



Citizens League
St. Paul Minimum Wage Project
Study Committee Member Bios
(Listed in alphabetical order)

1. **Mr. Bob Brick**, President/CEO, Ally People Solutions

Bob Brick works with a dedicated board of directors, talented leadership, and nearly 70 hard-working staff to establish and implement the strategic vision of ALLY. Prior to joining ALLY in 2007, he worked at PACER Center, The Arc Minnesota, The Arc Anoka County, and Lakes and Pines Community Action Council in Director and Executive Director positions.

ALLY People Solutions is a nonprofit that provides employment services and life skills training to people with intellectual and mental health disabilities. ALLY has been providing services in St. Paul for over fifty years. All ALLY program participants who choose to work earn minimum to prevailing wages regardless of disability, employer, position, or productivity, a unique approach for organizations that provide employment services to people with intellectual and mental health disabilities.

About 80% of ALLY's annual budget comes from the State and Counties through individual service agreements, which are mostly funded by Federal and State Medicaid funds (Medical Assistance in Minnesota). The State or Counties set rates, which change based on federal/state policy decisions.

2. **Mr. Samuel Callahan**, Cook, McDonald's & Taco Bell Restaurants

Samuel Callahan is 54 years old and has been a resident of Minnesota since 1995. He is a father of six daughters and one son. Samuel has been a cook at McDonald's for the past year and a half. He has also been a cook at Taco Bell for last five years. Both restaurants are on Snelling and University Avenues in St. Paul. Sam considers himself to be an all-around people person.

3. **Mr. Dillon Donnelly**, St. Paul resident & Director of Business Development, Donnelly Custom Manufacturing

Dillon Donnelly is the Director of Business Development at Donnelly Custom Manufacturing Company, an industry leading injection molding and manufacturing company. In his current role, Dillon utilizes his production and operations experience to create long-term customer relationships.

Previously, Dillon worked in different functional areas including production management, training and continuous improvement, customer service, and started at his career working as a press operator. In addition to his professional experience, Dillon earned a B.A. in Political Science from the University of St. Thomas and an MBA from Hamline University. Dillon is a St. Paul resident.

4. **Mr. Barry Gisser**, CFO, Science Museum of Minnesota

As Chief Financial Officer of The Science Museum of Minnesota, Barry Gisser leads the Finance & Accounting, IT, and Risk Management teams in supporting and advancing the Science Museum's mission to inspire learning, inform policy, and improve lives. He joined the museum in 2017 after spending more than 25 years in leadership positions at both publicly and privately held firms including Procter & Gamble, Ecolab, and ConAgra Foods. Barry's areas of expertise include finance and accounting, mergers and acquisitions, enterprise growth strategies, general management, organizational development, and change management.

Barry is a Certified Management Accountant (CMA) with a bachelor's degree from Kenyon College and an MBA from The Kenan Flagler School at The University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill. Barry currently serves on the Board of Directors for Twin Cities In Motion and the James J. Hill Center. He also serves as a judge for MN Cup, the largest statewide start-up competition in the country.

5. **Mr. Matt Gray**, Server, W.A. Frost Restaurant

Since 2004, Matt Gray has been a Server at W.A. Frost and Company. He was born in St. Paul and raised in a low-income household on the East Side.

Matt comes from a restaurant family. His grandparents, aunt, and mother all worked at various times in their lives in the industry. His first job at 15 was a dishwasher. From ages 17 to 19, he worked at Old Country Buffet and Perkins. At 19 he started his employment at W.A. Frost as a bus-person. Matt aspired to attend college; however, when he realized the income potential as a server in the full-service industry, he found his career path. Due to the cause and effect of increases to minimum wage in his industry, Matt has made it a mission to help preserve and maintain livable incomes for himself and others within the industry.

6. **Mr. Jon Grebner**, Political Action Director, AFSCME Council 5

Jon Grebner is the Political Action Director of AFSCME Council 5, a union of 43,000 public and private non-profit workers in Minnesota. Jon believes in worker's rights and that all workers should have a voice in their workplace. Through his role at AFSCME Council 5, Jon organizes members to participate in the electoral process by supporting candidates that support progressive public policy.

Jon moved to Minnesota from Milwaukee to attend the University of Minnesota. While working toward his bachelor's in political science and economic history, he developed his love for Juicy Lucy's, Post-its, and a good pan of bars. He never left.

Jon lives in the West 7th neighborhood of St. Paul. When he is not working he likes to ride bikes, visit breweries, and take his dog for long walks along the Mississippi River.

