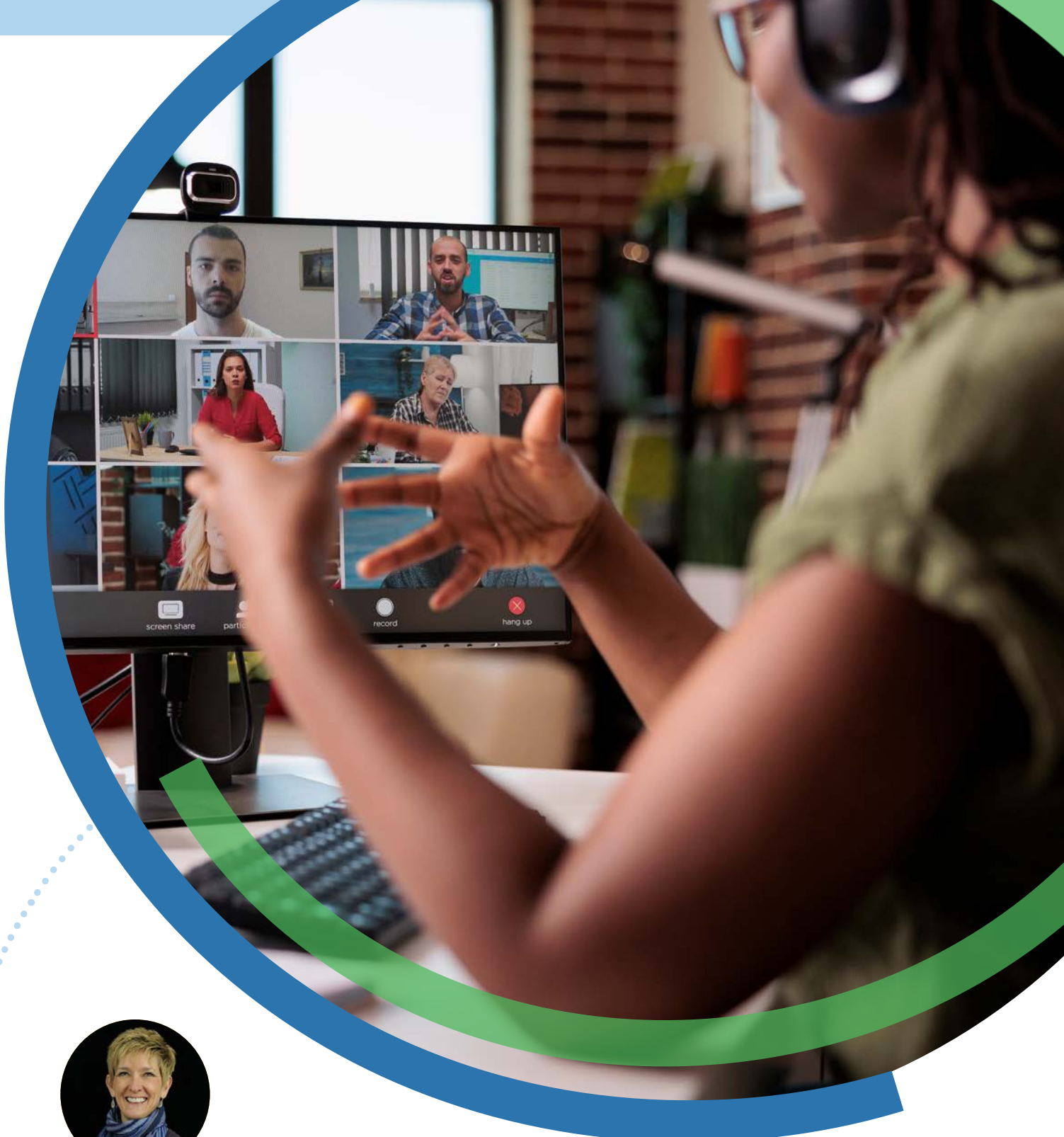
The provider convening also provides an opportunity to discuss ethical dilemmas that may arise during the course of treatment. "For example, there may be a situation where someone is coming to a provider but it's not appropriate for

them to provide services for legal or other reasons," says Lisa. "In that case, we help direct them to the appropriate venue."

