

the
MAIN STREET
alliance



**20
22**

**BE SAFE
BE HEALTHY
BE KIND**

BUILDING POWER FOR COMMUNITY-FOCUSED, PEOPLE-CENTERED SMALL BUSINESSES AND LOCAL ECONOMIES

**IMPACT
REPORT**

mainstreetalliance.org

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Greetings, Main Street Alliance Community:

I am delighted to provide you with Main Street Alliance's first annual report. This report is an opportunity to reflect on MSA's history and our accomplishments. With this knowledge, we look ahead to the future.

Main Street Alliance (MSA) has served as the nation's most vocal advocate for authentic small business voices for nearly twenty years. We have entered a new era of organizing at a pivotal moment. Our economic and public health crisis and larger fight for fundamental human rights demand a new movement. With the collective reckoning on equity and racial justice and a cacophony of voices calling for civic change and accountability, we know it's time for deep organizing. Small business owners are untapped resources. They are the miner's canary in the larger economic narrative related to good jobs and workers' rights. Small businesses are key to the vitality of small towns, rural communities, and communities led by Black and Latinx leaders across America.

With your partnership and investment, we are reimagining a world with less corporate power.

MSA is prepared to scale strategic efforts in target states for fundamental policy changes. In partnership, MSA leaders and staff will execute a vision to address equity through resourcing the small business sector, promoting good jobs and strong communities, shifting policy and perception about corporate America, and contributing to broad civic engagement. As we head into our new strategic phase, Main Street Alliance and Main Street Action are positioned for exponential growth and impact. Thank you to our staff and membership for building a strong local economy.

With gratitude,

Chanda Causer
Executive Director, Main Street Alliance



HOW WE CAME TO BE KNOWN AS MAIN STREET ALLIANCE

OUR HISTORY

As a small business owner without the money or time to influence politics alone, I'd given up the idea that there would ever be real representation for me at the state and national levels. MSA has changed that in a big way. MSA has allowed me to have a voice and the ability to work towards a better future for the people I care for the most.

— **Evan Dannels, Cadre**
Madison, WI



In 2002, an organizing strategy to counter the big business narrative grew out of the campaign in Maine for single-payer health care. Maine People's Alliance generated over 1,400 business signatures that they delivered to Senators Snowe and Collins. The Alliance for Just Society (AJS) replicated this success by starting small business pilot organizing projects in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island.

These pilots flourished and demonstrated the importance of an organized, independent small business voice. Main Street Alliance was born - initially sub-granting to community organizations across the country. In the summer of 2008, Main Street Alliance formed national action for health care reform as a part of the coalition with Health Care for America Now (HCAN). We held a national convening of volunteer small business members from across the country to discuss what should come next. Our members felt a new sense of political power with Main Street Alliance. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010 was a tremendous win for MSA members. Finally, MSA members sat at the table and told their stories.

