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# Tobacco Use Prevention

2021 REPORT TO THE MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE

03/31/2021

## **Tobacco Use Prevention: 2021 Report to the Minnesota Legislature**

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March 31, 2021

Dear Legislators:

Thanks to the collective efforts of grantees and community partners who are funded by Minnesota Statute, section 144.396, Tobacco Use Prevention, we have reduced youth cigarette use to the lowest level in our state's history. However, the work is far from over with persistently high rates of youth vaping (e-cigarette use).

Now more than ever, Tobacco Use Prevention funds are critically important to keeping our next generation free from nicotine dependence. New products like e-cigarettes threaten to trap our youth in a cycle of addiction to commercial tobacco products, like cigarettes, cigars and chew, as well as and other substances. The former U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams declared e-cigarette use among kids an epidemic.

Minnesota kids are still vaping at very high rates, with one in five high school students using e-cigarettes and 70% of high school and middle school users reporting signs of nicotine dependence, according to new data from the 2020 Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey. This data also shows about four in five Minnesota students (78.4%) reported that the first tobacco product they ever tried was flavored.

This research suggests our public health efforts are working, but that we need to redouble our efforts and investments to address new tactics from the tobacco industry. In particular, the data on youth vaping alarms us, as we see how this industry continues to use flavors, advertising, internet sales and other means to allure youth into nicotine dependence. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic underscores the need to reduce commercial tobacco use and vaping to improve lung health. Current and former smokers are at higher risk for getting severely ill from COVID-19. E-cigarette aerosol may also damage lung tissue, especially concerning during a respiratory pandemic.

Our data also continue to show many communities, such as Minnesota's American Indian, African American, low income, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) populations, still use tobacco at higher rates. As a result, these communities will be more likely to suffer harm and premature death caused by commercial tobacco. Culturally competent, tailored, and community-led efforts are vital to addressing commercial tobacco use in these communities.

The good news is that we know what it takes to make a positive change. Preventing youth commercial tobacco use, including the use of e-cigarettes, requires a sustainable and comprehensive approach. Large-scale prevention efforts, such as public education to raise awareness of the dangers of these products and measures to reduce youth access to these products in their communities, have been shown to be effective.

Tobacco Use Prevention funding supports these efforts, but we must do more. Minnesota is up against a multi-billion-dollar tobacco industry that spends over \$110 million every year promoting its products in our state. Research shows the more we invest in tobacco prevention and cessation programs, the greater and quicker our impact on reducing these harms. Addressing the wave of youth e-cigarette use will also require an intensive effort with robust and innovative strategies to combat the impact of new vaping technologies and industry marketing tactics.

Our history shows that Minnesota is capable of taking bold action to protect future generations from commercial tobacco's harm. We are still seeing the health impact and benefits of our progressive policies, like comprehensive clean indoor air, increasing the cost of tobacco, and laws that specifically protect our youth. Looking back on Minnesota's progress in tobacco prevention, I am optimistic we can build on our strengths and implement new approaches to protect our children, grandchildren, and future generations from the devastating health and financial burdens caused by commercial tobacco.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jan K. Malcolm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jan K. Malcolm  
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Enclosure: Tobacco Use Prevention: 2021 Report to the Minnesota Legislature

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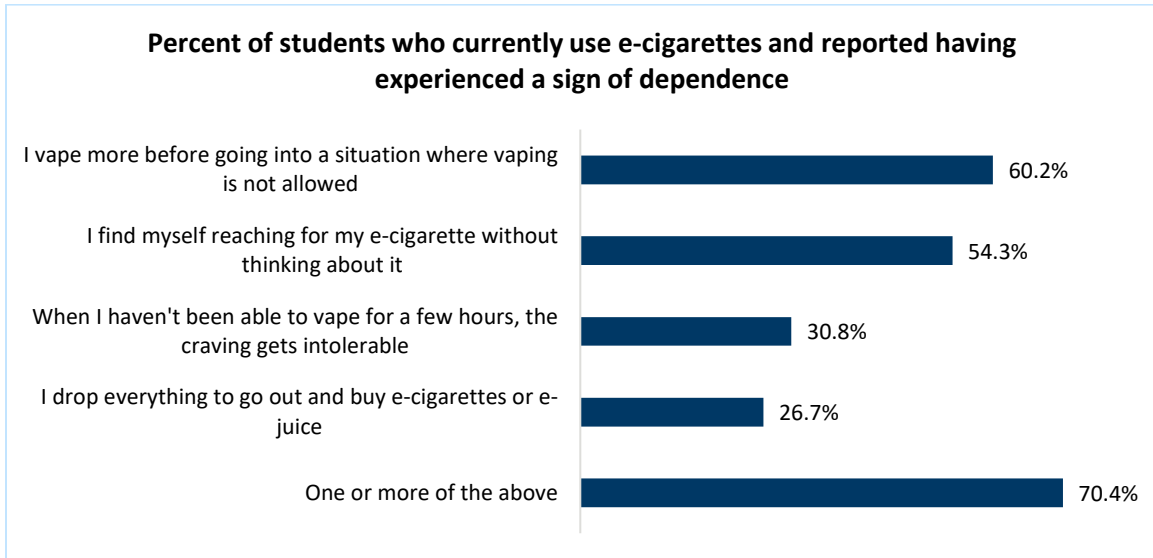
## Commercial tobacco use is still a problem

While youth cigarette smoking continues to decline, youth vaping remains at very high rates, with one in five high school students using e-cigarettes and 70% of high school and middle school users reporting signs of nicotine dependence.<sup>1</sup> With these high rates, a new generation is at risk of addiction to commercial tobacco products.

### Youth e-cigarette use and nicotine exposure escalate the risk of addiction

Nicotine primes the adolescent brain for addiction. Because their brains are still developing, adolescents can become addicted to nicotine more easily than adults.

Data from the 2020 Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey show that overall, 70.4% of students who use e-cigarettes report one or more signs of dependence, and these products are being used with greater intensity.



### Youth exposed to nicotine are more likely to use other substances

Nicotine can change brain chemistry, making youth more susceptible to addiction. And the earlier the exposure, the greater the risk. Evidence also suggests that, compared to youth who have never used them, youth who have tried e-cigarettes are twice as likely to start smoking in the future.