**In addition to being a place where gambling counselors can share their struggles and successes, the meetings provided a place for good old-fashioned bonding.** "In the same way that people participating in treatment want to feel a sense of belonging and a place to share similar experiences, the same is true from a counseling perspective," says Lisa. "It helps with morale and to keep each other engaged and dedicated even in the face of setbacks."

Although the process is referred to as "provider supervision," "supervision" is somewhat of a misnomer. "It has nothing to do with being "supervised" as an employee in the traditional context," says Lisa. "It's all about honing skills to be as effective a gambling counselor as possible."

Currently, Minnesota does not mandate provider supervision. MNAPG believes this is an important component to the quality of care, which is why it subsidizes this program. Provider supervision is voluntary and there is no cost for counselors or their agency or organization to become involved. It's a great opportunity for counselors to elevate their competencies, and ultimately provide Minnesotans struggling with gambling addiction the best possible outcome.



“It’s a chance to network, connect, encourage and be a mentor for new people in the field.”

Lisa Vig Johnson, gambling addiction counselor at Soul Solutions Recovery Center





“When clients know they can talk to the specialists for free, they open up and realize what an issue it is for them.”

Amy Dady, a problem gambling counselor, formerly with Fairview Health Services.

# COVERING ALL THE BASES

**By the time a person suffering from a gambling addiction seeks professional help, they are often in dire straits.** In addition to the emotional turmoil that causes some to feel suicidal and the path of destruction in personal relationships that often follows in their wake, there is also a very practical matter: most gambling addicts have spent their last penny.

While gambling counselors are equipped to help individuals manage their addiction, seek more healing ways and eventually start on the road to recovery, few have an in-depth knowledge of how the gambler can clean up from financial ruin. At best, counselors may have a few worksheets on basic budgeting that they can give to their clients, but they don't have the range of tools that financial professionals can provide.

Recognizing that the lack of financial counseling represents a significant gap in treatment for many clients, MNAPG has dedicated resources through GamFin, an online financial education community for professionals in problem gambling, so that financial counselors can meet with individuals on an add-needed basis. The service is a boon to counselors — it represents an added and important service they can offer to their clients — and can provide an important anchor leg for those in recovery.

“When I heard that we could bring in a financial specialist to talk to our clients

in a group session, I was thrilled,” says Amy Dady, a problem gambler counselor formerly with Fairview Health Services. “It gives people a chance to ask about anything, such as budgeting, current financing, FICO scores, paying down debt, bankruptcy and future planning.”

**Clients who want to ask specific questions can meet privately with the financial specialist — at no cost.**

“When clients know they can talk to the specialists for free, they open up and realize what an issue it is for them,” says Amy.

Access to financial counseling has received positive feedback. “I'm so delighted that my clients can go to them for counseling,” says Amy. “So much of the struggle and stress patients have is around the financial part. It's great that we can provide these added benefits and that they don't have to pay for them.”

“The dedication of these financial resources speaks to our larger effort of wanting to provide the best services to our stakeholders, in this case our counselors,” says Susan Sheridan Tucker, executive director of MNAPG. **“Counselors lack financial training, but we feel it's essential that gamblers have access to financial literacy services that can help them in their recovery.** When counselors work in concert with the financial advisor, it's a more comprehensive approach to a person's overall recovery.”

# GETTING OUT IN THE COMMUNITY



Community education is a central part of MNAPG's focus. Raising awareness about gambling addiction to as many audiences as possible can help prevent the destruction that often accompanies the disorder.

Our community educator, Sonja Mertz, scopes every corner of Minnesota for venues where she can spread knowledge about MNAPG and gambling addiction. Here are Sonja's thoughts on her experiences:

*I cover as many events as possible, including professional conferences, recovery events, outdoor festivals and public events. At public events, people sometimes tell me about their concern for a family member or friend. I also occasionally hear someone's story about their own recovery from gambling addiction. It's also common for people to look at our table and continue to walk by without stopping. Most have never heard of us, and might either be unsure of what we do or are uncomfortable with our name and are reluctant to approach us.*

*A major reason we participate in public events is so that people see our name and the concept of "problem*

*gambling" enters their minds. Our hope is that they will recall seeing us when they need us.*

*Professional events give us the opportunity to connect with people in similar fields who benefit from the use of our resources and to meet people in other fields (such as corrections or county services) who are not familiar with gambling addiction and the impact it may have on their communities and populations.*