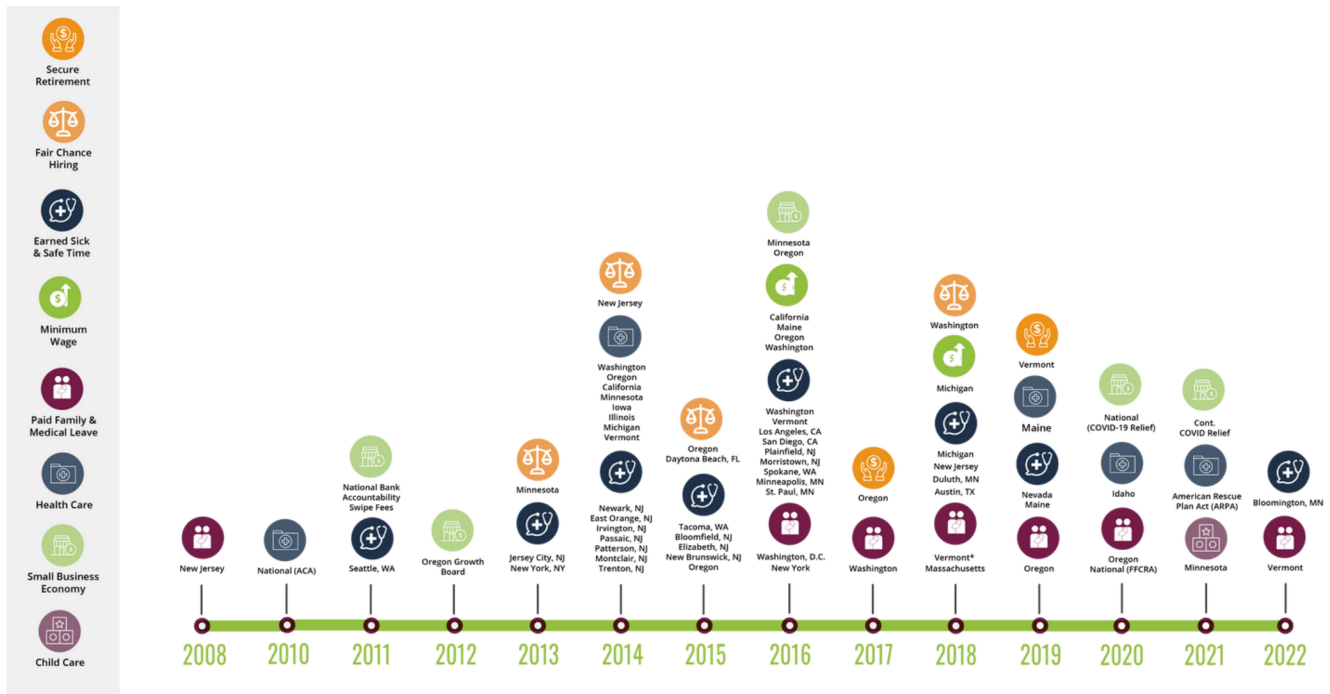
Since the beginning, we've seen local and national successes driven by small business owners.

I have so much gratitude for [MSA] as a vehicle for advocacy and personal involvement.

— **Shannon Berns, Du Nord Consulting**
Alexandria, MN

THE IMPACT OF SMALL BUSINESS ORGANIZING

OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS



REALIZING SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS' FULL POTENTIAL AS LEADERS FOR A JUST, POST-NEOLIBERAL FUTURE

Because of the groundwork laid by Main Street Alliance members, small business owners are driving a new narrative about our economy, the indispensable role of government in supporting small businesses to thrive, and the need for a stronger safety net so good jobs are accessible to all. Our work advances five core issue areas, identified by our members, that will build toward a more equitable small business economy:

- **Anti-monopoly** - Tackle corporate concentration of power in the market and politics, which is detrimental to the growth and development of small businesses and the communities they serve
- **Capital Access** - Create new and improve existing capital access options for small business owners, especially those systematically left out of traditional options, including BIPOC and women small business owners
- **Care Economy** - Invest in a universal safety net and job-sustaining supports, like Paid Family & Medical Leave, Child Care, and Retirement
- **Health Care** - Enact a universal health care system built on care, not profit
- **Tax Fairness** - Establish an equitable tax code that ensures we have the revenue needed for robust public investments

THE POWER OF SMALL BUSINESS ORGANIZING

OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS & PURPOSE

2021 BY THE NUMBERS

1,300+

Over 1,300 news features and OpEds highlighting MSA members' voices in hundreds of national and local outlets

50+

Over 50 meetings between our members and key decision makers at both the local and federal levels

3,000+

We grew our network by over 3,000 new members taking actions, and getting connected with organizers across the country

13M

Over 13 million people viewed messages and stories on what #SmallBizNeedsNow on social media

1,000+

MSA small businesses sent over 1,000 letters, emails, and postcards to Congress

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE: THE ROLE OF SMALL BUSINESS

Authentic small business owners need a vehicle to support organizing and political strategy to tackle complex systemic problems. We will engage small business owners through traditional on-the-ground organizing and leverage a modern distributive organizing method. We will **identify, support, and develop** leadership skills, critical analysis of economic policies, and alternative approaches for a more equitable economy.

Main Street Alliance and Main Street Action employ three main methods:

- **Continue to organize** small business owners; conduct state and local campaigns around our core issues areas and win policies that reduce concentrated economic and political power; establish a set of public goods; and contribute to a more robust infrastructure for further wins.
- **Continue to research policy and develop concept papers** across our core issue with member engagement. Provide deep political analysis to share evidence demonstrating the widespread benefits of a more equitable economy. Inform, inspire, and strategize with small business owners.
- **Start to activate small business elected leadership** development training to support members whose interest lies more in elected leadership to influence policy changes across our core issue areas.

