

STATE OF THE UNION REPORT 2022

PREPARED FOR DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

LETTER FROM MAPE PRESIDENT MEGAN DAYTON

For the first time in years, workers appear to have more control over our workplaces and wages. The pandemic has caused a significant worker shortage across the United States, forcing many employers to increase salaries to keep quality employees. More workers than ever before are telecommuting.

Support for labor unions is the highest it's been in nearly 60 years, with 71 percent of Americans now approving of labor unions. We are thrilled to see employees, Amazon, Half-Price Books and many other companies join together in one collective voice to fight for – and win – better working conditions and higher wages.

Many things have changed in our state government workplaces since the pandemic began nearly three years ago. One of MAPE's strengths is one-on-one organizing. It has been challenging since so many of our members are now telecommuting. So, we've come up with an exciting, action-filled month to combat declining membership numbers by getting in front of members to advance the health and future of our union: MAPE-tober.

This month, we have reinforced member engagement through membership recruitment, supporting contract action teams to fight for a fair contract, and talking with voters about candidates who support MAPE priorities. By meeting and chatting with members, we're bringing fellow union members into the fold and rethinking how we do this work, just as the national labor movement has done throughout its celebrated history.

WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY

Our voice at work in the 2020s now also includes where and when we work. MAPE members always step up for Minnesota, but we now know we can do that and be there when our kids get off the bus or when we need to pick up a parent for a doctor's appointment. Telework and flexibility mean management finally recognizes what so many of us have been saying for years: We can do our work at home at nine o'clock at night just as efficiently as we can in the Centennial Building at nine in the morning.

Gallup estimates more than 70 million workers here in the United States can do their jobs working remotely. Hybrid work has increased this year alone from 42 percent to 49 percent. Only one in five remote-capable employees are currently working entirely on-site. When an employee's location preference doesn't match their current work location, burnout increases while engagement drops.

FLEXIBILITY NEEDED FOR ALL WORKERS

I am one of the lucky ones – I've been able to telework since I started state service a decade ago. But not all MAPE members have the option to telework. Many of our siblings at the Department of Corrections, in Direct Care and Treatment, Veteran's Affairs, and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities don't have this opportunity. We must find a balance. I think a balance must mean flexibility for all workers in this new post-COVID workplace. Labor must drive this change.

A campaign for worker flexibility must include a reimagining of our union. How do we show up for each other in a world of increasing virtual interaction? When is the right time for us to meet online, and when do we need to commute to see each other in person? How do we welcome new members if new members never come to an office? How do we develop and maintain relationships? These are the questions we cannot afford to ignore.

REINVENTION NECESSARY FOR SURVIVAL

Labor has always had to reinvent itself to survive. This moment is a crucial point in our union's history. Millions of workers lost jobs during the Great Depression, and the future of organized labor seemed bleak. But President Franklin Roosevelt was pro-union, and New Deal legislation brought us the National Labor Relations Act in the 1930s. Organizing and collective bargaining created a solid middle class for millions of Americans in the 1940s and '50s.

A decade later, labor did what was right and became a key supporter – and player – in the fight for civil rights. We should do what's right again and fight for our members' work flexibility. What we do now will determine what MAPE looks like in 10 or 15 years. We must be forward-thinking, flexible, and creative, highlighting our success. These are all rungs on the ladder of solidarity. We are going to try things we've never tried before. Some ideas may not work, and we will sometimes fail. Learning from these failures is inevitable – it isn't a failure if we learn from it.

The pandemic has shown us that our members, and all Minnesota workers, should have flexibility in their jobs. No matter where we work or what we do, MAPE members are committed to doing what's best for our members and our neighbors. We each must help create a better and more just Minnesota.

In solidarity,

Megan Dayton



ORGANIZING- MEMBERSHIP

There has been a tremendous increase in telecommuting work within state governments nationwide. One of MAPE's strengths is one-on-one organizing. But the pandemic has created new challenges to meet with new employees since so many MAPE members are not physically in their agencies full-time now. The increase in telework is making it more challenging to organize and bring new people into our union.

The business agents have been working more closely with the communications team this year on messaging for organizing events engaging larger groups of members. Three examples that come immediately to mind are:



Retro Pay Day

This was when we wrapped up getting our current contract implemented. On the day that non-members got a pay bump without contributing to the union, we reached out and invited them to join. Many had started during the pandemic, and it was a good introduction to the union.



June 10

MAPE leaders from across the state came together in person and online to learn and plan for the future of the union. They left the workshop with customized organizing plans.



MAPE-tober

During October, we have been reinforcing member engagement through membership recruitment, supporting contract action teams to fight for a fair contract and talking with voters about candidates who support MAPE priorities. We have members on lost time every day. In fact, there is still time to sign up so check out the website to join this effort!

