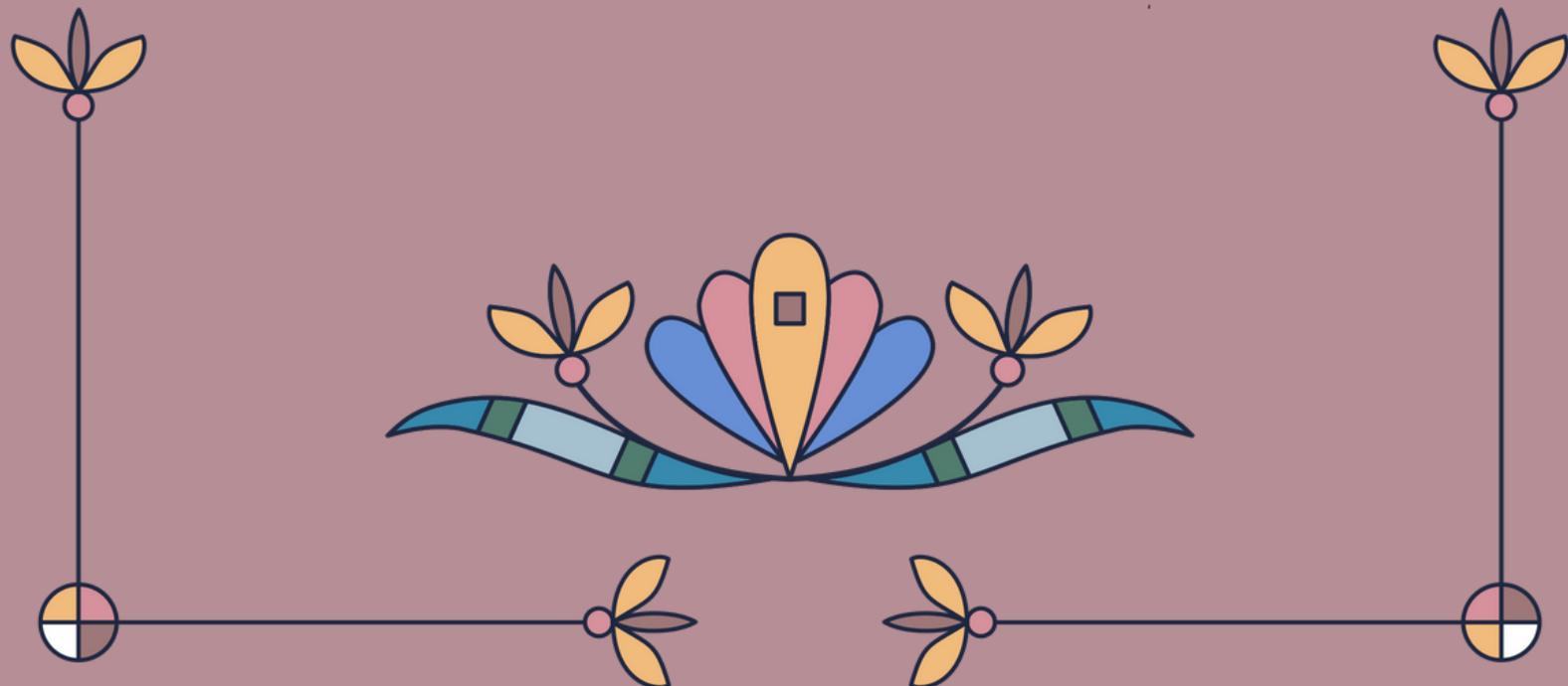


# MINNESOTA INDIGENOUS BUSINESS ALLIANCE



## 2020 IMPACT REPORT



# 2020 IMPACT REPORT

mniba.org

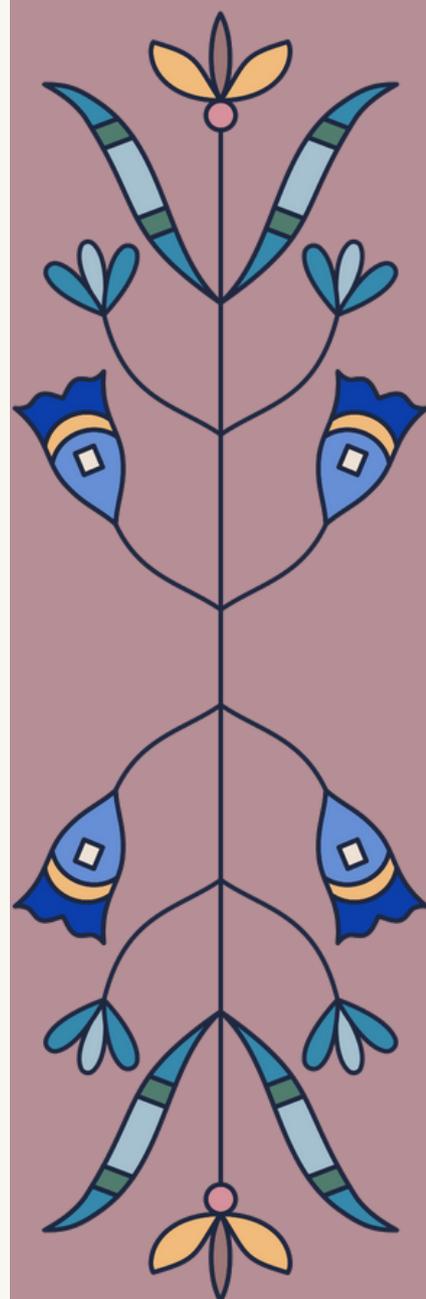
The Minnesota Indigenous Business Alliance (MNIBA) is a Native-led and governed 501c3 nonprofit, serving Native entrepreneurs, artisans, and businesses. They are at the heart of everything we do, and MNIBA puts Native business first! As our organization grows so do the opportunities to scale our impact.

## 2020 IN RESTROSPECT

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MNIBA continues to stand in awe and is humbled and proud of the response of our Native communities to the events of 2020. Our communities faced severe shortages, and our leaders and communities stepped up to provide supports, food, meals, and vaccines to its citizens. COVID-19 hit our communities at disproportionate rates and laid bare the inequities in our communities, especially concerning access to healthy food, health care, secure housing and employment.

May 25, 2020 is a historic date in MniSota, the day that George Floyd was murdered at the hands of the Minneapolis Police as the whole world watched. Mr. Floyd's murder sparked a worldwide social movement and global uprisings that aptly pushed systemic racism in all realms into focus.



