



April 5, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

It's hard to believe that it's been more than a year now since the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 a global pandemic, and a state of emergency was declared here in Michigan on March 10, 2020. A year ago, there was so much unknown about the virus and a lot of uncertainty about how the future would look. At times, the last year has felt like time came to a standstill. In other moments time was a blur. It has been a year of painful loss. We grieved as we watched George Floyd's senseless murder play out on television and phone screens around the world. The pandemic exacerbated pre-existing racial healthcare disparities and highlighted structural racism and inequality. As of this week, the death toll for Michiganders who have died from Covid-19 currently stands at [16,218](#). And for many of us, those statistics represent a loved one, friend or colleague taken from us far too soon.

The pandemic disrupted our lives in a multitude of ways. Things that many of us took for granted— like hugs, celebratory birthday dinners, vacations, and lunches with colleagues — were no longer considered safe. The transition to online schooling required some of you to become homeschool teachers while juggling work and other household responsibilities. In addition to the risks to our physical health, Covid-19 took a toll on our emotional health. There are many unsung heroes of this crisis, and I salute all of you who found the strength to keep moving even when times were tough.

In this moment of physical isolation, economic loss, and health safety risks, I found a strong sense of purpose. From the very beginning, Michigan Nonprofit Association's focus has been on helping nonprofits get through this crisis and that commitment has not wavered. This was a period of crucial pivots, growth, and innovation. MNA advocated for changes in the language and application process for the [Paycheck Protection Program](#), and we worked with financial institutions to help nonprofits navigate the process. Additionally, we created educational [webinars](#), and a [Covid toolkit](#) packed with helpful resources exclusively for Michigan nonprofits. We had no idea how long this pandemic would last, but nonprofits stepped up in a big way- providing much needed resources and services. And while there are many challenges ahead, we're a far cry from where we were a year ago. The health experts understand the virus better and have implemented improved treatment guidelines and faster Covid testing options. As I write this note, there has been record-breaking progress towards vaccination and vaccination access here in Michigan.

The pandemic hit us hard and knocked us down a few times. But make no mistake, we will come out on the other side of this crisis together. Thank you to the hard-working staff at MNA and nonprofits nationwide for your relentless commitment. I am proud to work right alongside you. Together, we are moving towards better days.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donna Murray-Brown'.

Donna Murray-Brown  
President & CEO