Minnesota data show that among students who use e-cigarettes, 65.1% of high school and 71.7% of middle school students had ever vaped marijuana, a statistically significant increase from 2017.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 2020 Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey

## New e-cigarette technologies pose greater risks for youth

Nearly all e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which can harm brain development as teens grow. Popular e-cigarettes like JUUL have developed new technologies using nicotine salts that are absorbed into the body more effectively and come in record-high levels of nicotine. The nicotine levels in these products are not regulated by any state or federal agency.

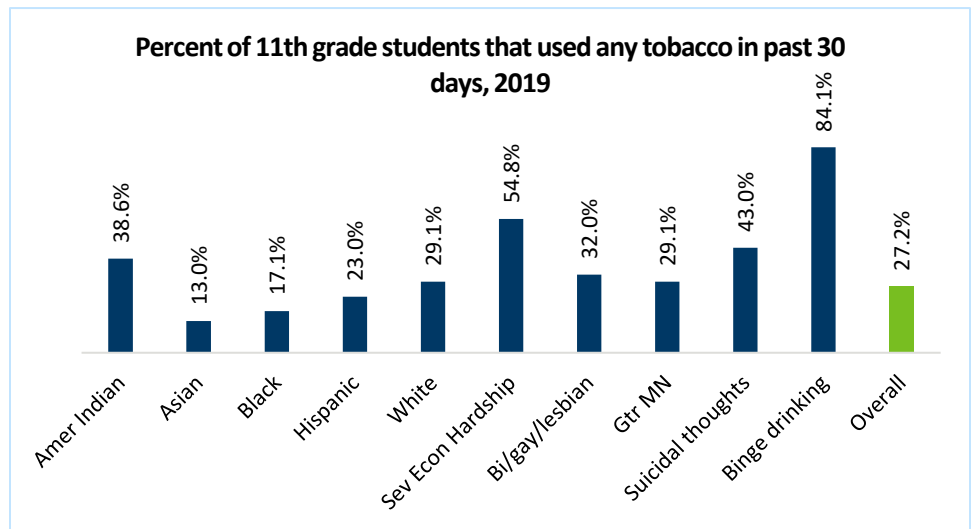
E-cigarettes and vapes are also often flavored like fruit and other flavors, have limited odor, and are easily hidden. In Minnesota, four in five students (78.4%) report that the first tobacco product they ever tried was flavored.<sup>1</sup>

## Many communities still use tobacco at higher rates

Data also show persistent tobacco use disparities between communities in Minnesota. For example, American Indian, African American, low income, and LGBTQ teens have higher than average tobacco use rates.

Significant disparities remain among both youth and adult populations historically targeted by the Tobacco

Industry. The 2019 Minnesota Student Survey revealed American Indian and white students, as well as students that identify as bisexual, gay, or lesbian, students experiencing severe economic hardship, and those that suffer from mental health and substance use disorders, use tobacco at significantly higher rates.



## Culturally competent, tailored, and community-led efforts are needed

The 2016 Community Voices report<sup>2</sup> described the deeply embedded social norm of commercial tobacco use in many communities. Often, tobacco products are widely available, easily accessible, and marketed to target specific communities. Additionally, tobacco use is often seen as a lesser threat compared to other community

<sup>2</sup> Minnesota Department of Health, *Community Voices: Reducing Tobacco-Related Health Inequities*. 2016.

issues that are reported as more serious or urgent. Communities are often best suited to identify and address their own tobacco-related needs and priorities.<sup>2</sup>

The report also notes that when quitting, community members wish to use services that are provided by members of their own communities, which are not readily available. There is a shortage of culturally specific and language-appropriate tobacco-related outreach and education efforts and services, which contributes to misconceptions about tobacco. Culturally relevant and peer-to-peer messaging is most effective.

## Tobacco Use Prevention funds support community efforts to reduce the harms of commercial tobacco use

Minnesota Statutes, section 144.396, Tobacco Use Prevention (TUP), supports statewide tobacco prevention efforts by providing the funding for two grant community programs, a system of statewide technical assistance and training, and specialized evaluation and community engagement efforts. Grantees work to reduce tobacco’s harm by implementing local tobacco control policies, systems, and environmental changes through a range of evidence-based strategies, while statewide technical assistance and training helps to build their capacity for doing the work. Additionally, tobacco use surveillance and grantee evaluation efforts help measure tobacco’s harm in our communities.

Through fiscal years 2019 and 2020, TUP helped grantees and community partners make positive impacts in their communities. Grant activities funded by TUP are shown in **Figure 1**.

**Figure 1: Grant activities funded by Tobacco Use Prevention**

Tobacco-Free Communities - Community Grantees	Tribal Tobacco Prevention Grantees	Technical Assistance and Training Grantees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth tobacco prevention</li> <li>• Cultural practices and education</li> <li>• Retail environment restrictions and tobacco industry influence</li> <li>• Tobacco-free events and outdoor spaces</li> <li>• Cessation referral and integration into existing services and networks</li> <li>• Health systems changes for tobacco treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cessation programs implementation</li> <li>• Health systems changes for tobacco treatment</li> <li>• Cultural awareness and education activities</li> <li>• Community smoke-free policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual consultation</li> <li>• Group trainings and peer learning</li> <li>• Development of online resources and education materials</li> </ul>

Grantees worked to reduce youth access to tobacco by updating and strengthening ordinances to restrict the sale and use of tobacco products, affecting over 500,000 Minnesotans. They also worked to create smoke- and commercial tobacco-free environments, denormalizing use of tobacco products and reducing exposure to harmful secondhand smoke for nearly 10,000 Minnesotans.



## Tobacco Use Prevention: 2021 Report to the Minnesota Legislature

Grantees also worked with 7 health care sites to improve health care providers' assessment of patient tobacco use and increase referrals to cessation support. These sites have impacted over 2,500 Minnesotans by integrating cessation support or education into their work with clients.

Technical assistance and training grantees were essential in the work by providing 21,500 hours of assistance and training in support of grantees advancing their local work in communities across Minnesota.

## Tobacco Use Prevention's community impact

Tobacco Use Prevention funding makes possible the Tobacco-Free Communities Grant Program and Tribal Tobacco Grant Program, as well as a network of statewide training and technical assistance providers. These programs provide capacity for a range of 27 organizations across the state, including local public health agencies, community-based organizations, non-profit partners, and tribal governments, to prevent youth commercial tobacco use, engage and educate communities, and work toward local solutions for reducing commercial tobacco's harm.