## IMPACT STATEMENT

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Our impact focuses on creating equitable outcomes for Native entrepreneurs and artists. We achieve this impact every day by being a critical resource provider and connector linking entrepreneurs to opportunities that support, elevate, and showcase Native innovation. Our goal is to inspire the next generation of Native entrepreneurs to design trade and exchange practices rooted in collaboration, cooperation, and sharing. We believe this is a pathway forward for economic justice, self-sufficiency, and equitable outcomes for our People. We continue to expand these boundaries while advocating for economic development initiatives that transition away from “resource extraction” to the development of “restorative and values-based economies.”

MNIBA is honored and privileged to be working on the traditional territories of the Dakota and Anishinaabe people. We acknowledge their respected Elders, community leaders, language speakers, entrepreneurs, artists and the next seven generations.

## MISSION

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**A**ign Partners

**C**onnect Business to Resources

**T**ransform Native Economies

## VALUES

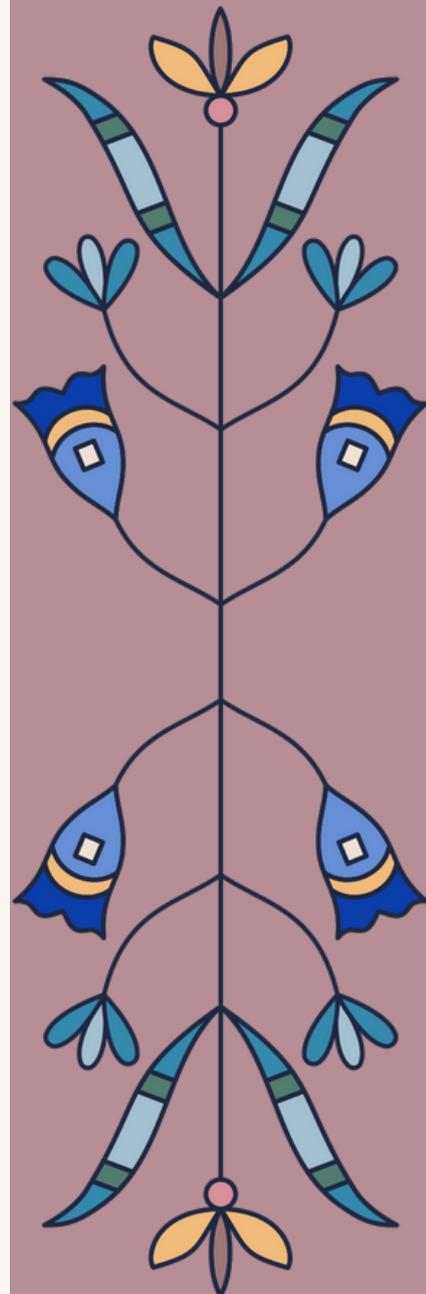
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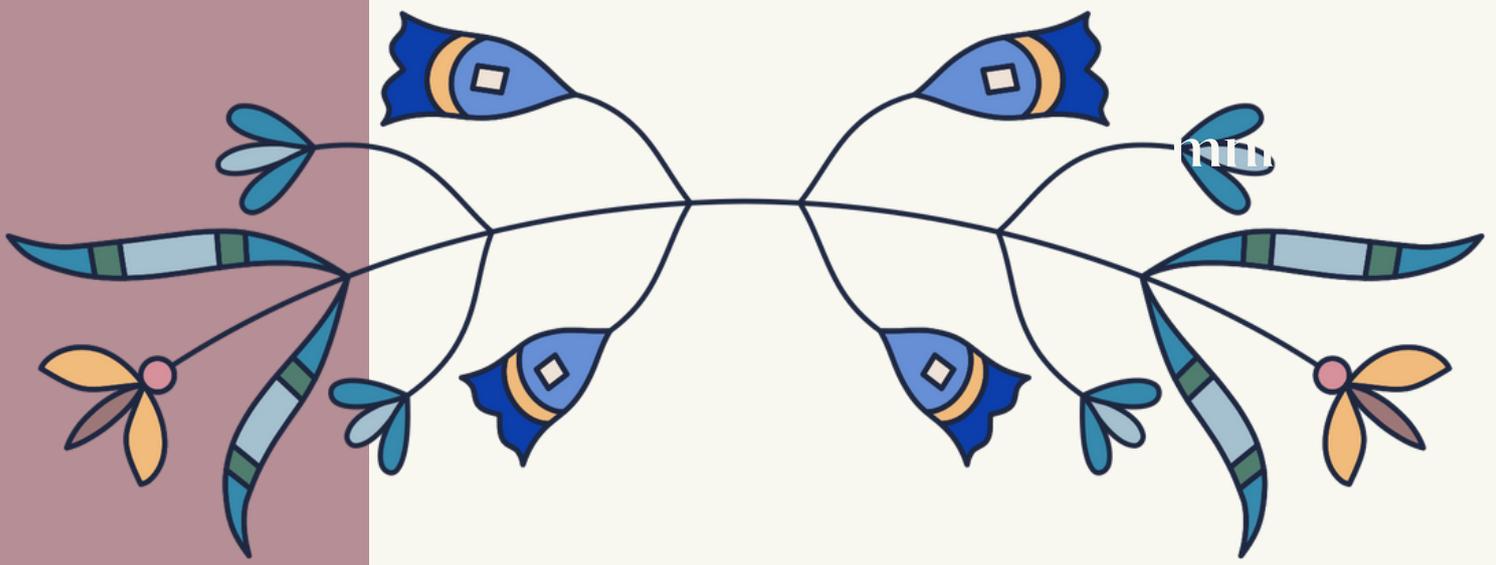
**COMMUNITY:** building trust and long-term relationships.

**CREATIVITY:** pushing beyond the obvious to promote change.

**SHARED LEADERSHIP:** representative of the communities we serve, fostering cooperation, collaboration, and respectful inquiry.

**RESTORATIVE GROWTH:** working to building healthy and equitable Native economies that work for all.





## SHARING OUR STORIES

When the pandemic struck, Mnisota was under a stay in place order, everything shut down except vital services. For native people, trade and exchange is about relationships, it is about connecting face to face with one another. This meant immediately transitioning to a virtual reality, which had its challenges and learning curves, especially in communities that lacked good broadband connectivity.