*Sometimes, when exhibiting at conferences for the first time, we are met with questioning gazes or direct questions like, "Why are you at this conference?" I appreciate those who approach the table with their questions, because they often are quick to understand why we are a good fit for the event and take a few brochures with them to learn more.*

*It's rare that an event does not result in at least one very meaningful interaction. If I feel that even if one person has walked away from our table with a glimmer of hope or reassurance, then it was time well spent.*



**MNAPG HAS  
A PRESENCE AT  
NUMEROUS  
CONFERENCES  
AND EVENTS  
THROUGHOUT  
THE YEAR.**



**13-100  
Age Span**

**14,451  
Total  
Attendance**

**Washington,  
DC**  
NCPG Annual  
Conference

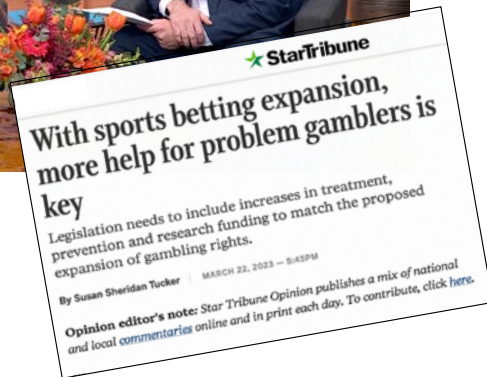
# COMMUNICATIONS

July 2022-June 2023

Much of MNAPG's work to dispel stigma and increase awareness to gambling addiction is achieved through our increasing media outreach. Through partnerships with the *Star Tribune*, Preston Spire and their public relations firm, One Simple Plan, and MNAPG's social media efforts, we are gaining traction. As we utilize more marketing tools to share directed messaging to specific audiences, our marketing analytics are indicating growing engagement.



MNAPG had **three televised interviews** and **11 articles published.**



MNAPG's social media channels include **Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn** and **YouTube.**



MNAPG e-mails were sent to **1,063,000 recipients** recipients with over **215,000 e-mail opens.**



Problem gambling awareness messages achieved **7 million+ impressions.**



Gambling addiction is real.  
So is recovery.

For every gambler, seven to ten others experience gambling-related harms. It's not just the gambler with the problem who's at risk. Families suffer in silence, often too ashamed to confront the issue.

Treatment works

Read Recovery Stories



## RAISING THE VISIBILITY OF GAMBLING ADDICTION

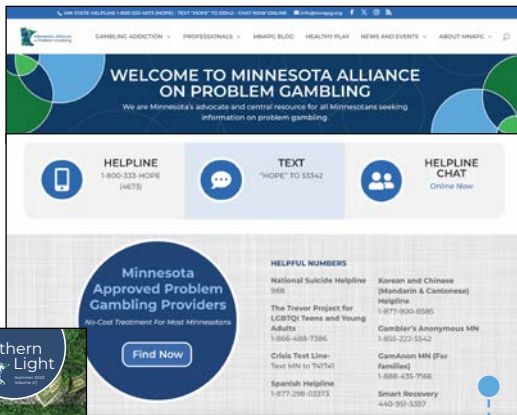


Communicating the message that gambling addiction is as real as any other addiction continues to be a challenge. This is important for various reasons — to destigmatize gambling disorder, to raise money for research and treatment, to raise public awareness and ultimately to get people the help they need. Faced with this challenge, MNPGA pondered how to best deliver this message in a way that would resonate with the public.

Working with Preston Spire, a Minneapolis-based marketing agency, we developed a public service announcement video that depicts a young man “drinking,” “smoking” and “snorting” a deck of playing cards. By weaving in other addictions, we make the point that gambling addiction is every bit the “legitimate” addiction that substance use disorder is.

Our hope is that this engaging PSA raises awareness of gambling addiction to a larger group of Minnesotans. We know that there are many more people in Minnesota who have a gambling problem but are not seeking help. We hope this draws more people in.

The video can be seen on our website at [mnapg.org](http://mnapg.org).



MNAPG won the **2023 National Council on Problem Gambling Award** in both the **website** and **newsletter** categories.





# Connecting. Reflecting. Moving Forward.

Assessing the state of problem gambling – 2022

## THE MINNESOTA CONFERENCE ON PROBLEM GAMBLING

There are few opportunities to bring together the range of professionals and organizations that have an interest, direct or indirect, in problem gambling. The Minnesota Conference on Problem Gambling, our flagship event, provided one such opportunity.