### Reducing youth access

Grantees worked to reduce youth access to commercial tobacco by contributing to efforts to update and strengthen restrictions on the sale and use of tobacco products through education and community engagement.

- Raised the minimum age to purchase commercial tobacco to 21 in Eagan, Hastings, Lilydale, South St. Paul, Dakota County, Lakeville, and West St. Paul.
- Overall, updated local tobacco ordinances have impacted over 500,000 Minnesotans.

### Protecting people from secondhand smoke

Grantees worked to create smoke- and commercial tobacco-free environments, helping to prevent commercial tobacco initiation, reduce exposure to tobacco use, and promote clean-air environments. Working with colleges, cultural centers, senior centers, childcare facilities and more, they supported:

- 5 childcare centers and schools have implemented smoke- or commercial tobacco-free environments, protecting over 1,600 youth and adults from secondhand smoke exposure.
- 7 cultural centers or places of worship went smoke- or commercial tobacco-free, providing a clean air environment for 6,600 people.
- Overall, 14 policy changes have impacted nearly 10,000 Minnesotans.

### Helping people quit

Grantees worked to reduce the number of people who smoke by working to improve health care providers' assessment of patient tobacco use and increase referrals to cessation support.

- JustUs Health Behavioral Health Clinic is helping members of the LGBTQ and behavioral health communities quit commercial tobacco use.
- Morrison County Juvenile Justice Program is offering cessation support and linkages for youth who have committed illegal acts and who use commercial tobacco.
- 7 sites have integrated cessation support and/or education into their work with clients, impacting over 2,500 Minnesotans.

## Engaging and educating communities

Grantees worked to educate and engage members of their communities on the harms of commercial tobacco through many activities, including meetings and presentations, as well as outreach communications via paid and earned media.

Specifically, grantees engaged in over 1,500 combined education and earned or paid media activities.

- For example, Morrison-Todd-Wadena staff presented on the harms of vaping and provided cessation resources to 125 7th-10th graders.
- Hmong American Partnership held weekly youth groups to promote commercial tobacco prevention and build leadership skills for Hmong youth.
- Tobacco-Free Alliance had multiple earned media activities including newspaper articles in the Lillie News and Star Tribune on policy successes, as well as an interview on Twin Cities Talk Radio to educate community members about St. Paul's menthol ordinance and T21.

## Building community capacity

Technical assistance and training providers delivered many tools and resources to support grantees and their communities move forward in their work. These providers:

- Responded to approximately 1,690 individual technical assistance requests for consultation.
- Conducted 54 group trainings, webinars, and conference calls.
- Provided 21,500 hours of technical assistance and training for grantees and their community partners.
- Produced or updated about 70 pieces of informational material (guidance documents, fact sheets and handouts, toolkits, newsletters, signage, videos, sample power points, and surveys, etc.).

## Tobacco-Free Communities grantee summaries

The Tobacco-Free Communities Grant Program (TFC) funds local community grants and technical assistance and training (TA) grants that aim to prevent youth commercial tobacco use, promote cessation, and address tobacco-related disparities in Minnesota using community-driven tobacco prevention and control activities and strategies.

Community grantees help build community capacity, change social norms around tobacco, and foster community readiness and support for tobacco control policies within their communities to protect youth from the harms of tobacco. TA providers support community grantees by ensuring they have the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to reduce tobacco-related health disparities and the harm from commercial tobacco in their communities.

### Community grantees

#### African Immigrants Community Services

African Immigrants Community Services (AICS) provides support services to East African refugees and immigrants in the Twin Cities area. AICS assessed the community's need for commercial tobacco prevention and cessation services by engaging East African community members and leaders through listening circles, community forums, and individual stakeholder interviews. Assessment data will be used to recruit East African youth and women community leaders to train them as peer educators to engage and educate their peers in tobacco and hookah prevention and cessation, with a focus on addressing misinformation about tobacco use.

#### Highlights

- The women's peer-to-peer group continued to meet twice a week, switching to a virtual meeting from April-October. Over 50 women participated in the peer education and support groups, and peer educators engaged with 230 women in the community around hookah and tobacco use.
- Recruited/ maintained 16 youth peer-educators who had over 900 conversations with community members about the harms of tobacco, vaping, and hookah use over the last year.
- Youth learned advocacy and leadership skills through learning about tobacco industry targeting of the Black community and developing counter-messages to share with their community.

#### Ain Dah Yung Center

Through the Ninijanisag Program, the Ain Dah Yung Center (ADYC) works with American Indian youth between the ages of 8-21 in the Twin Cities metro area to reduce non-traditional tobacco use in American Indian youth and young adults. The Ninijanisag (Our Children) Program educates youth about traditional tobacco use and general health education, engaging them in leadership and advocacy roles for a healthy lifestyle within their cultural context. This culturally responsive program leverages the strengths of the American Indian Community, including learning respect for tobacco as a sacred medicine and understanding how to live life in a good way.

*“Ain Dah Yung Center is a good organization. You don’t see other programs really investing in Native kids by tying them closely to their culture. Usually, the focus is on older kids, but here the older kids are connected to the younger ones and they are all connected to other youth and adults in the Native community. Culture is part of you, and ADYC’s focus on culture and community helps us be home in our bodies, without alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.”*

*- Youth Participant*

## Highlights

- The Ninijanisag program has held several Tobacco focused youth summits throughout the state of Minnesota. Over 100 unduplicated youth have participated in these events. They are currently working towards hosting the next event via social media.
- Between 11/1/2018 and 10/31/2020 The Ninijansisag program held over 200 tobacco prevention-based groups. These groups included tobacco informed programming, cultural events, and traditional medicine teachings.
- The Ninijanisag program has been operating at capacity during this time. With community referrals weekly with youth wanting to join the programming. The positive response from youth per our yearly evaluation has been insightful and uplifting.

## Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES)

CLUES is a community organization that specializes in assisting Latino individuals and families to be healthy, prosperous, and engaged in their communities. CLUES assessed tobacco-related health disparities and health needs of LGBTQ Latinos and Latinos living with mental illness through interviews, listening circles, and sharing sessions. Assessment findings will be utilized to develop a community-wide campaign promoting cessation. CLUES also employs Community Health Workers to integrate cessation connections and support into existing services and networks, and partners with local behavioral health clinics serving the Latino population to integrate cessation into their services.

