



Image: ANSR staff and partners at St. Paul City Hall after the council signed a No Menthol Sunday resolution on May 24, 2023.

ASSOCIATION FOR NONSMOKERS-MN 2023 REPORT



The Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota

www.ansrmn.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Association for Nonsmokers-MN	1
Board Members	2
Our Partners & 50 Years of ANSR	3
Live Smoke Free	4
Minnesota Legislative Outreach	6
Point of Sale	8
Technical Assistance	12
Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation	12
North Suburban Tobacco Compliance Project	13
Regional Prevention Coordinator	14
Minnesota Prevention Resource Center	15
Project WATCH	16
Financial Health	17
Thank You to Our Funders	18

ASSOCIATION FOR NONSMOKERS-MN

Mission Statement

The Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota (ANSR) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing the human and economic costs of commercial tobacco, nicotine, and other drug use in Minnesota.

Our core commitments are:

- to protect young Minnesotans from a lifetime of addiction;
- to ensure that all Minnesotans can breathe clean, smoke-free air everywhere; and
- to reduce health inequities and other disparities in relation to commercial tobacco, nicotine, alcohol and other drugs.

Contact Information

2395 University Ave W, Ste 310
Saint Paul, MN 55114

Phone: 651-646-3005

www.ansrmn.org

Land Acknowledgement

The Association for Nonsmokers-MN (ANSR) is located in Saint Paul, MN, the traditional homeland of the Dakota people. We acknowledge that the land we currently occupy comes from a legacy of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and forced removal caused by U.S. law and policy applied to Indigenous communities.

When referring to tobacco in this report, we are referring to commercial tobacco products and not tobacco used for sacred purposes by Indigenous communities.

Statement on Racial and Health Equity

ANSR is committed to ensuring that health and equity are considered in every aspect and element of our work. These are not just words to us. They inform our daily actions, including continually striving to uplift voices of Black and Indigenous people and people of color. We do not tolerate racism, xenophobia, or violence of any kind and continue to review and ensure that our internal policies are equitable. We remain committed to working in solidarity with our partners to end racism, be anti-racist allies, and stop racially-motivated violence.

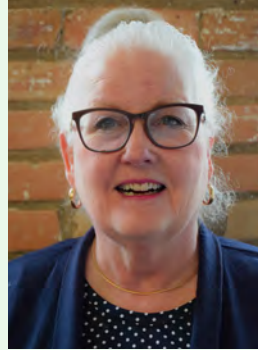
2023 BOARD MEMBERS



Jeanne Weigum
President



Bernie Hesse
Vice President



Mary Bergaas
Treasurer



Gene Nichols
Secretary



Jean Forster, Ph.D.
Director at Large



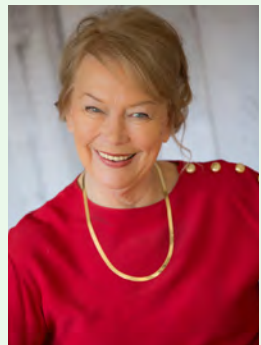
Deb Hennrikus,
Ph.D.



Martha Hewett



Natalie Johnson Lee



Lisa Marshall



Monique Muggli, JD



Paul Pentel, MD



Kris Rhodes, MPH

OUR PARTNERS

ANSR could not succeed without the dedication and help of our partners. Thank you to our many community partners who work side-by-side with us as we seek to protect Minnesotans from the harms of commercial tobacco, nicotine, and other drug use. Your contributions are invaluable to this work!

50 YEARS OF ANSR

ANSR celebrated our 50th anniversary in 2023. Originally created in 1973 as an American Lung Association program named the Association for Nonsmokers' Rights, we are the oldest organization in Minnesota primarily dedicated to commercial tobacco control.

ANSR joined partners in leading efforts to pass the first clean indoor air law in the nation, the Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act, in 1975. Five years later, ANSR became an independent organization and renamed itself the Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota.

Over the past five decades, ANSR has helped pass groundbreaking commercial tobacco prevention policies at the local and state level. We were there for the 1998 Master Settlement, the 2007 Freedom to Breathe Act, Tobacco 21 in 2020, and, more recently, the 2023 JUUL Settlement. We helped Minneapolis become the first city to restrict flavored products, excluding menthol, in 2015 and the first to restrict menthol in 2017. We have encouraged thousands of multi-unit housing properties to adopt smoke-free policies and have remained a trusted technical assistance provider to others working to reduce the harms of commercial tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.