In most native communities, business is all about the relationships and small Native businesses and artists are reliant on face-to-face trade and exchange. Most found themselves losing 100% of their revenue due to the stay in place order with the cancellation of conferences, trade shows, art shows, cultural events, and pow-wows, etc.

On top of this, our communities were faced with shortages and access to some of the most basic supplies, like hand sanitizer, gloves, masks, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, paper towels, toilet paper and many basic grocery items. Native communities were hardest hit during the pandemic.

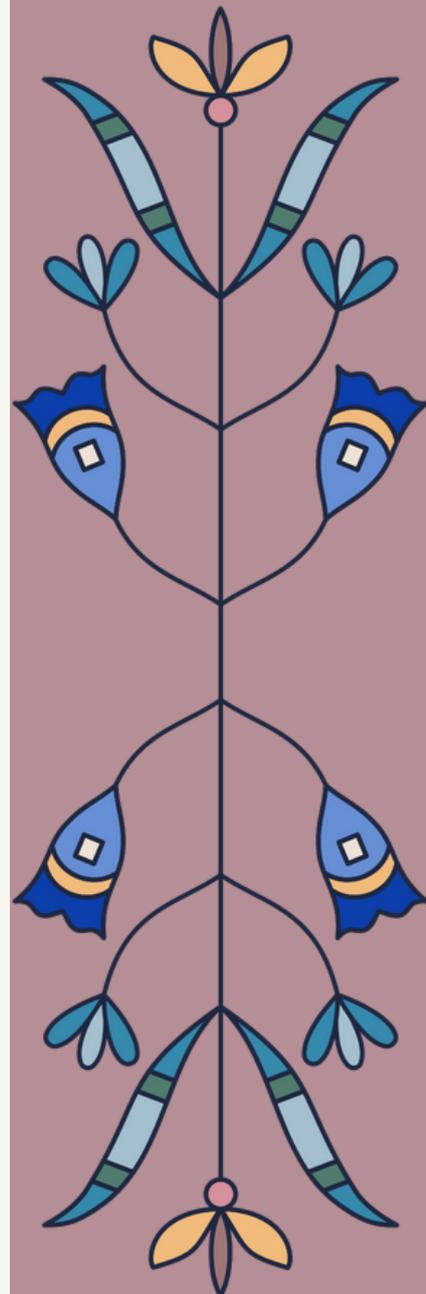
All of MNIBA's face-face events were cancelled after March 16, 2020 and moved us into immediate action so that we could be responsive and resourceful.

## LEARNING TO ADAPT, PIVOT AND RESPOND IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

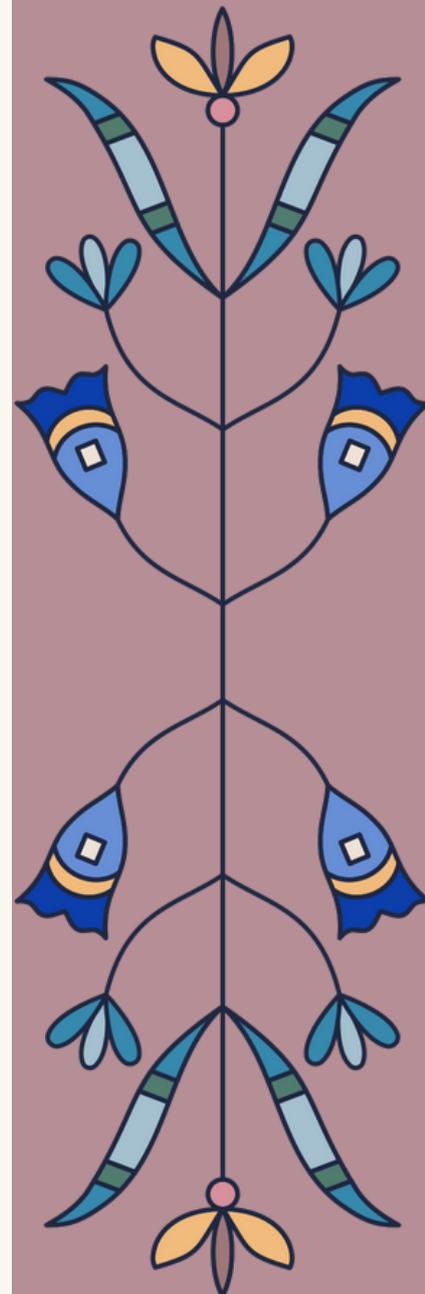
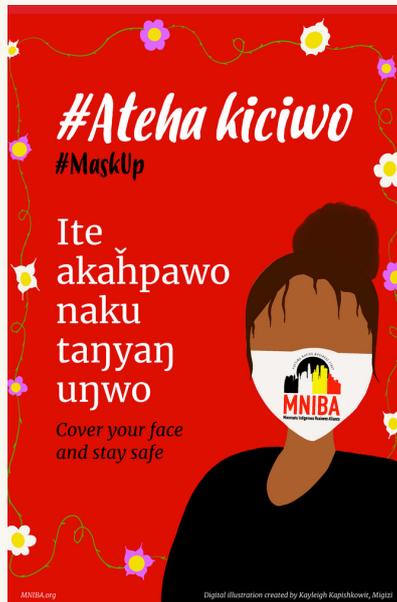
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During the PPE shortage, MNIBA contracted with a native seamstress to make 100 masks for Native elders, and prepared 100 gift bags that included hand sanitizer, alcohol wipes, gloves, masks, toilet paper, fresh picked cedar, and self-care messaging.