## Highlights

- Launched “Es My time” media campaign across several different outlets, which specifically targets tobacco users and their family members in the LGBTQ Latino community and Latinos living with mental illness. This campaign has reached over 20,000 community members so far.
- Paired tobacco use education and cessation referral with community crisis services they provided during the pandemic response, such as putting resources in food boxes and meal deliveries, which reached over 1200 families.
- Created and distributed educational videos on lung health, smoking, and COVID-19 through several channels of social media, including sharing with three clinic partners that shared them with clients.

## Hmong American Partnership

Hmong American Partnership (HAP) works with Southeast Asian refugees and immigrants in Saint Paul to address cultural norms and practices around tobacco use. HAP engaged key community leaders to serve on a community advisory council to drive their work throughout the grant. HAP is assessing the community’s knowledge of tobacco and cessation services, engaging and educating youth in tobacco prevention, and assessing the environmental tobacco policies in their community.

### Highlights

- Formed partnerships with two schools to implement a poster and video campaigns with youth. Over thirty youth participated in the project, which were shared with the entire school.
- Attended monthly coalition meetings and stakeholders input meetings to learn about local tobacco policy and share experiences of tobacco use from the Hmong community.
- Presented on tobacco and vaping use to two school assemblies, reaching over 1600 students.

### JustUs Health

The Shift MN program of JustUs Health engages with LGBTQ young adults around the Twin Cities metro area. They work to build support for commercial tobacco prevention and control efforts in LGBTQ communities and partner with LGBTQ young adults to develop leadership skills in tobacco control, cessation promotion, health equity, and advocacy. This work includes engaging young adults at community events, collecting and sharing data on LGBTQ tobacco use trends, and developing LGBTQ specific cessation materials. They are also working with JustUs Behavioral Health Clinic staff to integrate cessation referral and support within the clinical setting.

### Highlights

- Seven young-adult interns from the LGBTQ+ community completed a Tobacco as Social Justice curriculum, then used what they had learned to create a photo voice project, a zine writing project, and a street mural.
- Increased behavioral health provider capacity to address tobacco use by training 15 incoming clinic interns and providing incentives for clinic therapists to complete a more vigorous training on tobacco cessation treatment and referral.
- Provided LGBTQ+ tailored cessation resources on their LGBTQ Health Hub website and provider directory.

### Minneapolis American Indian Center

Minneapolis American Indian Center (MAIC) works with American Indian youth in the Twin Cities metro area to develop leadership capacities and skills. MAIC's Sacred Leader's Program works with Native youth to educate about the difference between commercial and traditional tobacco, traditional uses of sacred tobacco, the tobacco industry's targeting of Native people, and the harms of commercial tobacco use. They work to increase youth skills to advocate for smoke-free spaces, integrate their newly developed signage into other south Minneapolis residential and commercial spaces, and build a broader commercial tobacco-free community for tomorrow's generation in the American Indian Cultural Corridor.

### Highlights

- Sacred Leader youth participation tripled from an average of 5 youths per week to 15, a 200 percent increase in building resiliency and identity in Native youths to combat against commercial tobacco usage while developing capacity in learning, growing, and harvesting traditional tobacco.
- Facilitated two tobacco retreats with Sacred Leader to engage youth on their understanding and knowledge of traditional tobacco through storytelling with an emphasis on traditional tobacco creation stories in addition to the Sacred Circle of Tobacco Curriculum initially developed from multiple organizations in

Montana (revised in 2018 by IHS, Clearway Minnesota<sup>SM</sup> and the National Native Network) on tobacco prevention for youths today as a foundation for leading the retreats.

- Engaged youth to developed culturally relevant floral signage with messages "Think of the young ones when you smoke" and "Our ancestors are watching" in Ojibwe and Dakhota, which became a center piece in bringing awareness to the Indian center's Commercial Tobacco Free Grounds policy. Signage were 9x6 feet banners hung on the walls of the center.

## **Morrison-Todd-Wadena Community Health Board**

Morrison-Todd-Wadena Community Health Board works to engage youth in tobacco prevention efforts and promote and integrate cessation services among low-income rural residents. In all three counties they are working with community organizations, businesses, and events to be tobacco-free and free of commercial tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship. They are also working to improve and integrate cessation protocols into local community clinics and social service organizations. They partnered with local youth groups to educate youth on tobacco prevention and plan to engage these youth in working towards tobacco-free parks and sports field policies and develop a media messaging campaign.

### **Highlights**

- Youth group members across the three counties learned to film, edit, and produce a PSA-style ad on e-cigarettes and vaping. This ad was shown in the previews at the movie theater shared by the three counties, reaching hundreds of community members.
- Coordinators presented state Tobacco 21 law learning sessions for city/county decision makers and community members, reaching over 60 people. Being able to present virtually allowed them to offer this education session to the broader community and community leaders.
- Supported their local health system to provide two *Freedom from Smoking* classes and are working to be able to provide a virtual option of this class.

## **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Minnesota**

NAMI focuses on engaging mental health workers and people living with mental illness throughout Minnesota. NAMI has focused on increasing the number of mental health workers trained in smoking cessation and increasing cessation treatment and referral by mental health workers by developing and launching an accredited training for mental health workers across the state. NAMI is working toward a commercial tobacco-free grounds policy for their worksite and has completed a staff readiness assessment.

### **Highlights**

- Developed, finalized and launched the *Tobacco Cessation for Mental Health Providers* online training. So far 120 people have started the course and 76 providers have completed the training. Conducted outreach to mental health organizations and providers to educate them and encourage integration of cessation into their program services.
- Recruited 30 mental health providers to complete the training and participate in long-term evaluation of the effect of the training on cessation referral.

- Participated in the Lung Mind Alliance to support other behavioral health organizations in training staff and implementing tobacco policies.

## **Pillsbury United Communities**

Pillsbury United Communities works with African American and other cultural populations in North Minneapolis to increase culturally appropriate connections to cessation services and integration into existing community services, programs, and networks. They use a unique human-centered design process to assess smokers' attitudes and beliefs about smoking, barriers to quitting, and needs for cessation services. They focus on empathy-based approaches to promote and refer commercial tobacco users to cessation services and encourage the community to give social support to those trying to quit. They also work to expand partnerships with local clinics and other service areas to integrate cessation support and referral.