In November 2022, we hosted a hybrid event for both in-person and virtual attendees and featured national speakers. The conference covered a variety of topics with two presentation tracks, one geared toward treatment professionals (continuing education) and another for a more general audience.

Videos of session presentations can be found at <https://mnapg.org/news-and-events/conference/>

### Conference topics included:

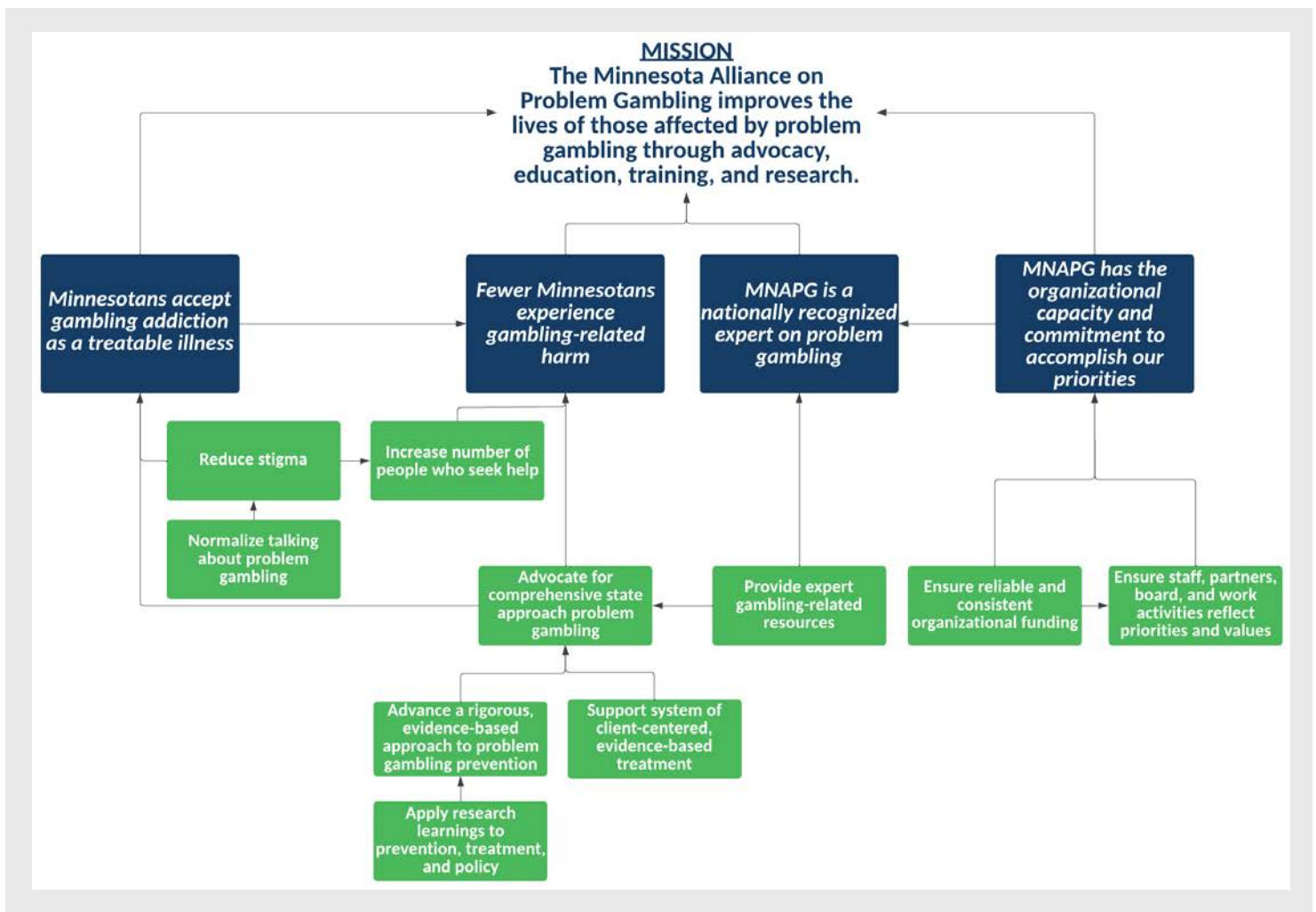
- Problem Gambling and Alexithymia: Implications for Interviewing, Screening and Intervention
- Gambling Disorders in a New Era of Gambling
- How Can We Move Forward with Cultural Humility/ DEI Absent a Strategic Plan? What's Your Navigation System?
- Sports Betting Integrity and Today's Student Athlete
- Traumatic Brain Injuries and Gambling
- Emergence of Problem Gambling from Childhood to Emerging Adulthood: A Systematic Review
- Women and Gambling – a Panel Discussion
- How Do We Talk About Risk So it Sticks with Folks Under the Age of 35? A Conversation about Personal Finance