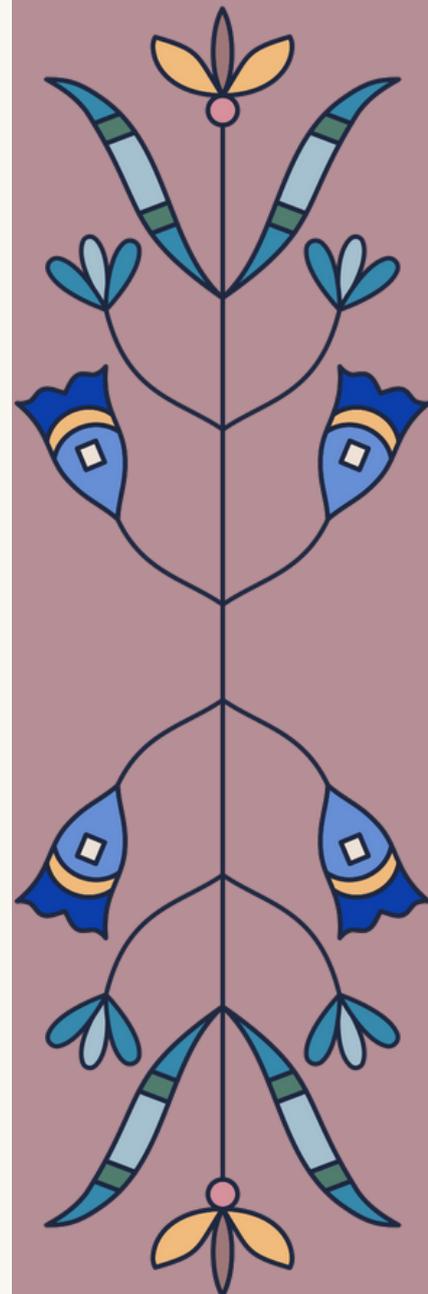
MNIBA partnered with Gatherings Café and their delivery volunteers to include the gift bags with their daily meal delivery.

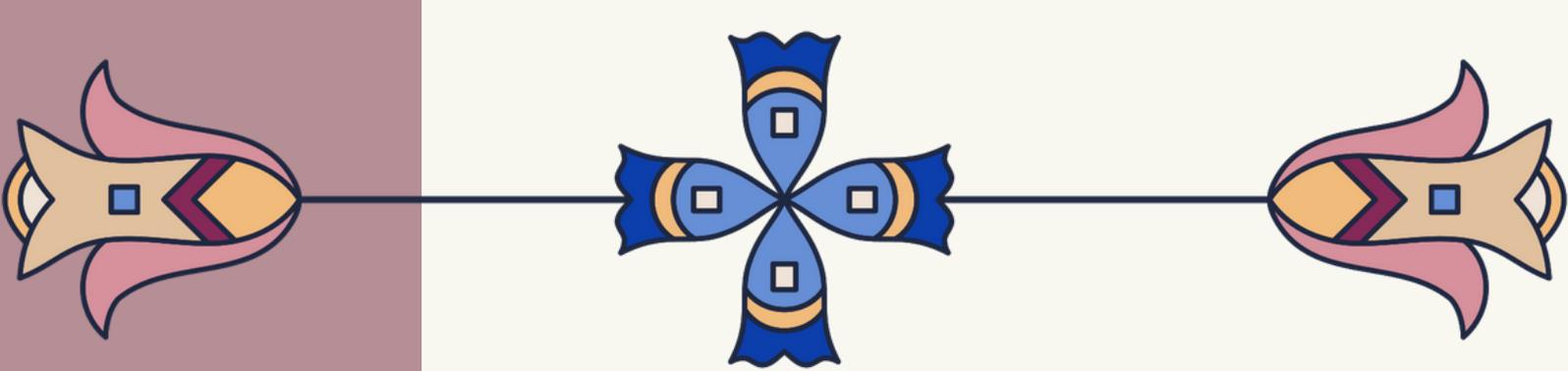


MNIBA contracted with high school students who had completed Migizi's digital and social media marketing program to design Covid-19 posters that would speak to a younger audience and carry important cultural messaging in both Dakota and Anishinaabe.



-  MNIBA provided funding for groups of small businesses and artists that would come together collectively to develop small business websites with e-commerce tools. This helped food businesses stay open by expanding their market to include GrubHub and DoorDash food delivery, and a group of 10 artists form a collective website to market their work through a shared platform.
-  Twenty-seven artists were awarded grants to buy much needed supplies like fabric, beads, leather, canvases, paints, and ink jet cartridges, etc.
-  MNIBA was able to donate funds to a group of chefs and sous chefs that were cooking and delivering meals for 100-150 elders and vulnerable shut-ins.
-  MNIBA also awarded six each 1-year subscriptions for Mobile Beacon Hot spots for businesses that had a web presence but could not afford monthly internet due to lost earnings.
-  MNIBA partnered with Pow-wows.com and had videos of entrepreneurs lived-streamed to their international and national followers to provide additional visibility.
-  MNIBA partnered with Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development in the distribution 2000 disposable masks to Native small businesses and tribal colleges' for staff and students.
-  MNIBA was responsive in in organizing Covid-19 resources and getting them in the hands of Native small businesses, artists, and communities. MNIBA partnered with organizations to ensure small businesses received the right technical assistance and training to be eligible for PPP loans and loan forgiveness funding.



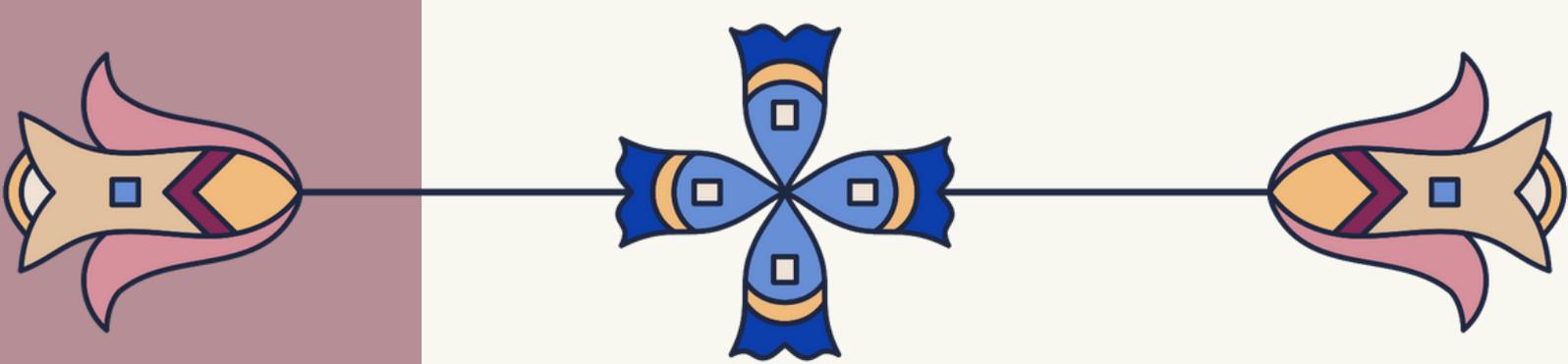


# EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

## SELF-CARE CAMPAIGN

Participants signed up and received a calendar of self-care challenge goals for the month. During the campaign they received articles on how to boost their mood the Native way, daily messaging and pointers on self-care, managing stress and loneliness brought on by isolation. MNIBA created materials on the virtual give-away, reminding folks to support Native business and artists, and to check in on elders, etc. Participants had the opportunity to be part of a weekly drawing to win Native produced self-care packages





## GET OUT THE VOTE CAMPAIGN

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MNIBA joined forces with Get Out the Vote campaign beginning in September 1, 2020 through November 3, 2020. We provided Native specific education, infographics, and messaging through our social network platforms. The Native voice was heard and recognized as a very important voting block and decider in the 2020 U.S. elections.