ANSR's first dollar, which hangs prominently in the lunchroom at the ANSR office.

ANSR has engaged countless community partners, advocates, and students in our efforts over the years, and we couldn't have done it without the generosity of donors and funders. Cheers to 50 more years of making lasting, life-saving change!

LIVE SMOKE FREE

Since 2007, Minnesota property owners, managers, multi-unit housing residents, and local health departments have come to know and trust the Live Smoke Free (LSF) program to deliver comprehensive smoke-free housing resources and assistance. In 2023 LSF continued to be the go-to source for all things smoke-free housing in Minnesota.

More Residents Protected from Secondhand Smoke

In 2023 LSF partnered with five local health departments through the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership of the Minnesota Department of Health to provide direct technical assistance to Minnesota property owners, managers, and multi-unit housing residents. Through this work, LSF completed a survey of Burnsville renters, got input on smoke-free housing policies from 175 community members at six Minneapolis events,



engaged Ramsey County stakeholders, community members, and commissioners in smoke-free housing conversations, and conducted outreach to numerous Hennepin County cities. Thanks to this work, Minnesota ended the year with **5,406** smoke-free housing policies that protect approximately **472,559** Minnesotans from secondhand smoke in their homes.

Left: Jackie Siewert and partners from Wellshare International doing community outreach at Luxton Park Jazz Fest on August 9, 2023.

Mid Continent Management Corporation Goes Smoke-Free

September 1, 2023 marked a big boost for smoke-free housing opportunities in Minnesota when Mid Continent Management Corporation implemented a smoke-free policy for its 39 properties and nearly 2,400 units. This policy will protect thousands of Minnesotans from toxic secondhand smoke in their own homes. Live Smoke Free provided consultation, signage, promotion, and resident education to foster a smooth transition for staff and residents.



Right: Morgan Hamernik helping a youngster play a guessing game at LSF's table at Northwood Villa Apartments' National Night Out event.

Grantee Connection and Cannabis Protection

In addition to direct assistance to properties, LSF provided technical assistance to SHIP grantees working on smoke-free housing strategies throughout the Twin Cities metro area. As part of this technical assistance, LSF hosted virtual, bi-monthly “Smoke-Free Housing Sharing Meetings” for grantees statewide working on smoke-free housing efforts. LSF also began updating materials, including signage and educational resources, to help Minnesota housing providers and residents understand and adapt to cannabis legalization in Minnesota. Secondhand cannabis smoke in multi-unit housing is a significant concern for housing providers and residents, and LSF is maximizing limited resources to help protect Minnesotans from this growing threat to clean air.



Updated LSF signage that includes cannabis.

Promoting Smoke-Free Housing Public Policy

In 2023 LSF continued working towards public smoke-free housing policies with funding from a Commercial Tobacco-Free Communities grant from the Minnesota Department of Health. LSF developed educational resources on the benefits of public smoke-free housing policies, engaged in a multi-phased equity analysis of Minnesota’s Model Smoke-Free Housing Ordinance with the Public Health Law Center and the Racial and Health Equity Committee of the Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation coalition, and engaged community members and decision makers in conversations about public policy options.



Kara Skahen promoting public smoke-free housing policies at the Richfield Farmers Market on October 7, 2023.



Chris Smith and Jack Ayim engaging community members in conversations about public smoke-free housing policies at the Bloomington Farmers Market on July 29, 2023.

MINNESOTA LEGISLATIVE OUTREACH

Minnesota Congressional Delegation

Thanks to funding from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, ANSR retained East African community organizer Said Ahmed to lead work on flavored hookah tobacco, or shisha, and its impacts on the East African community in Minnesota. Said conducted education and outreach using culturally appropriate, translated materials about hookah. He also gained community and decision maker support for including hookah in flavored commercial tobacco restrictions and bans at the local, state, and federal level.

ANSR continued to engage several members of Congress, including Rep. Angie Craig, Rep. Betty McCollum, Rep. Ilhan Omar, Rep. Dean Phillips, and Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith, regarding action on commercial tobacco at the federal level. ANSR staff leveraged long-term relationships with lawmakers' district office staff to secure lawmaker signatures on several letters of support.