# STRATEGIC PLANNING

In FY2023, MNAPG underwent a refresh of its strategic plan, noting the significant pace of change in the gaming industry since the U.S. Supreme Court’s overturning the ban on sports betting in 2018. Problem gambling continues to be a hidden addiction in Minnesota, gaining only minimal attention at the state agency level. MNAPG has been advocating for major changes in the state’s program which, if made, could help to meet the goals MNAPG has identified. In addition to refreshing our goals and key strategies, we tweaked our mission statement and organization’s value statement.



# FINANCIALS

## Financial Report

Each year MNAPG receives two difference funding sources through legislative statue for our work; the Minnesota Lottery provides \$225,000 and tax revenue generated by charitable gambling ( 1/2 of 1%), a variable amount each year. Department of Human Services (DHS) is the fiscal agent and encumbers the funds we articulate in our annual budget.

### FY23 REVENUE – JULY 2022– JUNE 2023

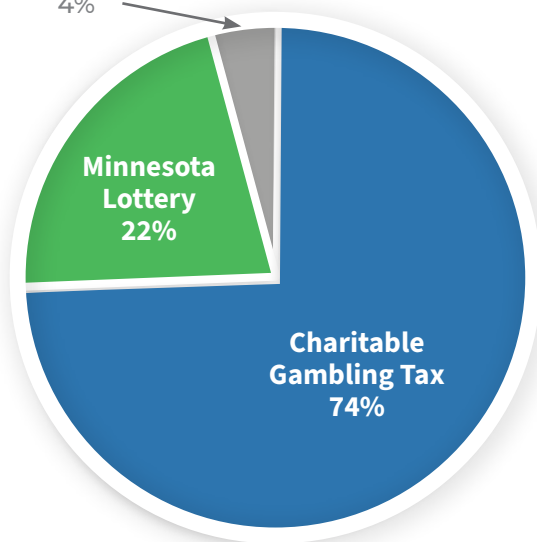
Charitable Gambling	
Tax Revenue (.05%)	\$737,473
Minnesota Lottery	\$225,000
Organizations & Individual Donors	\$38,030
Interest	\$5,324
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,005,827</b>

### FY23 EXPENSES

Program Activities	\$734,997
Operations	\$224,876
Misc. Expenses	\$64
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$959,931</b>