**VOTER  
REGISTRATION**

is more important than ever.



**ELECTION DAY**  
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

BE HEARD.



## WORKING COOPERATIVELY FOR COMMUNITY IMPACT

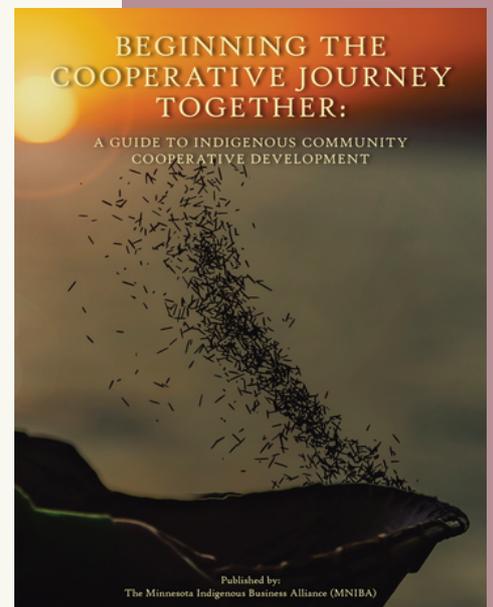
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MNIBA had a national launch of its publication in April 2020. The publication and printing was made possible through a long-standing relationship with Cooperative Development Services and USDA SDGG grant.

MNIBA began 2020 meeting with communities to discuss cooperative development and began a series entitled; "Creating a Collective Dream and Vision." MNIBA was able to introduce several Indigenous cooperative case studies and showcase how cooperatives today have a dual role in Indigenous communities. The workshops demonstrated how Indigenous cooperatives are:

- Place Based and Relational
- Supplying local needs as well as providing a pathway to community social and economic development while remaining close to their languages and cultural lifeways.
- Changing bottom lines to a quadruple bottom line focused on People, Place, Planet, Economy, in that order.
- Informed with processes and protocols by the people who are owner members, those using or generating the "product."

When Covid-19 hit, MNIBA immediately pivoted again and switched to a virtual model so that outreach would continue and hosted a series of virtual conversations with Indigenous cooperatives located in the U.S. and Canada.



## INVESTIGATING BEST PRACTICES TO ADDRESS THE CHILDCARE CRISIS

MNIBA formed a Statewide Childcare Working Group to collectively and cooperatively come together to address the childcare crisis in our tribal and rural communities. The working group explored and learned about numerous models and best practices for childcare that included worker-owned, parent and daycare cooperative membership models, daycare pods, corporate and community partnerships, tribal government, and corporate subsidized childcare models.

MNIBA hosted its virtual Childcare Cooperative Conference in May 2020. The four day virtual conference featured speakers and presentations on both cooperatives and community-based partnerships from the U.S. and Canada showcasing innovative and creative practices to meet their community's demands for early childhood education and affordable childcare. The virtual conference attracted Native practitioners and tribal early childhood programs from MN, ND, MI, WI, ME, MT, and SD.



### MNIBA's Virtual Childcare Conference

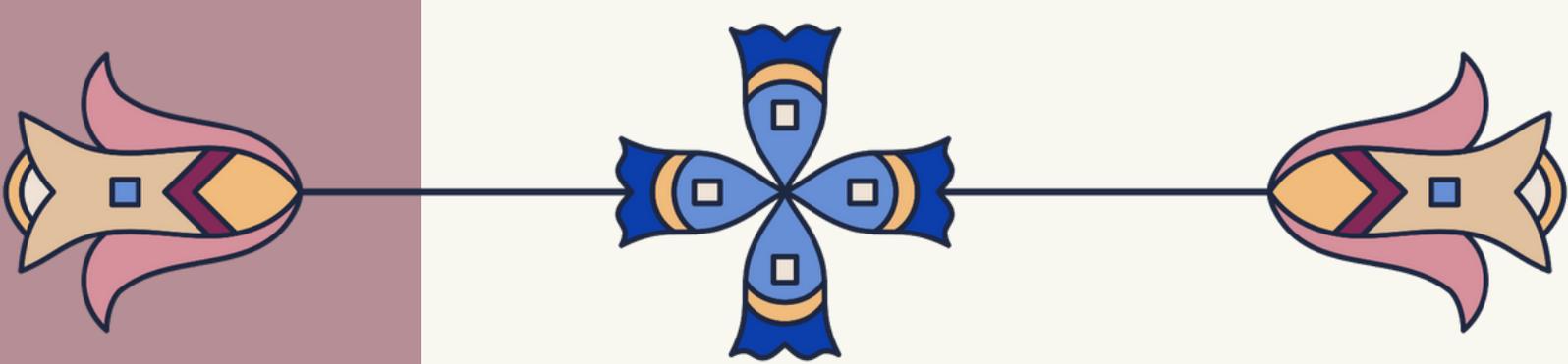
May 18-21, 2020 | 2:00-3:30 pm

*Practitioners from rural and urban communities share about innovative approaches and partnerships they have used to meet their childcare needs.*



BROUGHT TO YOU BY 





# BUY NATIVE CAMPAIGN

## NATIVE 2 NATIVE PROMOTION

MNIBA's social media posts and shares went off the charts in 2020. We created a series of messages and tested messages in the community that promoted Native 2 Native purchasing and promotion with our audiences. During each one of the holidays, we promoted both Native entrepreneurs from our communities. In 2019 we touched 1,809 people through our communication channels and in 2020 that jumped to over 11,900 people!

### REIMAGINING

*Decolonized Indigenous Foods*

**Chef Brian Yazzie - Gatherings Cafe Indigenpreneur**

Brian Yazzie was recently named new executive chef of the Gatherings Cafe at the Minneapolis American Indian Center. He and a group of sous chefs and volunteers have been using the café during pandemic to prepare meals to feed about 150 elders living in the Minneapolis and St. Paul Native American community.