7. **Mr. Matt Halley**, Executive Director, Cookie Cart

Matt Halley joined Cookie Cart as its Executive Director in 2004. Under his leadership Cookie Cart has grown from a grass roots organization in North Minneapolis to one of the largest youth employment training program in the Twin Cities, with a new St. Paul location. Matt holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from Augsburg College. He has worked in a variety of direct service and leadership roles at Twin Cities youth-serving organizations. Prior to Cookie Cart, Matt had a 10 year career at YouthLink where he began as a case manager for homeless teens and left as the Executive Director. His areas of expertise include crisis intervention, GLBTQ youth, "learn to earn" training, and youth social enterprise.

8. **Mr. Doug Hennes**, VP, Government Relations & Special Projects, University of St. Thomas

Doug Hennes oversees the University of St. Thomas's activities in the St. Paul and Minneapolis City Halls, at the State Capitol, and in Washington, D.C., and is a registered lobbyist in Minnesota.

Doug is a 1977 journalism graduate of St. Thomas. He was a reporter and editor at the St. Paul Pioneer Press from 1976 to 1990, when he returned to St. Thomas to oversee the University Relations department until 2016. He is the author of *That Great Heart*, a 2014 biography of the late I.A. O'Shaughnessy, a longtime St. Thomas trustee and St. Paul philanthropist.

Doug's recent community activities have included Minneapolis Downtown Council board (present), Central Corridor Anchor Partnership board (present), Citizens League PILOT task force (2017), St. Paul Chamber of Commerce board (2011-16), Mendota Heights Planning Commission (2007-18), and ThreeSixty Journalism board (2005-2017).

9. **Ms. Mary Hicks**, Principal Gift Officer, University of Minnesota

Mary Hicks, a St. Paul resident, learned the joy and rewards of hard work growing up on an Iowa family farm. She moved to Minnesota after college and never seriously considered leaving. Her volunteer service has been mostly in early childhood education. Mary holds a BA from Simpson College and did her graduate work at Saint Cloud State. She works at the University of Minnesota, where she started in student activities before building a career in advancement largely in the College of Liberal Arts.

Mary's interest in minimum wage issues stems partly from working through college when a degree was more affordable. Now she see students graduating with a great deal of debt and struggling to map their futures, working for a period in multiple low paying jobs. In her volunteer work, Mary sees families struggling to make ends meet, with some holding down multiple jobs while their children are often left at risk because of inadequate support structures. Mary also knows several restaurateurs struggling to make professional dreams come true and provide top notch products while surviving on very narrow margins, folks who want to give their employees livable wages but are looking for creative solutions.

10. **Ms. Sarah Kopp-Reddy**, Server, Pizza Luce

Sarah Kopp-Reddy is from St. Paul, Minnesota. She went to St. Paul Central High School and then to the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. Sarah works as a server at Pizza Luce in St. Paul and loves the fast paced and ever changing environment. Working in the service industry in a variety of positions for the last ten years has given Sarah the opportunity to see firsthand how important the 15 dollar wage discussion is for the future of the industry in the Twin Cities and nation.

11. **Mr. Andrew Kopplin**, Owner, Kopplins Coffee Shops

Andrew Kopplin is a resident of the Merriam Park neighborhood of St. Paul where he and his wife Amanda co-own Kopplin's, a coffee shop. He has two kids that are 5 and 2 years old. In the last 3 years at the shop, Andrew and Amanda have experimented with labor practices that push towards a livable wage for their employees, such as eliminating the uncertainty of tipped wages and including a higher wage in their pricing. They are looking forward to participating in the conversation about our community's values.

12. **Ms. B Kyle**, President/CEO, Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce (**Co-chair**)

As President/CEO of the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, B Kyle represents over 1,200 Twin Cities companies of all sizes and industries, as well as non-profit and government organizations. The St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce is a dynamic network of businesses and individuals, and is known for its strong advocacy both at a regional and state level on behalf of the employer community.

Within the community, B is a Midway Chamber of Commerce board member. She also is the 2015-17 President of the Minnesota Precision Manufacturing Association (MPMA), and for 12 years was editor-in-chief of its bi-monthly trade journal, *Precision Manufacturing*.

B graduated from the College of Saint Benedict and is a veteran U.S. Army officer. Prior to her work at the Chamber, she spent 11 years at the St. Paul Port Authority, ultimately co-leading its development work in St. Paul on projects such as the Treasure Island Center, CHS Field, the St. Paul Police Department's Public Safety Training Facility, and Major League Soccer.

13. **Ms. Rebecca Lucero**, Public Policy Director, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN)

Rebecca Lucero serves on the leadership team at MCN, a non-profit based in St. Paul, where she is responsible for developing and implementing MCN's policy agenda, educating nonprofits on key policy issues, lobbying on behalf of Minnesota's nonprofit sector, and developing and implementing MCN's inclusion and equity strategic framework.