### **Highlights**

- Completed evaluation of the pilot Wellness and Tobacco group and shared back the results with community and stakeholders. These lessons learned will be used to develop a regular class in their Wellness Center in partnership with North Memorial Health System.
- Partnered with youth groups to distribute wellness center and cessation referral information to over 500 residents near the North Market.
- Developing a training hub for their Community Health Workers, other direct-service staff, and Community Health Workers in the greater community on tobacco use and cessation referral. So far they have trained 18 community health workers.

## **Tobacco-Free Alliance**

Tobacco-Free Alliance works with youth groups and community partners in Ramsey County and nearby cities to address the harms of commercial tobacco among African American, Asian American, Latino, and LGBTQ communities. They work with partners to educate and increase community support for reducing commercial tobacco access and availability, restrict the sale of menthol and other flavored tobacco products, and increase commercial tobacco-free campus policies.

### **Highlights**

- Conducted 97 youth vaping prevention presentations in Dakota and Ramsey County middle and high school classrooms, reaching more than 2000 students.
- Worked with local coalitions and youth groups to educate and engage community members and stakeholders around local tobacco policies, resulting in 7 tobacco policies passing in Dakota county localities.
- Presented to five school districts on youth vaping and tobacco use, including educators and administrators, as part of their continuing education trainings and seminars.
- Youth groups helped design and promote the Escape the Vape video project contest, in partnership with MDH and the Masonic Cancer Center.



## WellShare International

WellShare International serves the East African and Somali communities in the Twin Cities metro area. Their East African Smoke-Free Program (EASFP) focuses on reducing commercial tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure among children, youth, and young adults. They achieve this through youth education, partnering with local businesses and organizations to implement tobacco-free policies, and raising awareness at community events. WellShare International created a community advisory committee and conducted a community-based assessment through key informant interviews, listening sessions, and focus groups. Assessment results will be used to develop culturally appropriate strategies for cessation integration, referrals, and education.

### Highlights

- Engaged 5 businesses to develop tobacco-free grounds policies, four in the Twin Cities and one in Greater Minnesota.
- Presented tobacco use and vaping education through a Somali talk radio show, videos on social media, and print ads in local media, reaching over 20,000 community members.
- Trained eight Henna and Hair salon workers to educate their clients on hookah and vaping risks; these salon workers had over 800 conversations with customers about hookah/ vaping last year.

## Technical Assistance and Training grantees

The Technical Assistance and Training (TA) grants aim to build grantee knowledge, skills, and capacity to carry out the goals of the grant program. The TA infrastructure is designed to address grantees' specific needs, support emerging tobacco control issues, and foster regional and statewide collaborations and partnerships. TA and training is central to the success of the local grant programs and provides critical policy, systems, and environmental change expertise for strategy implementation.

Grantees receive technical assistance on tobacco control best practices including smoke-free housing, tobacco-free outdoor spaces and events, worksites, and point-of-sale strategies. TA grantees also provide education on tobacco industry tactics, tobacco use disparities, community and youth engagement strategies, media and communication planning, and policy development. TA is delivered through individual consultations, virtual and in-person group trainings, facilitated peer-to-peer learning, toolkits, and other materials. Resources are developed with cultural- and community-specific needs in mind.

Five TA providers assist grantees statewide, serving 41 local public health agencies funded through the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) and 11 TFC community grantees. Over the last two years they provided 21,000 hours of support to grantees, approximately 1800 TA requests were fulfilled through consultations, training, and developing materials.

## American Lung Association in Minnesota

The American Lung Association (ALA) works across Minnesota to eliminate commercial tobacco use and tobacco-related death and disease. ALA is committed to cessation services and education, behavioral health care, and understanding rural-specific dynamics and issues. ALA provides tobacco-specific policy, systems, and environmental strategy TA to Greater Minnesota area grantees.

Additionally, ALA provides grantees and their partners with TA and training focused on healthcare systems change which increases the availability of tobacco treatment and services in hard-to-reach communities. This happens in traditional primary healthcare settings and innovative settings like public housing and community mental health and substance abuse treatment centers.

### Highlights

- Created a new toolkit on tobacco use and pregnancy and delivered trainings in Saint Paul and Cloquet, Minnesota, to providers, such as but not limited to; SHIP staff, WIC staff, tribal health coordinators and family home visiting nurses, working directly with pregnant and post-partum mothers who use tobacco products, including vape. The purpose of this project was to provide educational opportunities, hands on experiences, and resources on tobacco harms and tobacco dependence treatment for these direct care providers, serving this population. Additionally, the goal was to build capacity to support tobacco dependence treatment, using methods such as ask, advise and refer, within their current work and relationships with clients.
- Delivered virtual Freedom from Smoking trainings to SHIP and TFC grantees and their community partners. The trainings provided participants a foundation and structure to offer tobacco dependence treatment in a group setting and provide attendees with basic understanding of behavior change as it relates to tobacco addiction.
- Collaborated with the National Behavioral Health Network, MDH, and the Center for Prevention that included attending a training that provided guidance in putting together a work plan to address the disparities related to tobacco and behavioral health as part of the overall grant application from MDH to CDC. ALA shared the work of the Lung Mind Alliance with colleagues in other states in a series of webinars and virtual meetings.
- Spearheaded in-person trainings with Dr. Jill Williams for grantees and community partners to understand disproportionate impact of tobacco upon individuals with mental illness and/or substance use disorders; understand tobacco addiction; Learn how to incorporate assessment of tobacco dependence into clinical practice; utilize motivational assessments and psychosocial treatments; recognize pharmacologic treatment options for cessation.

### Association for Nonsmokers - Minnesota

The Association for Nonsmokers – Minnesota (ANSR) works to reduce the human and economic costs of commercial tobacco use in Minnesota. ANSR’s core commitments are to reduce the number of young smokers and to continuously advocate for the rights and health of nonsmokers. ANSR provides tobacco-specific policy, systems, and environmental strategy TA to metro area grantees.