State Outreach

ANSR engaged Minnesota lawmakers to further the tobacco prevention agenda of the statewide coalition Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation (MSFG). We held dozens of lawmaker meetings, engaged constituents to reach out to their lawmakers and testify in favor of the bill to end the sale of flavored commercial tobacco, and participated in the coalition's annual Day at the Capitol.



Staff and student advocates making their voices heard while meeting with legislators at the State Capitol.

The session ended with two major wins for commercial tobacco prevention and treatment in the Health and Human Services budget bill. The bill includes provisions to prevent youth nicotine addiction and support Minnesotans on Medicaid who are trying to quit smoking, vaping, or chewing commercial tobacco. *(continued on next page)*

The bill dedicates the state’s landmark settlement with JUUL and Altria to tobacco prevention (authored by Senator Kelly Morrison and Representative Kaohly Her (SF2520/HF2422)) and expands access to tobacco dependency treatment to Minnesotans on Medicaid (authored by Representative Robert Bierman and Senator Kelly Morrison (SF1320/HF1574)).



AG Keith Ellison high-fives Katy Johnson, UMN student and former ANSR youth advocate, at the JUUL settlement press conference. (Richard Tsong-Taatarii/Star Tribune)

ANSR and coalition partners joined Attorney General Keith Ellison, Governor Tim Walz, and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan in celebrating the State’s historic \$60.5 million settlement with JUUL Labs and Altria. Two of ANSR’s former youth advocates spoke at the event, highlighting the devastating effects of nicotine addiction on their generation. The coalition thanked lawmakers for taking advantage of this once-in-a-generation opportunity to fund commercial tobacco prevention and treatment.

One major piece of legislation remained undone at the end of the 2023 session: the bill to end the sale of menthol and all flavored commercial tobacco products in Minnesota (SF2123/HF2177). Flavors are driving the state’s youth tobacco crisis, and the industry’s marketing of flavored products drives commercial tobacco-related health disparities. A quarter of the state’s population is currently covered by local policies restricting sales of flavored and/or menthol commercial tobacco products, and a recent poll found two-to-one support for the proposal to end flavored commercial tobacco sales in Minnesota. The coalition is strategizing and planning for next session.

Menthol Coalition

ANSR and NorthPoint Health and Wellness continued to co-chair the Menthol Coalition in 2023. The group’s aim is to influence state-level work to end the sale of all flavored commercial tobacco, including menthol, throughout Minnesota. The coalition’s work in 2023 focused on expanding membership in the faith community, especially Black churches, and creating culturally appropriate systems for accessing cessation resources. The group held a “mini” Day at the Capitol in May with more than 20 participants. They met with key lawmakers, including Rep. Cedrick Frazier, Rep. Athena Hollins, and Speaker Melissa Hortman’s staff.

POINT OF SALE

License Caps and Flavors

Many Metro cities worked to protect their residents by passing policies limiting the availability of commercial tobacco in 2023. These measures included ending the sale of all flavored products and imposing licensing caps to reduce the number of retailers in their cities.

- Richfield ended the sale of all flavored commercial tobacco products and capped tobacco licenses at four;
- North St. Paul capped the number of tobacco licenses at seven and set proximity limits between tobacco retailers and youth-oriented facilities; and
- Saint Paul reduced the number of tobacco shop licenses (e.g., convenience stores) from 150 to 100, removed cigarette vending machines, and reduced the number of tobacco product shop licenses (e.g., vape stores) from 25 to 15.

ANSR staff and partners, public health advocates, and city staff after the public hearing and unanimous vote to end the sale of all flavored commercial tobacco products in Richfield on August 8, 2023.



ANSR Recruits New Student Action Team

Spring 2023 was bittersweet, as many of ANSR's longtime youth advocates graduated and made plans for college. At the start of the '23-'24 school year, ANSR formed its new Ramsey County Student Action Team (SAT) with funding from a Youth E-Cigarette Prevention and Cessation Initiative grant from the Minnesota Department of Health. The SAT engages 25 students from four high schools in Ramsey County: Roseville Area High School, Mounds View High School, Irondale High School, and White Bear Lake Area High School.

Students spent the first four months of the school year learning about commercial tobacco-related topics, including tobacco industry targeting, the environmental impacts of commercial tobacco, and how nicotine affects mental health. Staff taught the lessons at the group's monthly meetings using ANSR's Tobacco 101 curriculum.