Being part of MSA has helped me to network with other small business owners and gives me a broader understanding of how their businesses work and how we all are interconnected and could utilize 90% of the same supports that we are asking for. MSA is owners that care about their employees and customers and want our communities to succeed- not just line our or shareholders' pockets with money to the detriment of those same people and communities.

— Corrine Hendrickson, Corrine's Little Explorers
New Glarus, WI

2021 IMPACT

MSA ELEVATED THE STORIES OF SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS AND MEMBERS TOOK ACTION ON THE ISSUES.

ANTI-MONOPOLY

- MSA Members **Sabrina Parsons** (Palo Alto Software), **Aaron Seyedian** (Well Paid Maids), and **Anita Thomas** (Carolyn Dorfman Dance) lent their voices to the Main Street Against Big Tech Campaign, in partnership with Accountable Tech.
- MSA member **Edgar Comellas** (Aces Wild Entertainment) urged the Biden administration to break up Big Tech with Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Rep. Mondaire Jones.
- MSA Member **Sarah Piepenburg** (Vinaigrette) uplifted the case for antitrust legislation with Senator Klobuchar.

CAPITAL ACCESS

- MSA member **Nneka Brown-Massey** (Innovative Supplies Worldwide) testified before the House Financial Services Subcommittee on National Security, International Development, and Monetary Policy on “Supporting Small and Minority-Owned Businesses through the Pandemic.”
- MSA Member **Greg León** (Amalinda Restaurant) shared his story of how he was denied needed grant funds as the result of a racist lawsuit, leading to the call to replenish the Restaurant Revitalization Fund.
- MSA Board Member **ReShonda Young** (Bank of Jabez, Popcorn Heaven) spoke to the US State of Women on what is needed to support Black-owned and women-owned businesses, including equitable access to capital. Her 2019 lawsuit led to the CFPB implementing the Dodd-Frank 1071 Rule to begin collecting data on lending disaggregated by race and gender.

CARE ECONOMY

- MSA member **Sophie Blake** (Sophie Blake NY) met with Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo on the importance of investing in the care economy.
- MSA Member **Marcia St. Hilaire-Finn** (Bright Start Early Care) testified before the Senate HELP Committee on “Paid Leave for Working Families: Examining Access, Options, and Impacts, and spoke at a National Rally for Paid Leave and Child Care in Washington, DC.
- MSA Member **Eric Sorkin** (Runamok Maple) testified before the House Oversight & Government Reform Committee on “Leading by Example: The Need for Comprehensive Paid Leave for the Federal Workforce and Beyond.”
- MSA Member **Stephanie Woody** (The Vandalia Co) shared her story and why West Virginia business owners support paid leave with Vice President Kamala Harris.

I am so appreciative of the opportunity to speak directly to my congressional representative about our businesses and to show her appreciation for her work. I would not have had the same opportunity without MSA.

— Nancy Sobin, Professional Paperwork Services, LLC
Lawrenceville, NJ

2021 IMPACT CONTINUED

MSA ELEVATED THE STORIES OF SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS AND MEMBERS TOOK ACTION ON THE ISSUES.

HEALTH CARE

- President Biden invited MSA member **Molly Moon** (Molly Moon's Homemade Ice Cream) to the White House to discuss the vaccine mandate/testing.
- MSA Member **Jill Swenson** (Swenson Books) shared her personal story on how the ACA subsidies from the American Rescue Plan have saved her money each month, and why it is so important to her life and business.
- MSA members from WI, including **Patrick DePula** (Salvatore's Tomato Pies), joined the Lower Drug Prices Now Bus Tour to elevate why small businesses need lower health care costs.

TAX FAIRNESS

- MSA member **Rita Hudson-Evalt** (Union Rose) hosted Senator Wyden to uplift why small businesses need corporations and the ultra-wealthy to pay their fair share.
- MSA released our Tax Recommendations Report.
- MSA member **Danny Schwartzman** (Common Roots Cafe) outlined why tax conformity with PPP loans is critical to small businesses trying to survive the pandemic.