### Highlights

- Provided substantial prevention research, analysis, and tools to grantees and their city and county partners in their efforts to strengthen local tobacco sales ordinances. This partnership contributed to dozens of local tobacco and vaping regulations that prevent youth from initiating use.
- Updated Stop Sales to Minors free online tobacco retailer training to include several changes to federal and Minnesota state laws. This training was originally developed and launched in July 2016 to educate all tobacco retailers across the state on federal and state laws on selling tobacco products.
- Developed a toolkit to assist SHIP grantees and their local partners to promote the newly updated Tobacco 21 statewide law. Several resources were created including communications templates for retailers, signs, factsheet, and press release for local communities to use at their discretion.

- Led an intensive effort to respond to SHIP and city partners exploring city-wide indoor smoke-free multi-unit protections for residents, staff, and visitors providing research, policy analysis, and survey tools to assist in their efforts.
- Provided specific COVID-19 materials and technical support to grantees, property managers, and residents addressing an increase of secondhand smoke in multi-unit housing.

### **BRIDGE Team (Asian Media Access Inc.)**

The BRIDGE (Bringing Information and Resources for Disconnected Groups' Engagement) Team is a multicultural consulting team working to support grantees with cultural engagement and highlight their cultural integration processes. The BRIDGE Team helps grantees integrate community strengths and culture into communications, community engagement, and evaluation as they work to reduce commercial tobacco use.

#### **Highlights**

- Provided technical assistance to grantees with youth groups to teach the youth how to make videos, take photos, edit, and present their work.
- Profiled each grantee in a newsletter story, featuring community members and the impact participating in the TFC program had on them personally. The newsletters are shared through our government list serv and the broader community through grantee networks.
- Developed articles and resources on different levels of cultural integration and tailoring to community needs.

The BRIDGE Team has worked with MDH and grantees to ensure community-based work leverages community and cultural assets as well as identify how core activities and strategies align to help develop best practices for the community-specific efforts of the TFC grantees.

### **Counter Tools**

Counter Tools has expertise in point-of-sale tobacco control and provides grantees with standardized web-based tools to assess tobacco products and marketing in the retail setting. Grantees pursue and implement evidence-based approaches leading to decreased youth access and exposure to tobacco marketing practices.

#### **Highlights**

- Provided essential software tools, user training, data cleaning, and technical assistance to SHIP grantees collecting local data as part of MDH's effort to evaluation prevention policy in the retail setting.
- Grantees successfully completed over 3,000 store assessments – bringing to light the pervasiveness of cheap, flavored tobacco products in stores where youth frequently shop. This project has provided the communities the grantees serve with information to educate and mobilize stakeholders to act on the increasing threat of youth tobacco use.
- Created county specific data summaries for public health to communicate with local stakeholders and engage partners in prevention.
- Provided a comprehensive look at recent action and developments in the tobacco prevention and control space and for the tobacco industry like new research, tobacco product updates, policymaking, and lawsuits.

## Public Health Law Center

The Public Health Law Center has expertise in tobacco control policy change and specializes in state and local tobacco-related legal and policy issues, with the mission of improving health through the power of law. The Public Health Law Center provides tailored legal TA to grantees across Minnesota on tobacco-related policy options, policy analysis, and development of model language and resources.

### Highlights

- Continued its powerful working relationship the League of Minnesota Cities by aligning model ordinance language providing local governments with a critical and reliable resource.
- Updated smoke-free lease addendum. We also created a model condo association smoke-free agreement. These releases were used by communities throughout Minnesota.
- Provided supplemental TA support and helped over 30 communities updating their tobacco retailer licensing code to not only reflect federal and state law, but to comply with the best public health practices.
- Updated K-12 model policy and Alternative Penalties publication continues to work as an invaluable resource across the country. This discussion has opened up into many more areas of tobacco control.

Throughout the grant period, the Public Health Law Center responded to a large volume of individual requests for ordinance and policy reviews and provided local grantees with the depth and breadth of knowledge needed in a simple, understandable manner.

## Tribal Commercial Tobacco Prevention grantee summaries

In Minnesota, commercial tobacco use is highest in American Indian populations. According to the Tribal Tobacco Use Project, 59 percent of adult American Indians in Minnesota smoke. Tribal tobacco efforts address the high prevalence of commercial tobacco use in tribal communities by building strong, community-based tobacco control programs. Community initiatives include:

- Promoting, providing and collaborating in commercial tobacco treatment and cessation programming.
- Decreasing exposure to commercial tobacco smoke where community members live, work and play by advancing smoke-free policies.
- Engaging communities with knowledge of cultural practices around traditional tobacco and harms of commercial tobacco.
- Increasing access to traditional tobacco.

Many tribes are promoting healthy communities free of commercial tobacco and are growing asemaa (Anishinaabe) and harvesting cajsasa (Dakota) for use as an offering and for ceremonial use.

### Bois Forte Band of Chippewa

The Bois Forte Band of Chippewa is working to reduce commercial tobacco use among its members by involving the community in the development and implementation of tobacco messaging, engaging community members in cultural education and activities about the traditional use of tobacco and by providing smoking cessation referral services.

#### Highlights

- Promoted traditional tobacco use as the norm, as a form of commercial tobacco prevention at events throughout the community.
- Hosted community events to facilitate bringing back traditions and knowledge around asemaa growing and pouch making, to help pass on to the next generation.
- Collaborated closely with the local tribal radio station, KBFT, which has been inspirational for community members, especially youth, to learn about other Native Americans succeeding in their art and to learn about resources and local events.

### Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

The Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa prides itself on raising awareness about the difference between traditional and commercial tobacco. They provide culturally specific education and outreach activities including teachings around traditional tobacco and education about the hazards of commercial tobacco use and exposure. This grantee also administers a clinic-pharmacy tobacco cessation program and continues to promote commercial tobacco free spaces.

#### Highlights

- Participated in annual Kick Butts Day Event at Lincoln Park Children's and Family Collaborative. Had an elder make traditional tobacco pouches with materials provided by our program.
- Traditional Tobacco Harvesting Training for Fond du Lac Foster Care providers.

