



About the Minnesota Budget Project

The Minnesota Budget Project – an initiative of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits – is an active voice for tax fairness and a balanced approach to state and federal budgets. The Minnesota Budget Project provides independent research, analysis and advocacy on budget and tax issues, emphasizing their impact on low- and moderate-income Minnesotans and the organizations that serve them. Our mission is to provide interested citizens, elected officials and community leaders with timely and accurate information so that they can become more active and effective participants in the public policy debate.

Our analysis is available on the web at www.mnbudgetproject.org as well as our blog www.minnesotabudgetbites.org.

Meet the Staff of the Minnesota Budget Project:

Nan Madden, Director. Nan oversees the Minnesota Budget Project’s research, analysis and capacity-building efforts. She has extensive public policy experience on tax, budget and economic self-sufficiency issues. Nan has authored numerous publications on fiscal issues as well as economic self-sufficiency. She serves on the Steering Committee of the Affirmative Options Coalition, a statewide coalition that promotes public policies that create opportunities for low-income Minnesotans to achieve economic security. In 2006, Nan was named by the *Minneapolis St. Paul Business Journal* as one of its Forty Under 40 honorees.

Christina Wessel, Deputy Director. Christina has been active in analyzing state legislative activity for more than a decade, advocating on key public policy and budget process issues and providing analysis on various state budget issues that impact low- and moderate-income Minnesotans. She also produces the Minnesota Nonprofit Economy Report, an annual study examining nonprofit employment, wages, and finances. Christina has an M.A. in political science from the University of Minnesota and holds a B.A. in political science from Wheaton College.

Scott Russell, Policy Analyst. Scott’s work with the Minnesota Budget Project includes researching and writing about state tax and spending issues. He is an award-winning journalist, first with *The Capital Times* in Madison, Wisconsin and later for the *Southwest Journal/Downtown Journal* in Minneapolis. His freelance articles have appeared in MinnPost, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, *Bench & Bar*, *The Twin Cities Daily Planet* and other publications. Earlier in his career, he worked as a teacher, farm hand, Minnesota state policy analyst and homeless shelter worker. He has a B.A. in physics from Carleton College.

Leah Gardner, Outreach Coordinator. Leah supports the Invest in Minnesota campaign uniting faith, labor and nonprofit organizations around fair revenue-raising principles and is working to build awareness around economic and racial justice issues. Leah also is organizing the nonprofit community to oppose constitutional budget amendments. Her background in the nonprofit community includes direct service, fundraising, public policy and public relations work to support programs improving self-sufficiency for low-income families. Leah holds a B.A. in business from the

University of St. Thomas and an M.A. in public policy from the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota.

Barb Brady, Communications Manager. Barb is the Minnesota Budget Project's first communications manager. She came to us from the Pennsylvania State Education Association, where she was communications manager and a communications/organizing specialist. Barb served as the Wisconsin Education Association Council's Press Secretary for nine years before that. Barb started her career as a news reporter in Wisconsin before moving into public relations.