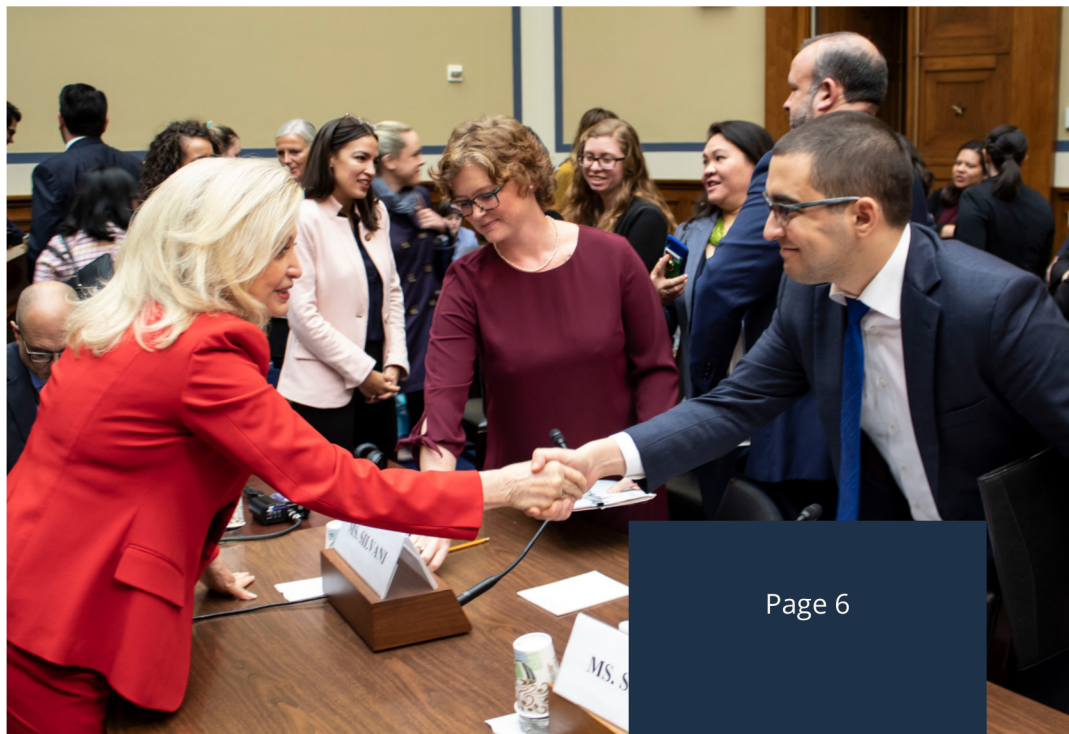
Additionally, beyond our core issue areas MSA awarded over 20 grants to bars and restaurants in the third round of the Main Street Relief Fund with support from the Seagram's 7 Keep the Dive Alive campaign. And MSA Member **Kris Marion** (Circle M Farms) highlighted how the Infrastructure Bill's investment in rural development, particularly broadband, would support small businesses like hers.



SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MONETARY POLICY



Supporting Small and Minority-Owned Businesses Through the Pandemic



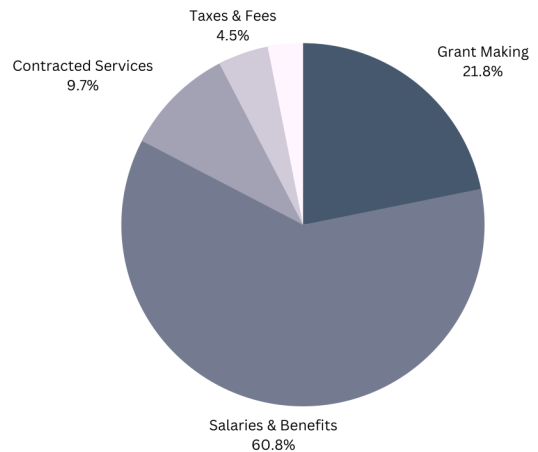
2021 FINANCE REPORT

BUILDING RESOURCES FOR A STRONG SMALL BUSINESS FUTURE

SUPPORT (>\$5,000) FOR OUR WORK IN 2021 COMES FROM:

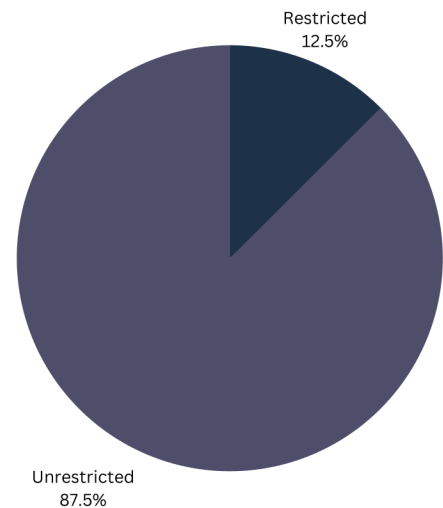
Alliance for Early Success
Ben & Jerry's Foundation
Fairfield Community Foundation (Diageo)
Family Values at Work A Multi-State Consortium
For West Virginia's Future
Ford Foundation
ISAIAH
Kellenbeck Development
Let's Grow Kids VT
Main Street Landing
Minnesota State Voices
Molly Moon Neitzel
New Venture Fund
Red Hen Baking Co.
Rockefeller Family Fund
Rutgers the State University of NJ
Star Power, LLC
Tides Foundation
US Small Business Administration
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Wellspring Philanthropic Fund Inc
Windward Fund

2021 EXPENSES



2021 REVENUE

in 2021, 100 percent of support for MSA came from grants and contributions.



It's powerful to be in community with other small business leaders, working together on what matters most.

— Caitlin Rogers, Next Day Animations
Minneapolis, MN

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

WE SEEK TO BUILD AN ORGANIZED BASE OF SMALL BUSINESS LEADERS IN EVERY U.S. STATE



Main Street Alliance (MSA) is an organization founded by small business leaders. MSA organizes small businesses around issues that matter most for businesses, their employees, and the community they serve. MSA aims to build a robust, self-funded, multi-racial, small business membership organization that can shift our economic narrative, wield political power, and win policy reform.



Justice, equity, and sustainability are central to our theory of change for the small business communities we serve. Main Street Alliance is committed to building a small business organization that represents the social fabric of the communities we serve, specifically Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), LGBTQIA+, and those living in rural communities. MSA leads with values rooted in equity and inclusion, focusing on underrepresented people. We live out these values externally and internally across our community organizing, policy strategy, staff recruitment, and retention.



We seek to build an organized base of small business leaders in every U.S. state, ready to take action, testify, and lead change locally and nationally. We are laying the groundwork today to build a membership base of 50,000 members. We are working to meaningfully shift the public narrative so that national media outlets seek our opinion on policy, strategy, and the small business owner's story. By dismantling the neoliberal ideologies of individualism, free-market capitalism, and small government, our staff and members will foster the narrative of healthy "Main Streets" in America.

IN 2022, WE WILL EXECUTE OUR STRATEGIES TO:

- Host six Getting Up to Speeds sessions, designed to share research and key findings across our core issues
- Host our first Hill Day in Washington, D.C.
- Engage 50 members in Small Business Month activities
- Engage 25 members of Congress and advocate for small business policy issues
- Drive our first national (nonpartisan) Get Out the Vote training and mobilization

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT

YOUR VOICE IS NEEDED TO BUILD POWER

Main Street Alliance will continue to serve as the most vocal advocate for small businesses, and we will continue to organize, publish concept papers, and share key findings with all members. As we enter our next era, we will start to solicit sustaining funding from small businesses. In May, we formally launched our sustaining membership program, which is designed to develop independent revenue for Main Street Alliance. If successful, we will have the resources to drive toward our vision of building a powerful small business membership organization.

Sustaining members will receive access to our new member center on our website, where we'll be building out training videos, a member directory, and exclusive member benefits:

- Free or reduced-cost skill-based training sessions
- Access to Getting Up To Speed webinars
- A directory of MSA members, to expand your network, and shop local when you travel
- Exclusive benefits like POS, HR, and other services to improve the lives of small business owners

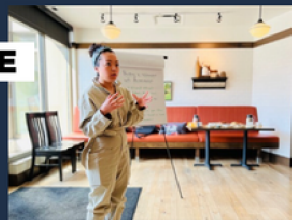
We are in the pilot phase and expect to make improvements and incorporate member feedback. **Together we can build community-focused, people-centered small businesses for local economies.**

Join the movement: mainstreetalliance.org



**RESOURCE
LIBRARY**

EXPLORE



**MEMBER
BENEFITS**

EXPLORE



**MEMBER
DIRECTORY**

CONNECT