Business Agent Organizing Efforts

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Organizing efforts are continuing at the Department of Natural Resources. Members and staff met with Minnesota Management and Budget and negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding regarding rest and recuperation days for members fighting wildfires.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Organizing continues at the Minnesota Department of Health. MDH members have come together to propose a program of recuperation and recognition for MDH employees who stepped up repeatedly throughout the pandemic. A Meet and Confer survey showed MDH employees are burned out and don't feel their efforts were recognized during the crisis. 650 MAPE members signed onto the proposal, and the Meet and Confer team has begun meeting with management around a MOU. The communications team also interviewed members and produced a video to share with MDH members and their commissioner.

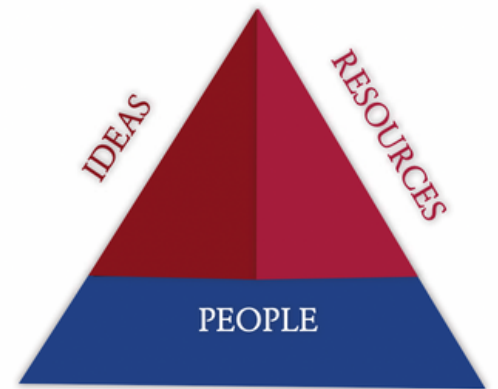
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

An amazing group of members sought to correct the misclassification of their position. They were told by their supervisor and manager it wasn't possible and not to even try to do this. The agency HR representative handling their case changed multiple times. But they continued to act together as a group, thought strategically about their escalation tactics and were able to successfully correct and upgrade many of their classifications to the higher senior level positions.

When we stand up, make our voice heard and fight for what we deserve we don't always win everything we set out to win. But the only time we really lose is when we don't fight at all.

STRATEGIC PLAN

After hundreds of interviews, dozens of meetings and many revisions, MAPE Board of Directors approved a new five-year strategic plan focused on building member power through organized people, organized ideas and organized resources. Highlights include focusing on membership, growing engagement and support of members, negotiations, electoral and legislative work and modernizing our systems.



STEWARD UPDATES

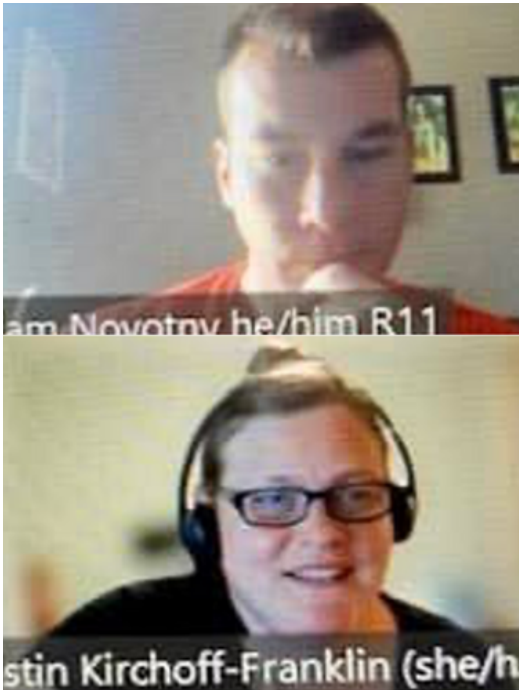
We have a total of 337 stewards in MAPE. Anyone interested in learning more about steward work can join us for basic steward training on Oct. 14. We have 15 people registered. If you have not yet attended, please consider registering today.

MAPE Vice President Angie Halseth and business agents have been providing FMLA training and role play training at various regional steward meetings over the course of the summer. They have been well received. We hope to continue and expand on them next year. We are in the process of revising advanced steward training to include an option that will allow us to keep the scheduled training, even with low participant numbers. All current stewards are invited to take advanced steward training.

STEWARD RETREAT IN 2023

MAPE's last Steward Summit was in 2019, so it's time to plan our next steward training, communicating and fun-having event, and we want all stewards to join us! This two-day retreat is scheduled for March 24-25 at the Minneapolis Delta Hotel. Planning is currently underway. A rockstar keynote has been booked, and we've surveyed all current MAPE stewards to hear what they want most to get out of this learning experience. There will be Friday fun and lots of Saturday educational content for all. Any stewards interested in helping plan, or suggestions for content or fun should contact Angie Halseth at ahalseth@mape.org.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS



Negotiations Committee members have begun meeting earlier than ever before because we know we must build power in the field to fight for the best possible contract.