After the trainings, the SAT got to work advocating for change in their communities. ANSR will continue engaging these young people on local policy and prevention work in the coming years.



The Student Action Team is made up of 25 passionate students who live and go to school in Ramsey County.

ANSR staff engaged students at Washington Technology Magnet High School in St. Paul in partnership with MN Community Care Health Start Clinics. The Wash Escapes the Vape peer group was formed with 25+ students participating as peer mentors and leaders.

College Student Engagement

ANSR continued to partner with college undergraduate programs in 2023. With help from ANSR staff, students from the University of St. Thomas Public Health Department participated in state level advocacy and students from Hamline University created social media content and zines focused on industry targeting and ending the sale of flavored commercial tobacco products.

ANSR hosted two undergraduate student interns for the summer of 2023: Gracyn Delaune and De'Marco Walton. They helped with community assessments and outreach and created a video promoting Nicotine-Free Generation policy in St. Paul.

ANSR at Local and National Conferences

Champions for Youth Summit

ANSR staff, Minnesota Department of Health staff, and other Minnesota partners attended the Champions for Youth Summit in Virginia in April. Staff heard from experts in the field on vaping and commercial tobacco prevention strategies related to flavors, support over suspension, marketing, and more. The conference was an opportunity to connect with passionate professionals from across the country.



ANSR staff joined partners at the Champions for Youth Summit in April 2023.

TopCon 2023

Many ANSR staff presented at the second annual TopCon conference in early May, hosted by the Rede Group. The national, virtual conference focused on emerging topics in commercial tobacco prevention and served as a site for dialogue around prevention best practices, policy strategies, and more. The conference theme was “The Future of Best and Promising Practices.”

Esha Seth presented “Two for One: How Price Restrictions Impact Point-of-Sale Advertising” about the Don’t Discount My Life program and St. Paul’s price restriction ordinance. Emily Anderson hosted a presentation on innovative practices with flavored hookah tobacco (shisha). Molly Schmidtke hosted two presentations: the first on the environmental impacts of commercial tobacco products and the second titled “An Evolving Industry: New Trends and Marketing Strategies of the Tobacco Industry.” Jackie Siewert wrapped up the conference on the final plenary panel titled “Achieving Equity in Smoke-Free Housing: How a Social Justice Approach Shaped a Model Smoke-Free Housing Ordinance.”

NACCHO360

ANSR's Katie Engman, Benton County Public Health's Jaclyn Litfin, Jennifer Lezer, and Mariah Klein, Benton County Commissioner Steve Heinen, and AmeriCorps student Palash Bhanot traveled to Denver for the National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO) 360 Annual Conference on July 10-13, 2023. During their presentation “Paving the Way: Leveraging Local Values and Best Practices to Successfully Adopt Commercial Tobacco Prevention Policy,” Engman, Klein, and Lezer discussed Benton County’s 2022 tobacco retail licensing ordinance as a real-world example of these prevention efforts.

Minnesota Prevention Program Sharing Conference

ANSR staff traveled to the 49th annual Minnesota Prevention Program Sharing Conference, hosted by the Minnesota Prevention Resource Center, in Brainerd in October. Two ANSR staff joined over 50 other speakers in discussing their prevention work and expertise.

Molly Schmidtke partnered with other Minnesota Department of Health technical assistance providers to present on the environmental impacts of commercial tobacco products and discuss campaigns and school policy that can help mitigate environmental harms. She presented with Willow Najjar Anderson from the Public Health Law Center and Pat McKone from the American Lung Association.

Katie Engman partnered with Mariah Klein and Jennifer Lezer from Benton County Public Health to host the same presentation they gave at NACCHO360.

School Behavioral Health Conference

A week later, Molly Schmidtke and Katie Engman traveled back to Brainerd to present at the 2023 School Behavioral Health Conference. They discussed alternatives to suspension strategies for schools, the importance of nonpunitive measures, and how to support youth struggling with nicotine dependence.

American Public Health Association (APHA) Conference 2023

Molly Schmidtke attended the 2023 APHA Annual Conference in Georgia in November. She was accepted to present a poster on the environmental impacts of commercial tobacco products. She presented an Emerging Scholars pre-recorded poster on the commercial tobacco industry's emerging products and product trends. This recording was available via catalog for attendees.