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- Annual Kick Butts Day Events at the Ojibwe School and FDL Pharmacies. Students, staff, patients, and families were able to pledge to quit “cold turkey” or to never use commercial tobacco and provided turkey subs.
- Provided garden materials and tobacco seeds for the Sawyer Community Center Youth to plant their own tobacco plants. And harvested with youth at their Spring Mental Health Summit.
- Held an Asemaa Event at Niiwin Market in Duluth, in Collaboration with AICHO (American Indian Community Housing Organization). At the event, supplies were provided for all attendees to make their own traditional tobacco pouch.
- Partnered with pharmacies to provide pharmacy bags displaying traditional tobacco messaging and information to help people quit commercial tobacco use.

### **Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa**

The Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa works to engage its members to be advocates for a healthier community by participation in cultural education and activities around the traditional use of tobacco, and by planning and implementing activities that will help their community members live healthy lives. Community members are requesting to use traditional rather than commercial tobacco in ceremonies and offerings and through growing their own they are able to honor that request.

#### **Highlights**

- Reached 310 adults through Grand Portage’s social media outreach and educational efforts.
- Actively worked on increasing the community’s access to traditional asemaa by planting and packaging seeds for new growing year and maintaining and building new structures for growing sacred tobacco.
- Began a new support group called “Grand Portage Healthy Lunges Hiking Club” that is focused on getting the community up and moving while promoting healthy smoke-free living. Between two hiking events, cumulatively, over 70 adult community members have participated in hikes.
- Began the TTUP II survey project.

### **Leach Lake Band of Ojibwe**

The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Health Division’s Tobacco Program strives to work on engagement in the community, schools and clinics to increase Traditional Tobacco promotion and Commercial Tobacco prevention as well as exposure.

#### **Highlights**

- Partnered with the Leech Lake Child and Teen Check-up Program to bring 16-Year-Old Luka Kinard to speak about vaping addiction at 6 area schools. Luka spoke to 2043 students and 377 adults about his severe vaping addiction, the 39 days he spent in inpatient treatment, and how he has over-come his addiction.
- Partnered with the Cass Lake-Bena school district and Red Cedar Assisted Living to promote Traditional Teachings by making tobacco pouches and hand drums.
- Partnered with local community members to create a Commercial Tobacco Free space at the Powwow Grounds and the new community-funded park.

## Lower Sioux Indian Community

The Lower Sioux Indian Community works on decreasing commercial tobacco use within the community by engaging its members in cultural education and outreach activities, such as pow-wows, health fairs, annual diabetes awareness events, and drum groups. The Lower Sioux Indian Community also trains youth to promote smoke-free spaces in many settings, which has led to the Lower Sioux casino, Jackpot Junction, becoming smoke-free in all non-gaming areas of the facility. Additionally, all outdoor recreational grounds and the Lower Sioux Healthcare buildings and grounds are now smoke-free. The Lower Sioux Recreation Center, which houses the Lower Sioux Tribal Tobacco Program provides a safe environment for the community's youth.

### Highlights

- Increased access to traditional tobacco in the community by planting seeds throughout the community and regularly hosting canjasa harvesting events that also include education on the difference between commercial and traditional tobacco.
- Approved Honoring Canjasa for Healthy Generations Policy in November 2019, which comes from the Health and Human Services Advisory Committee's work of establishing a healthy and sustainable community. The policy prohibits harmful, non-ceremonial use of tobacco of any kind, including electronic cigarettes or devices and states they shall be prohibited within and outside of the Lower Sioux Healthcare grounds, lacrosse field, playground, and outdoor basketball courts. Commercial tobacco was also prohibited at any non-commercial community sponsored events organized by the Lower Sioux Indian Community, unless in a designated area.

## Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe works to decrease commercial tobacco use within the community by engaging its members in cultural education and outreach activities around the traditional use of tobacco which includes prevention activities that eliminate the use of commercial tobacco, traditional tobacco teachings, round dances, asemaa storytelling in the Ojibwe language, digital storytelling, planting sacred medicine, health fairs, and their community newsletter. Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe also supports a clinic-pharmacy tobacco cessation program.

Over the past few years, the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe has worked to decrease commercial tobacco use within the community by engaging its members in cultural education, health information, outreach activities and promotion. These included cultural education and outreach around the traditional use of tobacco.

### Highlights

- Educated community members by collaborating with Mille Lacs Area Partners in Prevention (MAPP), Onamia Schools, and Tribal SHIP grantees, providing education at community health fairs and other events, as well as publishing commercial tobacco education, quitting resources, and information on cancer awareness and support in the Band community newspaper, website, government communications, social media, and the Band's public health newsletter.
- Recorded and preserved stories about from Mille Lacs Band members about their memories of the use of traditional tobacco and experiences with commercial tobacco through digital storytelling interviews. They also educated over seventy-five community members about the origin and use of traditional tobacco through oral history via wintertime storytelling events at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum.

- Promoted tobacco cessation by arranging for smoking and vaping cessation information to be included with food distribution offered to Elders and other Mille Lacs Band members, advocating for a tobacco education and cessation collaboration with the Band clinics and pharmacies, and small group “Hypnotherapy as a Tool for Health” workshops which focused on smoking cessation, stress reduction, weight loss and physical activity. They also organized round dances, women’s gatherings, and other cultural events and provided tobacco cessation information and educational reinforcers such as fans, t-shirts, and water bottles at community and cultural gatherings such as powwows.
- Worked to increase access to traditional tobacco by supporting Band members to plant, cultivate and harvest sacred medicines, (particularly traditional tobacco and asemaa), as well as vegetables; by providing supplies and gardening tools to Elders and Nay Ah Shing schools, and by making traditional tobacco available to Band members and organizations in order to replace the use of commercial tobacco for ceremonial and spiritual purposes.
- Sponsored and funded “Freedom from Smoking” remote training through the American Lung Association for Band members and employees as well as other area and native stakeholders.
- Placed counter-marketing messaging around smoking and vaping, including risks related to COVID-19, on billboards in high traffic areas near the Band districts, which also included contact information for the American Indian Quitline.

## Prairie Island Indian Community

The Prairie Island Indian Community (PIIC) works to promote cultural awareness and revitalization as a form of commercial tobacco prevention and reduction. PIIC has made great strides in restoring important cultural plants across the land and within the community, thus working towards restoring cultural ties to the land and its medicines. PIIC also provides education through various outreach events, its Elder’s Cultural and Medicinal Garden, and the community’s Health Clinic on tobacco cessation and traditional tobacco uses among American Indians.

