



# REPORT TO MEMBERS

2011-2012

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NAVIGATING CHANGE TOGETHER:

*An alternative operating model  
for turbulent times*

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COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE CHALLENGES

*For more information about our services, please visit us at [www.mcwmn.org](http://www.mcwmn.org)*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Collaboration: Support through turbulent times*



Collaboration can be risky.

And the rewards can be profound.

The **CommonWealth's** journey began over a dozen years ago as a dream shared by a handful of social service executives. They knew there were risks to striking out in new direction like this. But they suspected—correctly, it turned out—that this bold idea could have significant impacts on the way we work in our communities.

We have successfully navigated the risks of collaborating to achieve this vision. We have developed a fully functioning set of shared administrative services. We have proven that our members can share administrative resources, reap the benefits of higher quality management, and sharpen their focus on mission. We work better together than apart.

But the work is not easy. Like all partnerships, the **CommonWealth** needs to respond to the emerging needs of our members. We do this in the midst of significant shifts and profound changes in the nonprofits we support. As the needs of the communities we serve continue to grow, the resources available to us continue to shrink.

We share our members' journey; their challenges are our challenges. As a result, we must continue developing the staff and building the technology we need to provide high quality, low-risk services for our members. We are committed to improving the depth, breadth, and quality of our work in a way that best positions our members to face the challenges ahead.

Our entire team is honored to support these organizations providing for our communities' most vulnerable. Together, we'll keep working to make a more powerful impact in our communities.

# new

NEW TO THE  
COMMONWEALTH

**Clare Housing-** *Human Resources*

**Episcopal Community Services-**  
*Finance, Human Resources*

**Little Brothers - Friends of the Elderly-** *Finance, Human Resources*

**Northside Economic Opportunity Network-** *Finance*

**Simpson Housing Services-**  
*Client Data*

**East Side Neighborhood Services-**  
*Client Data*

## OUR RESULTS

### MEMBERS NAVIGATING CHANGE

#### Powerful Impact through a Shared Solution for Leadership Development

This year, the **CommonWealth** partnered with our parent organization, MACC Alliance, to provide managers and supervisors an opportunity to enhance their leadership skills. In 2012, thirty-six managers had enrolled in an initial training offering- twenty-one participated in a nine-month, intensive process and the remaining fifteen participants selected a customized, three-session offering targeting their individual learning goals.



**The Family Partnership**  
*Counseling Education Advocacy*

#### Strategic Success Through Merger Support

As the ground shifts for many of our members, providing merger support has become an important part of **CommonWealth's** service and expertise.

Last year, The Family Partnership underwent a merger with Reuben Lindh Family Services adding forty new employees to the

**CommonWealth** family. Over the course of a year, our staff supported and advised on critical financial and human resource aspects of the merger.



**FamilyWise**  
*Educate. Empower. Enrich.*

This year, Genesis II for Families merged with the Children's Safety Center of St. Paul under the new name **FamilyWise Services**. Over several months in 2011, **CommonWealth** staff advised and supported the financial integration of the two organizations.

### Growth and Focus Despite North Side Tornado

A number of our member agencies with services in North Minneapolis were severely impacted by the May 22 tornado. The storm's path of destruction through North Minneapolis devastated families, businesses, and a half dozen of our members' buildings. We were deeply involved in their facility issues, as well as helping to get relocated staff back up to speed. The **CommonWealth** was able to advocate on behalf of members with their insurance companies to recover full damages owed to these organizations.



### MISSION

The mission of Clare Housing is to provide affordable housing, supportive services and compassionate care to people living with HIV/AIDS.

For more information, go to [www.clarehousing.org](http://www.clarehousing.org)



The organizations that make up the **CommonWealth** are diverse in program focus, populations served, size, and the areas of services they utilize. New members Clare Housing and NEON represent this richness within our membership.



### MISSION

The Northside Economic Opportunity Network (NEON) is a North Minneapolis community-based organization whose mission is to expand economic opportunities and build wealth for North Minneapolis residents through the creation, growth, and development of small businesses in the North Minneapolis area.

