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Michigan Nonprofit Association Announces CEO Transition

(Lansing—June 29) The Michigan Nonprofit Association (MNA) today announced the resignation of CEO Donna Murray-Brown, whose departure is prompted by a spousal job change that will take her family out of state. Murray-Brown will stay on through Dec. 31 and provide consulting services as needed through the first quarter of 2022.

MNA has already begun the establishment of a search committee, headed by Incompass Michigan CEO Todd Culver, to begin its hiring and recruitment efforts. Both internal and external candidates will be considered, and the board is making stakeholder input a high priority. The search process is expected to commence in the coming weeks.

“This is difficult news for all of us,” said MNA board chair Scott Schropp. “During challenging times, the gift of great leadership is one to cherish more than ever, and Donna has been a reliable source of unruffled, courageous and profound direction each and every day. Her work will have a tremendous impact on our state’s nonprofit sector for generations to come.”

“Donna’s impact extends far beyond Michigan’s nonprofits; her inspirational leadership has been felt by nonprofits and people throughout the country,” said National Council of Nonprofits President and CEO Tim Delaney. “As Board Chair of the National Council of Nonprofits, Donna helped guide the nonprofit community through the challenges of the pandemic in ways that will resonate for years to come. Donna’s colleagues — accomplished nonprofit leaders from across the country — admire the keen intellect, graceful humility, and joyful “can do” attitude she brings to every gathering, large and small. Michiganders and the millions of people served by nonprofits nationwide owe Donna a debt of gratitude. They all may not know her name, but they all benefited from her commitment to their success. She has been the right leader at the right time for our sector and our communities.”

During her tenure, Murray-Brown has led significant restructuring and engagement efforts among the organization’s programming and leadership. She has been a consistent champion for innovation and has developed essential partnerships with state and national organizations, making sure our state was included in important national conversations “Donna’s taken MNA to new heights through her bold, courageous, innovative, and equity-centered leadership,” said Kyle Caldwell, president and CEO of the Council of Michigan Foundations. “Michigan nonprofits have benefited from her work and now it’s up to those of us on the board to find the right person to continue that legacy of exemplary leadership.”

Her leadership has been recognized repeatedly at the state and national levels, including honors from the Nonprofit Times’ Power and Influence Top 50. “Donna has led Michigan’s
nonprofit community with skill and grace through one of the most significant, complex, and turbulent periods of modern nonprofit history,” said Rip Rapson, president and CEO of The Kresge Foundation. “Her clarity of vision about the vital role of nonprofits in fortifying the state's civic culture and her unwavering commitment to improving opportunities for the state’s least fortunate citizens will leave an indelible mark on our community. She has left the state a better place.”

Most of all, however, Murray-Brown is known for her efforts to drive diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in the nonprofit sector. “When I think of the many talented people driven to help build justice and opportunity in southeast Michigan, Donna’s name rises to the very top of the list. She is wise, brave and effective,” said Allandra Bulger, executive director of Co.act Detroit. “Her work in our region has made it a significantly better place. I know how hard it will be for her to leave us, but I also know we all are better for her time here. Her collaborative efforts have fostered the kinds of changes that will be truly transformative for generations to come.”

“There are strong leaders, and then there are game-changers like Donna,” Schropp said. “Through her efforts, the MNA is in a position that’s stronger than it’s ever been. We are looking forward to identifying a worthy successor who can take the baton and propel our organization forward to all the amazing work we still want to do to advance and support the people of Michigan.”

About MNA
Founded in 1990, Michigan Nonprofit Association (MNA) is a 501 c (3) charitable organization dedicated to nonprofits and the communities they serve by promoting anti-racism and social justice. MNA is a statewide membership organization that achieves its mission through advocacy, training, technology services and civic engagement. To learn more, visit https://www.mnaonline.org

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