### Highlights

- Traditional medicines such as 500 pouches of cañsasa, 500 sage bundles, 130 sweetgrass braids, and 130 cedar bundles were harvested and prepared. These medicines were distributed to over 200 community members.
- Completed Tribal Tobacco Use Project (TTUP) II survey in 2019 in partnership with American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF). Data was collected from 142 community participants showing that 9 out of 10 have used traditional tobacco, 6 out of 10 want to learn more about traditional tobacco, and 55% of commercial tobacco smokers expressed an interest in quitting.
- According to the annual wellness screenings through the Prairie Island Health Clinic, commercial tobacco use rates reduced from 43% in 2018 to 40% in 2019.

## Red Lake Band of Chippewa

The Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians provides culturally specific services to community members. Included are cultural education activities at various community events and in the schools. At the employee and teen health fair members are provided education on the dangers of commercial tobacco use, second-hand and third-hand smoke and how to make and use traditional tobacco for healing. The partnerships with various community organizations such as Family and Children Services and local schools focuses on teaching numerous youth about



how to make traditional tobacco as part of the Keep Tobacco Sacred campaign. All instructional lessons utilize the Ojibwe language and cultural teachings about tobacco.

### Highlights

- Produced signage in Ojibwemowin and posted on the Red Lake Indian Health Service campus and provided updated materials to area tribal programs for smoking cessation, smoke-free homes and cars including the American Indian Quitline from QUITPLAN Services.
- Delivered instruction on the traditional tobacco use knowledge focused on the campaign to Keep Tobacco Sacred.
- Worked collaboratively with Red Lake Indian Health Services Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist to educate about and distribute culturally specific smoking cessation materials and made referrals to access the Nicotine Replacement Therapies available.
- Posted various smoking cessation links on social media specific commercial tobacco use and the risks for COVID-19.

## Upper Sioux Indian Community

The Upper Sioux Community provides cultural tobacco education at events like their Suicide Prevention community event, health fairs, and pow-wows. This Upper Sioux Community is also developing an incentive to quit program.

### Highlights

- Held annual gathering on traditional tobacco with breakfast and storytelling.
- Embracing Wellness event with a workshop on vaping and meditation breathing and circulation techniques to help with vaping and commercial tobacco use.
- Food Forest traditional medicine planting and harvesting continues to support community needs.
- Tribal Tobacco Use Project II (TTUP II) Study data collection occurred in partnership with the American Indian Cancer Foundation with community members assisting as survey monitors.
- Annual No Puffin around Me event with an emphasis on vaping and finding other healthy activities youth can do instead- watched TPT documentary Reclaiming Sacred Tobacco.
- Healthy Living Bingo- a fun and interactive way for Upper Sioux Community members to hear about updated health and education awareness that pertains to the health disparities affecting Indian Country and issues that affect the community.

## White Earth Nation

The White Earth Nation (WEN) tobacco coalition works closely together to encourage community members to make a quit attempt and participate in carbon monoxide testing as a quit smoking motivational tool. On National D Day, smokers were given resources and healthy quit smoking snacks to challenge themselves to make a day long quit attempt. White Earth Public health provides the community members with the most up-to-date quit smoking resources and information to encourage smokers to quit. The WEN tobacco coalition asks other program partners to assist us in our messages by providing commercial tobacco free resources such as e-cigarette information and smoke free space window clings. White Earth Nation encourages our members to use organic traditional tobacco for ceremonial purposes.

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### Highlights

- Engaged community members to plant and harvest organic traditional tobacco and share with community, providing much of this sacred medicine the community needs throughout the year.
- Provided community carbon monoxide testing to encourage good health and wellness while supporting those interested in quitting by providing cessation resources.
- Advertised and promoted cessation resources and encourage keeping our tobacco sacred by using it for ceremony and wellness.

## Other Tobacco Use Prevention efforts

### Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey

Tobacco Use Prevention funding supports the Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey (MYTS). The survey has been conducted since 2000 by the Minnesota Department of Health to provide comprehensive, in-depth information on middle and high school student tobacco use to help inform and evaluate prevention efforts. The MYTS is a representative sample, online survey. The 2020 MYTS, which collected student data before schools switched to distance learning, revealed that e-cigarettes remain popular among Minnesota teens. The 2020 survey assessed vaping behaviors in greater detail and revealed that the majority of teens who use e-cigarettes show signs of nicotine addiction. Many teens who use e-cigarettes wish to quit, want help to quit, and have tried to quit but are still using these addictive products. The 2020 MYTS data were released February 23, 2021 and covered broadly by both local and statewide media.

## Financial report

	SFY 2019 Awards	SFY 2020 Awards
<b>Community Grantees</b>		
African Immigrants Community Services	110,000	90,000
Ain Dah Yung Center	110,000	90,000
Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES)	160,000	140,000
Hmong American Partnership	110,000	90,000
JustUs Health (formerly Rainbow Health Initiative)	152,805	140,000
Minneapolis American Indian Center	160,000	140,000
Morrison-Todd-Wadena Community Health Board	160,000	140,000
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Minnesota	110,000	90,000
Pillsbury United Communities	160,000	140,000
Tobacco-Free Alliance	160,000	150,000
WellShare International	160,000	140,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,552,805</b>	<b>\$1,350,000</b>
<b>Technical Assistance and Training Grantees</b>		
American Lung Association in Minnesota	72,000	132,000
Association for Nonsmokers – Minnesota	182,948	128,000
BRIDGE Team (Asian Media Access Inc.)	125,000	125,000
Counter Tools	50,025	50,025
Public Health Law Center	275,000	300,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$704,973</b>	<b>\$735,025</b>
<b>Tribal Tobacco Prevention Grantees</b>		
Bois Forte Band of Chippewa	82,460	82,460
Fond Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	96,991	96,991
Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	79,629	79,629
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	135,195	135,195
Lower Sioux Indian Community	79,511	79,511
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe	95,276	95,276
Prairie Island Indian Community	77,091	77,091
Red Lake Band of Chippewa	143,195	143,195
Upper Sioux Community	76,562	76,562
White Earth Nation	134,090	134,090
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>
<b>Other TUP Allocations</b>		
Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey		135,975
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$135,975</b>
<b>Total Funds Awarded</b>	<b>\$3,257,778</b>	<b>\$3,221,000</b>