Brian is an educator and advocate, and has been outspoken when it comes to cultural appropriation of Indigenous foods by non-native chefs. Last winter, Yazzie filmed in an episode of Taste the Nation with Padma Lakshmi, a Hulu docuseries about U.S. immigrant and Indigenous cuisine. During the filming, Yazzie fired up the grill and served antelope meat from a local hunter, plus corn and beans from a Native farm in the area.



**MNIBA.ORG**

“

**BUY NATIVE FIRST!**

It is our collective responsibility to invest in our Indigenous economies!

— *Indigenous Ideas In Action*



Charlie Stately - Woodland Indian Crafts

**MNIBA.ORG**

### Did you know.....

Small native business ownership continues to be a crucial tool for expanding social, cultural and financial prosperity and community self-determination.

*Indigenous Ideas in Action*



**MNIBA.ORG**



### REIMAGINING

#### *The Digital Divide*

Madonna & Melvin Yawakie  
Turtle Island Communications  
Indigenpreneurs

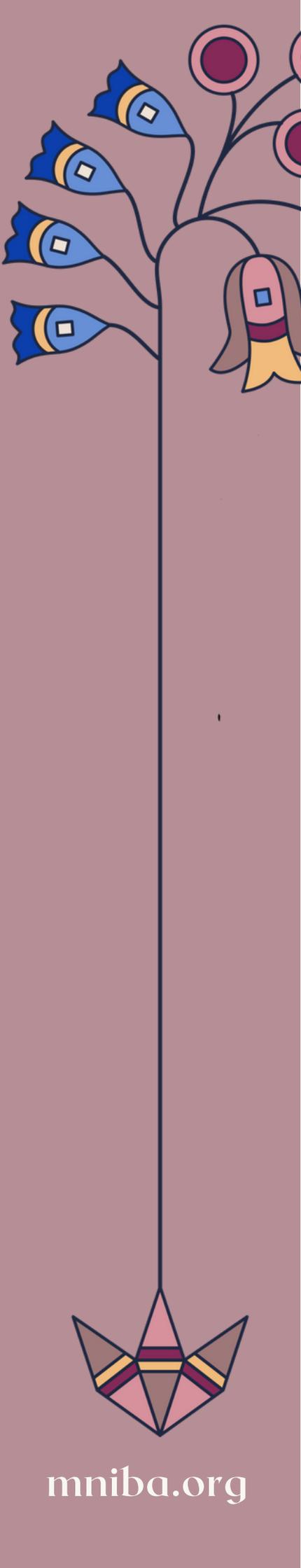
MADONNA & MELVIN YAWAKIE ARE DOING THEIR PART TO CREATE DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES WHERE OTHERS SEE A DIGITAL DIVIDE. AS THEY CONNECT TRIBAL COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES TO THE INTERNET, TRIBAL ECONOMIES ARE BEING RESHAPED AND NEW JOBS ARE CREATED.

THEY LEAVE BEHIND AN INFRASTRUCTURE AND A BUSINESS MODEL FOR A TRIBAL NATION TO OWN & OPERATE THEIR OWN BROADBAND SYSTEM.




*Indigenous Ideas In Action*

MNIBA.ORG



# MNISOTA ARTISTS ALLIANCE

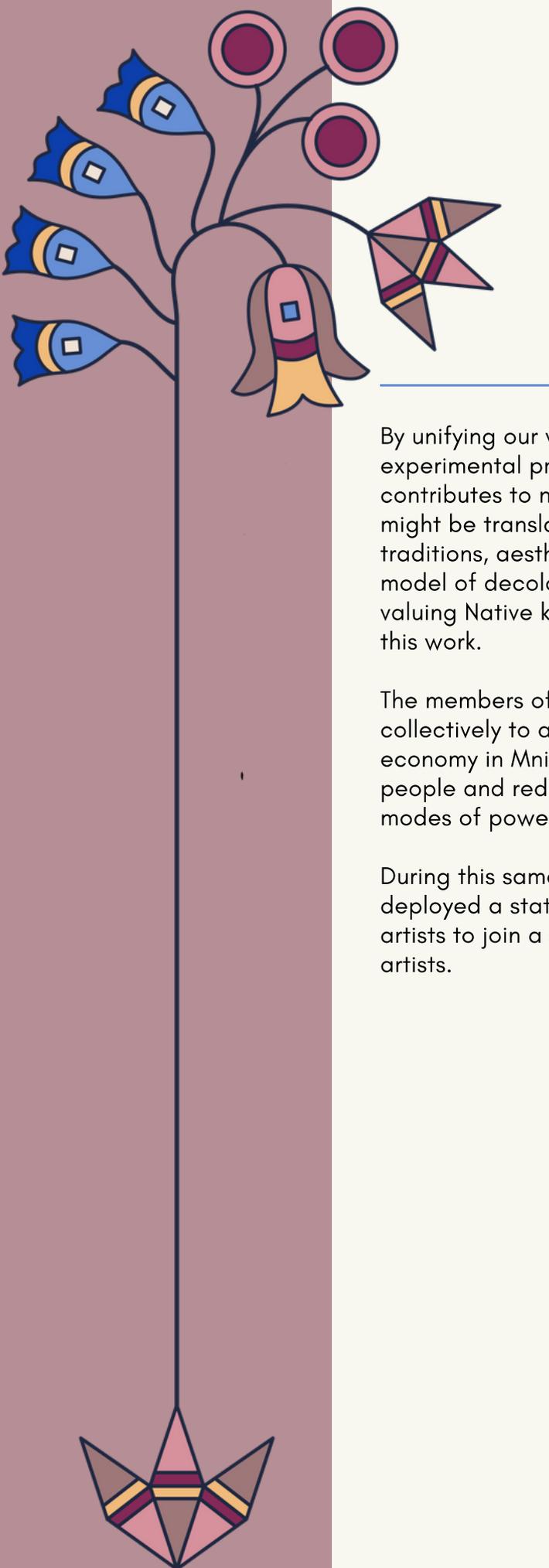
## ADVOCATING FOR EQUITY, EQUALITY, AND INCLUSION IN THE ARTS

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It must be understood that Native artists and organizations serving Native artists before the global pandemic, have been for decades working to hold institutions, like the MN State Arts Board and other state agencies accountable and have demanded action, transparency and equitable access to funding.