Rebecca has more than a decade of policy, legal, and nonprofit leadership experience including organizing, building coalitions, and fostering meaningful, change-oriented relationships. Prior to joining

MCN, Rebecca served as policy & advocacy manager and global village leader for Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, as the Senior Community Representative for Representative Keith Ellison, as an unemployment law judge with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), and as an attorney with a civil rights firm and with the Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis. Rebecca has a B.A. from Grinnell College (Iowa) and a law degree from the University of Minnesota Law School.

14. **Mr. Tim Mahoney**, St. Paul resident and Owner, The Loon Café

Tim Mahoney has been a home owner in St. Paul for 33 years. He has owned and operated the Loon Café in Minneapolis for 30 years. He is also the owner of Mahoney's Bar and Grill and President of the Warehouse District Business Association. Tim serves on the boards of the Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association, the Minneapolis Downtown Council, and the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District (DID).

15. **Ms. Veronica Mendez Moore**, Co-Director, Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha (CTUL; Center of Workers United in Struggle)

For over 10 years, Veronica Mendez Moore has organized and developed leadership with low-wage workers to fight for fair wages, working conditions, and a voice on the job in different industries in St. Paul and across the Twin Cities, working to shift the balance of power between low-wage workers of color and large corporations. CTUL plays a crucial role in the labor movement, creating innovative, new models of organizing that re-organize the economy to build more power with and for workers. Most recently, CTUL organized with retail janitors across the Metro Area resulting in Target implementing a Responsible Contractor Policy with its cleaning contractors as well as industry-wide wage increases. This policy is the first of its kind in this industry nation-wide and ensures organizing rights for janitors who clean Target.

16. **Mr. Oscar Murcia**, Owner, El Guanaco Bakery Y Cafe

Oscar Murcia is from El Salvador and has been living in St. Paul for more than 20 years. He has two businesses, Oscar's Cleaning Services, Inc. and El Guanaco Bakery and Café. Oscar has had the cleaning business for 15 years and has 7 employees, including his wife and himself. He has had the bakery for 12 years and has 15 employees. He runs the bakery with the help of his family since it's a family business. It has been a dream of Oscar's to share a piece of his country with the people of Minnesota and that's what he does with the bakery.

17. **Ms. Kera Peterson**, Political Director/Campaign Manager, Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation

Kera Peterson has worked with labor unions in the East Metro since 2002 and has been a union member since 1997. She holds a Master of Advocacy and Political Leadership from the University of Minnesota Duluth as well as undergraduate degrees in psychology and urban studies.

Kera is an active member of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. She chairs the Minnesota Fair Trade Coalition Steering Committee and the Witness for Peace Midwest Board of Directors. She also serves as Treasurer for the North Star Policy Institute.

18. **Mr. Sam Peterson**, Owner, Kyatchi Restaurant

Sam is 43 years old and was born and raised in South Minneapolis. He spent his entire life in the service industry starting at age 14 working at the State Fair and the Uptown Art Fair. He spent 14 years working at First Avenue in Downtown Minneapolis, including 4 years as the General Manager. He has been managing in the service industry since he was 21 and it had been his lifelong dream to own his own establishment. About 5 years ago, he and his sister decided to put their dreams into action and opened their first Kyatchi in 2014. Their second location just opened up in December in Lowertown St. Paul.

19. **Ms. Analita Silva**, Co-Owner, El Burrito Mercado Restaurant and Grocery

Analita is the director of catering and youngest co-owner at El Burrito Mercado, based in St. Paul's West Side, who works with customers to enhance their special day. Whether that is a business meeting or a wedding, she believes that paying attention to detail and listening to the customer helps create the best experience for both the customer and their guests. Analita has worked with dozens of organizations and has renewed contracts year after year. Analita has a degree in family studies and psychology from the University of St. Thomas which has served her well in a family business.

20. **Ms. Pang Vang**, Owner, Rainbow Health Kare, Inc.

Pang Vang and her dad started Rainbow Health Kare, Inc. together in 2003. Located in St. Paul, Rainbow Health Kare is a personal care agency that provides non-medical home care support to elderly and disabled individuals. Pang has a background in business and will be starting her nursing degree in the fall of 2018. She currently serves on the MN First Provider Alliance Board, the Minnesota Board of Aging, the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce PAC Board, and the MN Hmong Chamber of Commerce. She is married and has three children, two of which currently swim with the St. Croix Swim Club in Stillwater. She enjoys hiking, biking, reading, and eating. Her goal this year is to travel to Japan.

21. **Mr. Rick Varco**, Political Director, SEIU Healthcare MN (**Co-chair**)

Rick Varco has served as the Political Director of SEIU Healthcare Minnesota since 2002. Prior to that he served as the Executive Director of the Lexington-Hamline Community Council. In 2016, he was a member of the St. Paul Earned Sick and Safe Time Task Force. He currently serves as a member of the St. Paul Charter Commission.