For more information, go to [www.neon-mn.org](http://www.neon-mn.org)



Our Members	Year Joined	Services Provided
Ampersand Families	2010	Finance, HR, Facilities
Annex Teen Clinic	2008	Finance, HR, Facilities
Asian Women United of Minnesota	2009	Finance, HR, Facilities
CAPI USA	2008	Finance, HR, Facilities
Clare Housing	2011	HR
Community Emergency Assistance Program	2009	Finance, Client Data
Confederation of Somali Community in Minnesota	2010	Finance, HR, IT
East Side Neighborhood Services Inc.	2012	Client Data
Emerge Community Development	2008	Finance, HR, IT, Facilities, Client Data
Emergency Foodshelf Network	2010	Finance, HR
Episcopal Community Services	2011	Finance, HR
FamilyWise Services	2009	Finance
Hallie Q. Brown Community Center	2012	Finance
Little Brothers-Friends of the Elderly	2012	Finance, HR
MACC Alliance of Connected Communities	Founder	Finance
Minnesota African Women's Association	2010	Finance, HR
Neighborhood House	2008	IT, Client Data
Northside Economic Opportunity Network	2012	Finance
Phyllis Wheatley Community Center	Founder	Finance, HR, IT, Facilities, Client Data
Pillsbury United Communities	Founder	Finance, HR, IT, Behavioral Health Billing, Facilities, Client Data
Plymouth Christian Youth Center	Founder	Finance, HR, IT, Facilities, Client Data
Simpson Housing Services	2012	Client Data
Somali Success School	2011	Finance
The Family Partnership	Founder	Finance, HR, IT, Behavioral Health Billing, Facilities, Client Data
The Link	2009	HR, Client Data
Youthprise	2011	HR

# OUR WORK AND IMPACT

## SNAPSHOT:

### Focus through Our Strategic Plan

In 2010, our board approved the organization's first multi-year strategic plan, based on broad input from our members, staff, and community stakeholders. In 2011, we achieved one of the plan's key goals by merging with our founding organization, **MACC Alliance**. In 2012, our values and our other strategic goals have been integrated into the operating framework of the **CommonWealth**.

## SNAPSHOT:

### Depth of CommonWealth Services Growing

**MACC CommonWealth** maintains core services in the areas of finance, human resources, information technology, medical billing, facilities management, and a client data system. Since we last reported to members, we've focused on enhancing the *depth* of services we provide to members. As a part of that effort, we've launched a quality improvement process that will enhance the value of membership. In the last year, supporting mergers, leadership development, and helping to develop a new service delivery collaborative have all been a part of deepening our service to members.

## SNAPSHOT:

### Extending Capacity = Greater Impact

This past year, our Human Resources team worked to build tools that have increased our members' effectiveness. As an example, the team launched a new online recruitment platform that makes finding higher quality talent faster and easier.

In the last several months, our Client Data team has observed the powerful impact an efficient and well-designed database can have on program outcomes. For example, Pillsbury United Communities was able to increase the number of clients they could serve in their foodshelf as a result of the implementation of online real-time client record management

## SNAPSHOT:

### New Ways to Collaborate

As a part of our reintegration with **MACC Alliance**, **CommonWealth** staff provided expertise and support for the creation of a new program collaboration. This new **MACC Alliance** entity will be a space for joint program delivery and funding opportunities.

## OUR MISSION

**MACC CommonWealth** supports the mission of its member nonprofits by providing outstanding management and administrative services in a collaborative framework.

## OUR VALUES

membership-driven, excellence, partnership, integrity, innovation

## OUR GOALS

1. Achieve and sustain outstanding, long-term member experience
2. Achieve growth in membership and revenue
3. Ensure a sustainable mix of products and services
4. Reintegrate with **MACC Alliance**

## SNAPSHOT:

### Cost Savings: A Benefit of Collaboration

The Human Resources team has been able to attain cost savings for members joining our multiple employer benefit plan(s)- the scale and size of the **CommonWealth** continues to provide members pricing they wouldn't otherwise have access to.

Members who use our facilities services are saving an average of \$19,000 every year on their trash hauling services due to our work competitively bidding members' collective waste disposal needs in 2011. This is one of many cost reductions our Facilities team has secured for our members.

## SNAPSHOT:

### Protecting Member Revenue

In the last two years, government funders have dramatically increased their reviews and audits of the 150 government contracts we manage on behalf of our members. The **CommonWealth** has worked with our members to help them avoid the financial consequences of non-compliance. For example, in this past year, we implemented new tools for tracking time against federal contracts. We've also developed new means of allocating expenses to government-funded programs that protect our members' revenue while fully complying with federal rules.

# HERE TO SUPPORT YOU

## MIKE JOHNSON MEMORIAL CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

*In memory of our colleague and friend Mike Johnson, a founding staff member of the CommonWealth, we initiated a customer service award program to recognize staff that provide outstanding service to members.*

### FEATURED TEAM MEMBER: **Skye Holmberg**



Skye provides benefits support to our members. Starting her service to the CommonWealth as an intern in 2009, Skye has become an invaluable asset to our members.