MNIBA began hosting statewide meetings in July 2020 with 16 Native-led organizations that serve Native artists to discuss a range of challenges, from the predictable and widespread tokenism to the many shades of exploitation, all of which became amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. In many ways, the pandemic and the murder of George Floyd has distilled these historic challenges into a clearly visible concentration. The statewide working group are representative of rural, tribal territories, urban geographies, genders, generations, and positions. They include curators, economic development and housing organizations, galleries, museums, nonprofits, tribal programs, theater, dance, and more that serve native artists and creatives.

After several months of meeting together, the working group members agreed to call themselves the Mni Sota Native Arts Alliance (MNA) and that Native peoples have the inherent right of cultural sovereignty over not only their narrative, but the management of their arts and cultures in Mni Sota.



By unifying our voices, MNAA created a space for dialogue, experimental practice, and community engaged work that contributes to new ideas and an understanding of how art mediums might be translated, and transformed by Native knowledge, traditions, aesthetics, performance, and land-use systems. This model of decolonized, non-institutional ways of engaging with and valuing Native knowledge and creative productions is at the heart of this work.

The members of MNAA are building strength by working together collectively to advance funding for the Native arts ecology and economy in Mni Sota. MNAA's goal is to be managed by Native people and redesigned in a way that decentralizes institutional modes of power and systemic racism.

During this same time, MNIBA brought on three Arts Activists and deployed a statewide artist survey, and created a call for Native artists to join a series of conversations designed by Mnisota Native artists.

• MNIBA Presents •  
**MniSota Native Artist Conversations**

To inform the development of a statewide Native-led Arts Collective/ Organization

**Call for Artists to join the conversations**

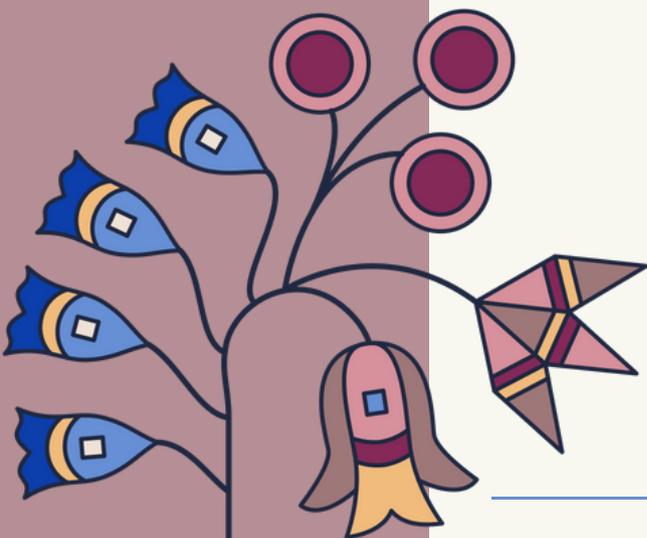
EVERY WEDNESDAY | 11AM-12PM | HOSTED VIA ZOOM

Zoom Link: <https://www.mniba.org/news-events/event-calendar.html>

We're hosting these conversations because of the lack of equitable access to funding and resources for our arts community. Your conversations will help inform the development of a statewide Native-led Arts Collective/ Organization.

**WEEKLY TOPICS:**

<b>9/9/20: Artist Resources (Grants, Fellowships, Residencies)</b> Please join if you have participated in art grants, fellowships, or residencies	<b>10/7/20: What's Emerging For Artists During COVID-19?</b> Please join to discuss COVID-19 experiences, including what's emerging and how to adapt
<b>9/16/20: Anishinaabe and Lakota/Dakota Artists and Art Practices</b> Please join if you create or identify with Anishinaabe and Lakota/Dakota art	<b>10/14/20: Trauma-Informed Artists and Art Practices</b> Please join if you practice and/or teach trauma-informed art/techniques
<b>9/23/20: Other Native Relatives Art Practices</b> Please join if you live in MniSota and represent another tribe or mixed ancestry and create their art	<b>10/21/20: Intergenerational Art</b> Please join if you teach or learn about art that is traditional or contemporary and how we pass that on
<b>9/30/20: Artist Entrepreneurs</b> Please join if you consider yourself an Artist Entrepreneur	<b>10/28/20: Open Conversation</b> Please join if you have anything to contribute beyond our weekly topics



MNIBA produced, promoted and distributed the 2020 Winter Solstice Art Catalogue locally, regionally and nationally. It was so that it caught the attention of the Tribal Business News and Native News Online, who published articles about the collaboration.

**Chholing Taha - Shawl Lady:**

*"I wanted to let you know how successful your Winter Solstice Art catalog has been for me. I was very, very worried about this holiday season as 60% of the small shops who sold my prints and cards went permanently out of business. So I wasn't sure how things would go for me and my family.*

*I am pleased to tell you I have had a 300% increase in sales and an unbelievable 1019% increase in traffic on my online store. Winter would have felt very different for me if folks like yourselves were not working hard for the community."*

**Thomas Peacock - Black Bears & Blueberries Publishing:**

*"As a result of the COVID pandemic we haven't been able to do any of the person to person marketing we were accustomed to, like attending conferences and workshops, and visiting schools, businesses, and bookstores to show and promote our books. We rely on schools for a good share of our business as they typically buy in classroom lots. So we had to try to build an online presence. We use Twitter, FaceBook, and list serves, and make individual calls and emails to potential customers.*

*What we noticed as a result of MNIBA's online Winter Solstice Art catalog and promotion of our business, as well an elevated presence on their website as a 'business of the month', is a noticeable increase in individual sales. While these are typically small orders, they have had a definite impact on our bottom line. We also noticed we are receiving these orders from all over the country. We appreciate it very much. We should ride out this disruption just fine."*

# WHO WE WORKED WITH IN 2020



National  
Congress of  
American  
Indians



Blandin Foundation™  
STRENGTHENING RURAL MINNESOTA



Northwest Indian  
Community Development Center



Center for Cooperatives  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



# RELATIONSHIPS

## OUR DONORS AND FUNDERS

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Wopida Tanka – Chi Miigwech for the generous support of donors and funders, without their support we could not have been able to accomplish what we did in 2020.