Molly presenting her poster on the environmental impacts of commercial tobacco products at the APHA conference.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In 2023 ANSR staff responded to requests for assistance from MDH grantees for:

- community education;
- policy, systems, and environmental change planning, strategy, and implementation;
- tobacco-free policies for housing, outdoor air, businesses, and county grounds;
- ordinance updates to meet state minimums; and
- guidance on how the new cannabis law intersects with commercial tobacco laws.

What is ANSR's role in Technical Assistance?

With funding from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), ANSR staff provided technical assistance to MDH Commercial Tobacco-Free Communities, Youth E-Cigarette Prevention and Cessation Initiative (YEPCI), and SHIP grantees and city and school staff working to reduce tobacco industry influences and increase the number of commercial tobacco-free spaces.

ANSR created a new “Tools for Schools” toolkit to help school staff prevent commercial tobacco and nicotine use among students. It contains a wealth of evidence-based prevention strategies for schools and other materials, including:

- tools for youth education, engagement, and advocacy;
- lesson plans from ANSR’s Tobacco 101 curriculum;
- lists of support programs and treatment options;
- guidance on support over suspension measures;
- factsheets about flavored commercial tobacco products and e-cigarettes; and
- direct assistance options that ANSR can provide to schools.



TOBACCO-FREE YOUTH RECREATION

The Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation program continued to provide training materials for stakeholders by maintaining a database of all commercial tobacco-free parks policies in 2023.

For more information, visit:
tobaccofreeparks.org

NORTH SUBURBAN TOBACCO COMPLIANCE PROJECT (NSTCP)

The North Suburban Tobacco Compliance Project (NSTCP) offers suburban Ramsey County law enforcement, decision makers, retailers, and communities a proven, comprehensive method to ensure youth cannot access commercial tobacco at the point of sale. NSTCP recruits, trains, and maintains youth buyers from participating cities. Compliance checks are conducted face-to-face, as young people attempt to purchase in real-time. All youth follow specific protocol and receive compensation for their time.

93% of NSTCP retailers passed the youth access compliance checks in 2023, compared to 89% in 2022. The rate is above 90% for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. Departments are back on track and gaining capacity to conduct two annual checks.



ANSR continued to promote trainings and materials to boost retailer compliance, including the Stop the Sales to Minors online retailer training and This is Our Watch training materials from the FDA.

Congratulate and Educate

ANSR continued to partner with the Department of Human Services to provide support and technical assistance for the Congratulate and Educate program in 2023. The program provides resources to local law enforcement and public health agencies to conduct educational tobacco compliance checks. The checkers reward those who pass with a certificate congratulating them on their compliance or educate those who fail instead of issuing a citation. These checks must supplement, not replace, the state minimum of one required enforcement check per year. ANSR worked with **72** participants in 2023.

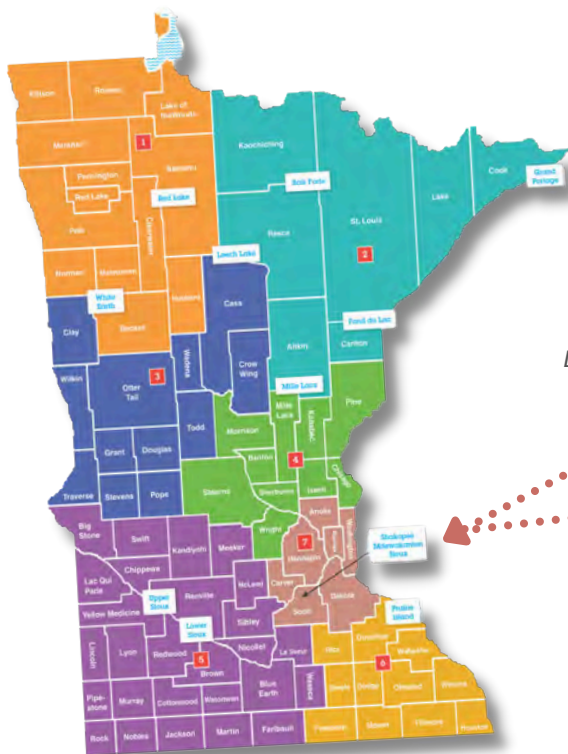
REGIONAL PREVENTION COORDINATORS (RPC)

Regional Prevention Coordinators (RPCs) provide resources, consultation, training, and technical assistance to local community coalitions, agencies, and other community members to support the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse (ATOD). The program is funded by the MN Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health, Housing, and Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services Administration and is hosted at ANSR.