"Skye Holmberg exemplifies the meaning of customer service! Every interaction with Annex Teen Clinic staff has been handled with grace, enjoyment and service. Skye is truly a joy to work with and deserving of recognition." *Brian Russ, Annex Teen Clinic*

"Skye played an integral role in supporting EFN with the cancellation of our old 403b plan and the start-up of our new 401k plan. It was a detailed and complicated process and we could not have done it without tremendous help and facilitation from Skye!" *Lori Kratchmer, Emergency Foodshelf Network*



*To hear Skye's perspective on her work, scan the QR code.*

### FEATURED TEAM MEMBER: **Sheila Ballard**



Sheila provides accounting support to several CommonWealth members. Starting out as a temp in 2010, she is now a full-time employee and a valuable contributor to the CommonWealth's mission.

"No matter how convoluted the request (tricky vendor info, strange payment plans, etc.), Sheila is remarkably gracious and accommodating. Every time I've had an eleventh hour dilemma, Sheila just says, 'Give me a call, and we'll work it out.'" *Claudia Stahl, Executive Director, Asian Women United of Minnesota*

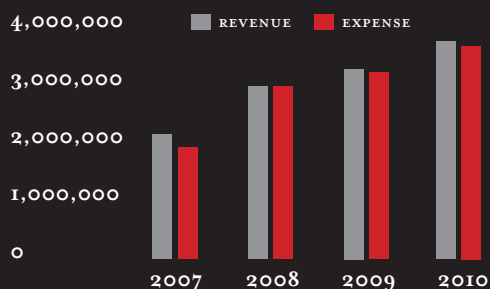
"Sheila offers feedback and suggestions to improve our systems. She went above and beyond in assisting Oak Park during the tornado and assisting us in cutting emergency checks. She is professional and pleasant, and always has great follow-through." *Leslie Vinson, Center Director, Camden Neighborhood Center, Pillsbury United Communities*



*To hear Sheila's perspective on her work, scan the QR code.*

MACC CommonWealth coaches its members on the importance of sound financial management. We're committed to those same practices.

Our growth in membership and the addition of new services has also produced regular revenue growth. This history of strong financial performance provides the operating stability our members depend on. Like our members, we keep a close eye on our cash—building cash reserves is critical to our long-term viability. We anticipate that 2012 cash reserves will remain equal to about three months of operating requirements.



### FEATURED TEAM MEMBER: **Shane Miller**



#### **Honored by Pillsbury United Communities**

Pillsbury United Communities President and CEO Chanda Smith Baker selected Shane Miller for their Presidential Leadership Award, citing his extraordinary

efforts helping PUC after a tornado devastated much of North Minneapolis last spring, including several PUC buildings in the Camden neighborhood.

She noted that he was already on the ground in North Minneapolis just hours after the tornado, launching an intensive ten-month effort of working with contractors, insurance companies, and PUC staff to reconstruct PUC's buildings and recover all of the reimbursement PUC was entitled to from its insurers.



*To hear from Shane about his work, scan the QR code.*



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## A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

We owe special thanks to our members and to **MACC Alliance**—our work together is forging a new path for collaboration in the nonprofit sector. We are proud of the work our members do in service of our community and are grateful for the opportunity to support them.

The **CommonWealth** is an initiative of the **MACC Alliance of Connected Communities**, a partnership of community-based human service organizations that advocate for, connect, and serve individuals, families, and communities in the Twin Cities Metropolitan area.

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### ABOUT THE COMMONWEALTH

#### CommonWealth Defined

A collaborative created and driven by our member nonprofits, the **CommonWealth** provides expert administrative services and administrative leadership that allows our members to focus on their mission and make a powerful impact in their communities.

#### An Alternative Operating Model with Significant Results

The **CommonWealth** was established in 2007 by several members of **MACC Alliance for Connected Communities**. Our founding members believed that if they worked together through shared administrative expertise, they'd deepen their mission focus and have a greater impact. Our collaborative approach brought profound organizational and financial benefits to our founding organizations. Our

work together helped extend the ability of those organizations to serve our community.

#### Collaborative Solutions for Administrative Challenges

Today, the **CommonWealth** delivers nonprofit organizations collaborative, expert solutions for finance, human resources, information technology, client data, and medical billing. The **CommonWealth's** growing team of over thirty employees,

complemented by a network of service providers, guarantees administrative expertise far beyond the capacity of any individual member. As a collaborative, we work as a partner to support our members through the complex challenges they face.

*Learn more about our services and how we support our members at [www.mcwmn.org](http://www.mcwmn.org)*