### 21 Anonymous Donations

Abigail K.  
Adam D.  
Alison H.  
Alyssa R.  
Anne H.  
Apryl J.  
Ashley S.  
Ava B.  
Betsy K.  
Brita M.  
Carly E.  
Catherine M.  
Catherine W.  
Charlotte T.  
Chavonn S.  
Christina S.  
Christina Y.  
Claire W.  
Common Futures  
Dani P.  
David M.  
David S.  
Denise P.  
Douglas C.  
Elaine H.  
Ella M.  
Emily B.

Eric C.  
First Nations Development  
Institute  
Global Giving  
Hannah W.  
Helpsystems  
Isla S.  
Jennifer P.  
Jesse G.  
Jesse J.  
Jesse S.  
John B.  
Jonah F.  
Julianne H.  
Kamille K.  
Katie T.  
Kayaire G.  
Kim S  
Kimberly S.  
Kirsten S.  
Kristen T.  
Kristi F.  
Lawrence S.  
Madonna Y.  
Maggie B.  
Marlene K.  
Matthew S.  
McKnight Foundation

Michael A.  
Molly O.  
Nan O.  
Nancy K.  
NDN Collective  
Nicholas L.  
Northwest Area  
Foundation  
Pamela S.  
Patricia P.  
Penny H.  
Rebecca K.  
Remy C.  
Rosy S.  
Samantha H.  
Sara M.  
Stephanie D.  
Tisha M.  
Tony L.  
Tri Minh V.  
Vanessa M.  
Wayne D.  
Wendy H.  
Yvonne C.

# PARTNERSHIP AND IN-KIND SUPPORT

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Our partner's organizational support is invaluable and deeply appreciated. By joining together we accomplish so much more and bring valuable resources, professional development and training to our communities. In 2020, MNIBA received the generous in-kind support of staff to attend meetings, goods, services, conduct research, provide meeting space, and meal donations from the following organizational partners:

- Northland Foundation
- Women Venture
- MN Tribal Resources for Early Childhood Care
- Leech Lake Early Childhood Care & Daycare Center
- Cooperative Development Institute
- Fond du lac Tribal and Community College - Early Childhood
- Fond du lac Tribe - Early childhood division
- American Indian Community Housing Organization
- Indigenous Visioning
- Mahube Otwa - Early Childhood Program
- NW Minnesota Foundation
- Blandin Foundation
- Northwest Indian Community Development Center
- Plains Art Museum
- ARTZ Cooperative of Zuni Pueblo
- Qualla Arts and Crafts Cooperative
- Artic Cooperatives - Arts Division
- Cooperative Development Services
- Southwestern Indian Polytec Institute
- University of WI Cooperative Center
- Cooperative Catalyst
- Cooperatives First Canada
- U of M Center for Urban and Regional Affairs

# MNIBA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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In 2020, the following people generously donated their time and expertise in guiding the organization, keeping the mission and Native business front and center, creating policy, stewarding the funds and strategic planning for MNIBA's future.



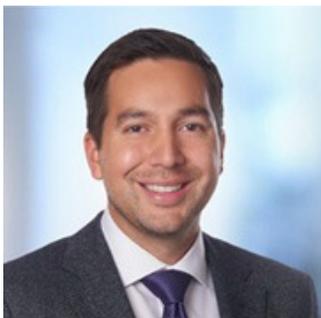
**Wayne Ducheneaux, II**  
Executive Director  
Native Governance Center  
Cheyenne River Sioux



**Elaine S. Hansen**  
Retired Director  
UMD Center for  
Economic Development



**LeAnn Littlewolf**  
Economic Development Director  
American Indian Community Housing Organization  
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe



**Jesse Sixkiller**  
Attorney  
8 x 8  
Cherokee Nation

# MNIBA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Dani Pieratos**  
President  
Harvest Nation  
Bois Forte Band of Chippewa



**Shanne Soulier**  
CEO  
Big Spirit, Inc.  
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa



**Madonna Peltier Yawakie**  
CEO  
Turtle Island Communications  
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa



\$7,000

awarded to Native entrepreneurs, artists, and community members.



729

MNIBA virtual workshop participants.



129

MNIBA live event participants.



24

Diverse Suppliers

96%

Indigenous led



100

Native entrepreneurs served outside of workshops and events and supports including review of market, business and financial plans, network connections and introductions, and referrals.



11,900

people touched through email communicues, phone inquiries, statewide work groups, direct merchandise purchases, newsletter, website, and social media posts, and channels.



100%

Indigenous focused projects.



\$30,000

donations



\$4,5000

partner in-kind donations for goods, services, meeting space and meals donated.



1600

Hours of time-based giving on behalf of the board of directors, ED and volunteers at workshops and events.

# 2020 IMPACT AT A GLANCE

MINNESOTA INDIGENOUS  
BUSINESS ALLIANCE



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

MNIBA's goals for 2021 are to continue to expand the visibility, genius and indigenuity of our Native entrepreneurs and artists in the region and celebrate their accomplishments, as well as those of our youth, community members and organizational partners in all our social media platforms and communiques.

One of MNIBA's ongoing goals is to support as many Native entrepreneurs, artists and organizations as possible throughout the year. It is important for MNIBA to walk its talk about Buy Native and Putting Native Business First. This includes who designs the artwork and layout of the design that goes into our Impact Report. We would like to acknowledge Marlena Myles, Spirit Lake Dakota for her beautiful Dakota floral designs.

We have learned through COVID-19 that the way we are used to conducting business has been irrevocably changed. We will continue to assist Native entrepreneurs and artists on how to be nimble, to pivot and be responsive to their customers in new ways.

We will continue to grow the narrative of the equitable economies and systems we had in place prior to colonization that were grounded in cooperation, sharing, and community well-being, demonstrated by the practice of the "give away" where accumulated wealth was redistributed among its members to ensure community-wide survival and ongoing prosperity, a practice that continues today.

Our goal is to forge new strategic trade routes, both virtual and physical and explore building new trade confederacies.

We will continue to move towards building equitable economies that are driven by Native ways of being and knowing for Native businesses and artists in Mnisota because we know how to work together in cooperation by connecting people around a shared vision!



# FOLLOW ALONG

Interested in learning more about our work? We post updates about our work, workshops, events, featured entrepreneurs, and artists on our website and social media platforms. Please "Like" and "Follow Us," and don't wait until next year's Impact Report to learn about what we are up to.

Please visit our website at [www.mniba.org](http://www.mniba.org) and sign up to receive our communiques and newsletter.