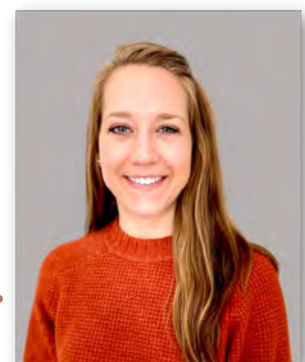
ANSR is host to two RPCs:

- The Region 7 RPC serves the Twin Cities metro area including Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties, and
- The newly-created Region 8 RPC serves Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities, including North Point Health and Wellness, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Austin, and Faribault.

The metro-based Region 7 RPC worked with 11 coalitions and communities in 2023. The metro-based Region 8 RPC, who started in fall 2023, worked with four BIPOC communities. Both RPCs provided technical support to grantees around organizational development, data collection, community assessment, member engagement and outreach, strategic planning, strategy selection and implementation, evaluation, and sustainability planning.



David Olson-Iverson, Region 8 RPC



Kayla Baker, Region 7 RPC

Learn more about RPCs at rpcmn.org.

MINNESOTA PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER (MPRC)

The Minnesota Prevention Resource Center is funded by the MN Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health, Housing, and Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services Administration and is hosted at ANSR. It connects substance misuse prevention professionals and community partners to the quality information and training they need to effectively prevent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse. Project staff also assist community partners in accessing research, interpreting findings for practical application, and identifying resources.

MPRC, in collaboration with the Minnesota RPCs, hosted 13 virtual webinars and training opportunities during 2023, reaching over 2,000 prevention professionals. MPRC distributed monthly MN Prev newsletters to over 1,500 recipients and responded to technical assistance requests.

Learn more about MPRC at www.mnprc.org.

Prevention Program Sharing Conference

In October the Minnesota Prevention Resource Center (MPRC) program hosted the 49th annual Minnesota Prevention Program Sharing Conference at Cragun's Resort in Brainerd, MN. The conference engaged hundreds substance misuse prevention coalitions, agencies, and individuals throughout Minnesota. In addition to the in-person option, all sessions were recorded to increase access across Minnesota. The 2023 conference had a combined total of 257 attendees!



Jason Lind, Madeline Bremel, and Kara Skahen at the 2023 conference at Cragun's Resort.



The 50th annual Minnesota Prevention Program Sharing Conference will be held in-person in St. Cloud, MN on October 15-16, 2024. To learn more about the conference, visit mnprc.org/conference.

PROJECT WATCH

Project WATCH, a research program of ANSR, works to expose tobacco industry marketing tactics across the state. The program is funded by the Blue Cross Blue Shield Center for Prevention. Project WATCH identifies and tracks marketing tactics of the tobacco industry to inform policy campaigns.

The Project WATCH team shares its findings by updating the MSFG statewide coalition on a monthly basis, presenting findings at state and national conferences, and using examples to educate decision makers on Big Tobacco's latest marketing moves.



Staff went undercover and attended The LoonMN's 10th anniversary yacht party in August. The LoonMN is a MN-based vape company. Staff came back with free vape products and branded swag. Project WATCH continues to monitor LoonMN's marketing.

Project WATCH informs partners of current industry tactics. Below are examples of the tobacco industry urging customers to oppose the FDA's proposed federal menthol regulations and using movie references to target young audiences to buy oral nicotine pouches.



Molly Schmidtke and Melissa Michels undercover on The LoonMN yacht.