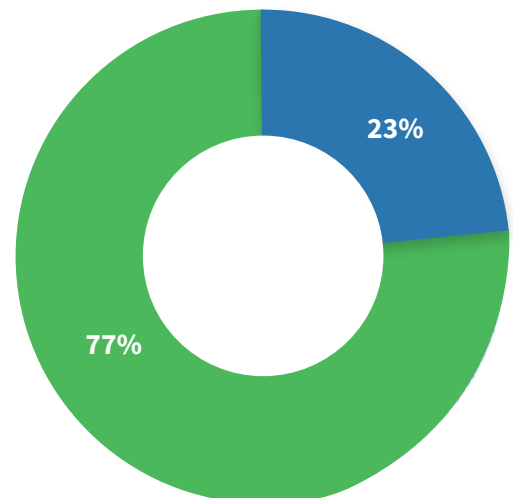
### FY23 REVENUE – JULY 22 - JUNE 23

Organizations & Individual Donors  
4%



### FY23 EXPENSES

■ Operations    ■ Program Activities



Funds distributed by Minnesota Department of Human Services

## Statement of Financial Income and Expense July 2021 through June 2023

	Jul '21- Jun '22	Jul '22 - Jun '23	TOTAL
Ordinary Income/Expense Income			
Contributed Support			
4010 • Individual/Business Contribution	2,3715.22	5,390.07	\$5,105.29
4530 • State Grants	524,121.00	962,472.810	\$1,486,593.81
Total Contributed Support	<u>527,836.56</u>	<u>967,862.88</u>	<u>\$1,495,699.44</u>
Earned Revenues			
5490 Miscellaneous revenue	6.88	250.00	\$256.88
5494 Membership Dues Individuals	220.00	1,640.00	\$1,860.00
5495 Membership dues - Organizations	55,970.00	31,000.00	\$86,470.00
Total Earned revenues	56,196.88	32,890.00	\$89,086.88
5315 • Bremer Bank Interest	88.77	3,042.90	\$3,131.67
Sales	550.00	2,031.29	\$2,581.29
Unapplied Cash Payment Income	66.60		\$66.60
Total Revenue	<u>\$584,738.81</u>	<u>\$1,005,827.07</u>	<u>\$1,590,565.88</u>
Gross Profit	<u>\$584,738.81</u>	<u>\$1,005,827.07</u>	<u>\$1,590,565.881</u>
Expenditures	<u>\$536,451.03</u>	<u>\$959,249,24</u>	<u>\$1,495,700.27</u>
Net Operating Revenue	<u>\$48,287.78</u>	<u>\$46,577.83</u>	<u>\$94,865.61</u>
Net Revenue	<u><u>\$48,287.78</u></u>	<u><u>\$46,577.83</u></u>	<u><u>\$94,865.61</u></u>

# FISCAL YEAR 2023 MNAPG CONTRIBUTORS

## PLATINUM \$10,000+

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Draft Kings



Canterbury Park



Minnesota Indian Gaming  
Association

## GOLD \$5,000 - \$9,999

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Mille Lacs Band of  
Ojibwe



Minnesota State Lottery



Running Aces Racetrack  
and Casino

## SILVER \$1000- \$4999

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Competition Cheer  
Spirit Booster





## Affiliate Membership

MNAPG is the Minnesota state affiliate for the National Council on Problem Gambling. This relationship is one of mutual benefit. NCPG provides MNAPG with direct access to national and international experts in the field. We share similar missions and core values that guide us in improving the lives of those impacted by problem gambling in Minnesota. It's a top-down, bottom-up synergy that fosters innovation, creativity and the sharing of information to raise awareness that problem gambling is a public health concern that is both treatable and preventable.

As an affiliate, we communicate regularly with the national office as well as with our counterparts in 35 other states.

We come together to advocate for federally led initiatives while NCPG relies on us to lead public policy efforts in Minnesota.

In July 2022, Susan Sheridan Tucker was elected as NCPG's Secretary. She also serves on its Executive Committee and chairs the Finance Committee and Affiliate Relationship Committee.

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## Contributors/Members

Adam Bell

James Bradford III

Sean Copeland

Dawn Cronin

Amy Dady

Mary Dahnert

Elk River Lions Club

Elizabeth Erickson

Don Feeney & Diane Carter

Beth Fraley

Michael Hochman

Jeff Hudson

Craig Johnson

Lester Prairie Lions Club

Lisa Vig Johnson

Paul Mladnick

Katie Richard

# MNAPG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### **Jeff Hudson - President**

A compulsive gambler in recovery

### **Katie Richard, LADC**

#### **- Vice President**

Gambling Counselor, Vinland National Center

### **Marie Hinton - Secretary**

Communications, Minnesota Lottery

### **Rachel Jenner - Treasurer**

Executive Director, Allied Charities of Minnesota

### **Don Feeney - Member at Large**

Policy and Research Consultant to the National Council on Problem Gambling, co-founder of MNAPG

### **Renee Most- Member at Large**

Executive Director, StepUp Program

### **Sunny Chanthanouvong**

Executive Director,  
Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota

### **Sean Copeland**

Tribal Attorney Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior

### **Michael Hochman**

Sr. Director of Casino Operations,  
Canterbury Park

### **Craig Johnson, LADC**

Gambling Counselor, Club Recovery, LLC

### **Marti Paulson**

CEO and Executive Director,  
Project Turnabout

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## STAFF

**Susan Sheridan Tucker**, Executive Director

**Sonja Mertz**, Community Educator

**Eboun Singhathip Wilbourn**, Operations Manager

## CONTRACTORS

### **Evans Stark Design,**

Graphic Design/Social Media/Digital

**Bill Stein**, Communications

**Webbequity**, Communications

**Celeste Aguzino**, Communications





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