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Press Forward Minnesota Announces Inaugural Grantees to Strengthen Local News

MINNEAPOLIS – January 22, 2025 – [Press Forward Minnesota](#), a collaborative initiative dedicated to supporting local news and information across the state, today announced its first cohort of grant recipients.

Press Forward Minnesota is awarding a total of \$520,000 to 13 organizations. These grants support smaller news organizations that provide hyperlocal, original reporting to communities across the state, with a focus on meeting the needs of communities of color, linguistically diverse communities, low-wealth rural communities, and others not adequately served, reached, or represented.

The 13 organizations selected through a rigorous process represent diverse media outlets that serve communities across the state, from the Iron Range to the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Each grantee will receive a one-year, \$40,000 grant.

The grantees are:

- **Access Press, Ltd.:** Growing capacity and strategy to expand perspectives and geographic coverage to serve Minnesota's disability community.
- **BLCK Press:** Launching digital reporting to amplify and serve the voices of Black Minnesotans.
- **Eden Prairie Local News:** Expanding coverage of economic developments, business dynamics, and their impact on Eden Prairie's diverse communities, including Somali and South Asian residents.
- **Hmong Broadcasting Company LLC:** Expanding Uncover More Good on 3HmongTV, a program fostering awareness, civic engagement, and cultural pride through conversations on critical issues affecting Hmong and Southeast Asian communities.

- **Iron Range Today:** Laying the groundwork to fill regional news gaps in northern Minnesota by funding a part-time position, freelance reporters, training, and essential equipment to thrive in the digital news landscape.
- **Lakeland News:** Strengthening connections across its 7,500-square-mile viewing area and ensuring robust infrastructure to uphold its values of excellence, innovation, integrity, and respect to serve residents of north central Minnesota.
- **Minnesota Women's Press:** Expanding Greater Minnesota outreach and accelerating content development with a new membership model and director while continuing award-winning journalism on gender-based violence, systemic inequities, and solutions-driven storytelling.
- **Mshale Communications, Inc.:** Amplifying the voices of African immigrant communities in Minnesota through data-driven journalism to highlight the critical issues, trends, and disparities affecting these communities, ensuring that their perspectives are fully represented in local media.
- **Pillsbury United Communities (North News):** Supporting grassroots community journalism and youth training in North Minneapolis while expanding digital content to make news more accessible on mobile platforms.
- **Project Optimist (in partnership with St. Cloud Somali Community Radio):** Collaborating with St. Cloud Somali Community Radio to share solutions-focused stories about the Somali community in Central Minnesota.
- **Root River Current, Inc.:** Strengthening operations, resources, and storytelling capacity to expand coverage, enhance audience engagement, and fulfill its commitment to "Building Community Through Storytelling." in southeast Minnesota.
- **Steele County Times:** Hiring a full-time reporter to address underserved coverage areas in southern Minnesota and meet growing community demand to ensure fair representation of underrepresented groups.
- **ThreeSixty Journalism at the University of St. Thomas:** Empowering diverse high school students through training and workshops in journalism and multimedia storytelling.

"We are incredibly excited to support these outstanding organizations that are vital to the health and well-being of their communities," said May Yang, senior manager of policy and partnerships at the Minnesota Council on Foundations, who serves as the staff lead for Press Forward Minnesota. "These grants will help them expand their reach, innovate their reporting, and better serve their audiences."

"McKnight is thrilled to see 13 innovative newsrooms from across the state included in the first round of Press Forward Minnesota funding," said Tim Murphy, program officer at the McKnight Foundation. "These organizations are providing a vital service, helping to inform and connect diverse communities that have been affected by the local news crisis. At the same time, we know local journalism needs more support from more funders, businesses, and readers alike, to match the scale of the challenge. We look forward to building on this important first step to strengthen a local news ecosystem that serves all Minnesotans".

Press Forward Minnesota is committed to fostering a robust and vibrant local news ecosystem across the state. This grant program represents one of the many ways the initiative supports local journalism and ensures that all Minnesotans can access the information they need to be informed and engaged citizens.

About Press Forward Minnesota:

Press Forward Minnesota is a collaborative initiative that brings together funders, media organizations, and community partners to re-center local journalism as a cornerstone of community cohesion, civic engagement, and government accountability, with a strong focus on racial equity.

Press Forward Minnesota is one of the inaugural chapters of [Press Forward](#), a national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news.

Press Forward Minnesota has received funding commitments from The McKnight Foundation, Bush Foundation, the Glen Nelson Center at American Public Media Group, the MacArthur Foundation, and the Taylor Family Farms Foundation.