The Negotiations Team is continuing to work on Contract Action Team recruitment. Team members have been holding listening sessions across the state and worked to ensure members completed the Negotiations Survey.

Negotiations Committee Co-Chairs Adam Novotny and Kristin Kirchoff-Franklin and others met with Gov. Tim Walz last month. Based on our tireless work during the pandemic, we wanted to clarify one of MAPE's priorities is that significant, meaningful and competitive wage increases that keep up with inflation are included in future budgets being drafted by the governor and his team. We know he heard us. We also know that we can continue to sometimes work with and sometimes push the Walz Flanagan administration. And together we make things better for our members and for Minnesotans.

“It’s important when we go to the bargaining table that we can say we know members want a specific proposal because we surveyed them. This particular survey will be helpful to see what people are willing to fight for. It’s all about building power,”

Sheenah Jewison, At-Large member, Negotiations Committee

MAPE AT THE CAPITOL

2021-2023 Contract

We have had to battle anti-labor forces who have been in power since 2015 at the State Capitol. Our number one priority this year was passage of our 2021-2023 contract. We were able to do this early in the session with large majorities in the State House but it took until the very last days of session for it to pass the State Senate.

Throughout the session, MAPE member voices were important in creating change. Lobby Week featured hundreds of MAPE members speaking up, telling Legislators why their constituents wanted the contract to pass. Thank you to all who participated!



FRONTLINE WORKER BONUSES



MAPE is proud to have been one of the original members of the Essential Workers Taskforce which fought for bonuses for frontline workers. More than 1.2 million workers, double the number expected, applied for the \$500 million in bonuses. More than 1,025,000 Minnesotans will receive payments of \$487 beginning this week.

A big thank you goes to all our members who testified at hearings and spoke with reporters about the work you did to keep Minnesotans safe.

\$12 Billion Surplus Left on Table

Senate leadership also decided to leave a staggering \$12 billion surplus on the table at the end of session. Despite so many compromises and attempts to get those funds to so many Minnesotans who truly needed it – workers and their families, our kids and their schools, all the state agencies where we work so hard to serve our fellow Minnesotans. Senators walked away from the deal, leaving the money behind and Minnesotans in need. This underscores the need to elect candidates who support workers and their families.



ELECTION WORK



This is another space where our members' taking action is critical. There is an incredible amount on the line this election year. As anti-labor and anti-government rhetoric has increased, it is more important than ever we have elected officials who care about democracy and investing in our communities. The newly elected Legislature will decide how to spend the state's huge surplus and pass – or block – legislation on issues that will directly affect our lives.

The Governor makes the first draft of the budgets for state agencies. Lawmakers in the House and the Senate are also part of the budget process and must approve our contract.

GET INVOLVED

With just over four weeks left until Election Day, many races are incredibly close and there are many voters who have not made up their minds yet. It's more important than ever to vote for candidates who will vote for workers. We have lots of ways for you to help – please visit MAPE.org for ways to get involved.



ENDORSEMENTS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS



VOTE

It feels like democracy and many of the institutions so many of us in state government work so hard to protect are on the ballot this year. We urge you to go vote as soon as possible and then get active.

MAPE is unique in that we get to elect our boss and the people who vote on our contract. Through the PAC, there has been a lot of work done to hold our elected officials accountable and then support the people who support us. After hosting listening sessions with members, interviewing the governor and addressing many concerns members had, and a promise from the governor to attend the negotiations opener next year if re-elected, the PAC endorsed Governor Walz. This week, we held a virtual event to hear from him about his race for re-election and how we can help.

UNION OPERATIONS

Technology

We've spent the past year working on updating the organization and modernizing our operations. MAPE internal operations remain effective and proficient while most staff work from home offices.

The Operations Department helped modernize technology during the past year (e.g., ADP online timecards, Govenda board management software, Sovran as new IT company) to make our union run more smoothly.

All this work of internal staff and systems development will make our work with members more powerful and help us build into the future.

Human Resources

Former MAPE Treasurer Todd Maki joined MAPE as Operations Director when he replaced the retiring Paul Schweizer and Suzanne Al-Kayali was hired as Executive Assistant. A new staff contract was negotiated with OPEIU. The Board of Directors expanded the number of business agents to focus on all-important organizing and enforcement work. We also streamlined the BAs by merging the organizing and enforcement teams.

FINANCES

MAPE's financial performance was strong again last year, with net assets increasing by over \$1.2 million in calendar year 2021, continuing a trend of year-to-year growth even as membership declined (see Finance Workgroup report). MAPE's financial statements are audited by an outside CPA every year. The audit shows our financial controls and systems in place keep protecting MAPE's financial health. MAPE's trustees continue to provide a valuable third level of review of financial transactions and reports.