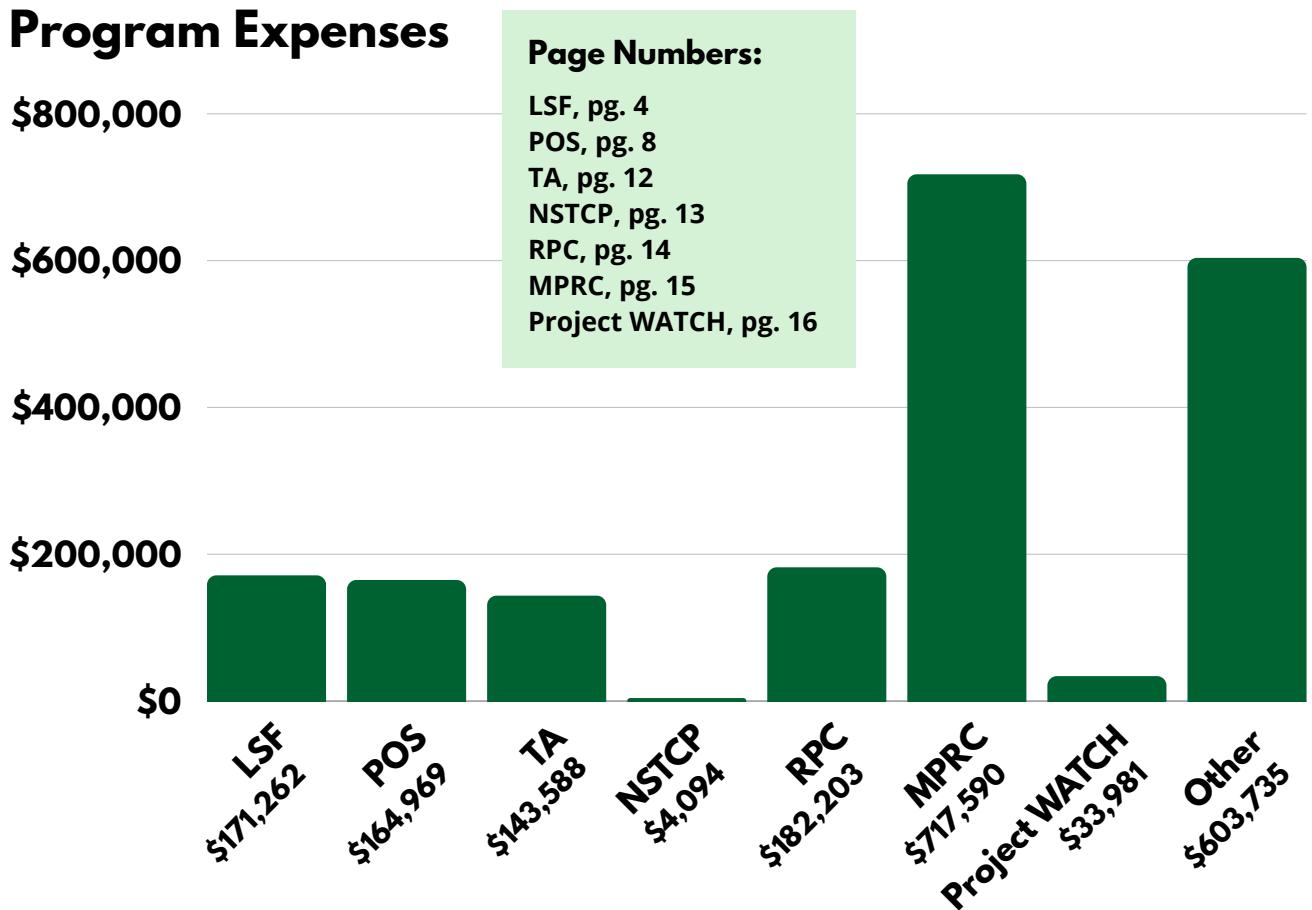
FINANCIAL HEALTH

The accounting firm Harrington, Langer and Associates audited ANSR's 2023 financials. The result of the audit was an unqualified opinion.

Expenses for 2023

Fundraising Expenses \$9,358	Management Expenses \$147,038	Program Expenses \$2,021,422
---	--	---

Program Expenses



A complete set of 2023 financial statements can be found on [the ANSR website](#).

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

ASPiRE Center

Bloomington Public Health

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota Center for Prevention

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

Dakota County SHIP

Hardenbergh Foundation

Hennepin County SHIP

Minneapolis Health Department SHIP

Minnesota Department of Health

Minnesota Department of Human Services

St. Paul - Ramsey County Public Health SHIP

Rice Family Foundation

Tobacco-Free Alliance



Thank you to all of our members who make donations, large and small. We appreciate your generosity.



A special thank you to these donors: David Klevan, Deb Hennrikus, Harry Lando, Jean Forster, Paul Pentel, Stuart Hanson, Susan Kennedy.





The Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota

2395 University Ave W, Ste 310 Saint Paul, MN 55114

651-646-3005

www.ansrmn.org