In 1994, a handful of activists formed the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability with a bold vision: uniting across issues and geographies to advocate for smarter growth and social justice in the Twin Cities. Over the past 25 years, thousands of community leaders have worked together to evolve that vision and turn our hopes for a more equitable region into reality, by securing significant funding and policy wins while shifting narratives about power, privilege and who deserves to thrive in our neighborhoods.

In 2018, as we approached our 25th anniversary, I began to reflect more deeply on my 24-year tenure at the Alliance and the privilege to work alongside so many tireless, visionary leaders. Together, we’ve made transformational gains in affordable housing, transit and health equity, economic and workforce development, and environmental justice. By resourcing organizing, centering those most impacted, and being accountable to community, we’ve been able to drive racial equity into the analysis, practices and worldviews that inform so many of the systems that impact our day-to-day lives.

As Executive Director, I’ve had the opportunity to learn and grow as an equity advocate, not only from our community partners, but from Alliance staff, as well. In our own programmatic evaluations, Alliance staff like to ask the question, ‘As organizers, did we step back so that others could step forward?’ In 2018, I realized we had arrived at an opportune moment to apply that principle to our executive leadership at our organization.

So, as we move into 2019 and celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Alliance, I will be leaving my role at the Alliance and I’m thrilled that Joo Hee Pomplun will become the new Executive Director in the Fall of 2019. With deep relationships and knowledge of this work, Joo Hee and the Alliance staff will continue to inhabit the intersections of critical community issues and build the coalitions that have created a diverse and dynamic movement for regional equity.

In 2018, your support of the Alliance was essential in securing significant policy and campaign wins, and in building the capacity of leaders and organizations that will continue to transform the landscape of regional equity in 2019 and beyond. It’s been my great honor to play a role in our movement and, like you, I look forward to supporting the Alliance for years to come.

Sincerely and in solidarity,

Russ Adams
Together, we’re working to actualize equity across the Twin Cities region.

The Alliance is a coalition of community-based organizations and advocacy groups building shared power to advance strategic campaigns around the intersections of racial justice, economic justice, environmental justice, and health equity.

We believe that:

- People are experts in their own lives and have the best ideas to make positive changes in their communities.
- Building power and expanding leadership through organizing is one of the most effective ways to create lasting change.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring that people of all races, income levels, and geographic areas benefit from public decisions and investments; share in decision-making; and have access to opportunities like housing, transportation, jobs, good schools, parks, health care, and more.
- Shared leadership, ideas, and resources among many groups and individuals.
- Accountability to our members and allies while working for public accountability to the diverse communities represented in the Twin Cities region.

We do our work through:

- Coalition building
- Community engagement
- Field building
- Strategic system navigation
8 Successes from 2018

At the Alliance, we don’t just change policy. We work in coalition to build power that shifts systems and elevates true community solutions. In 2018, thanks to your support and the collective efforts of our member and partner organizations, we advanced equity across the region through coalition organizing, policy advocacy and field building.

1) Released Our AREA: Alliance Regional Equity Agenda

In the Twin Cities metro area, people of color, indigenous, immigrant, and low-income communities are leading powerful, creative work to establish a just region where all can thrive. Developed through conversations with local leaders and released in 2018, Our AREA: The Alliance Regional Equity Agenda highlights the strategies Alliance members and partners are using and calls for further collective action to heal communities, stimulate regenerative power, dismantle structural racism, and end the displacement and gentrification of our communities. With overarching principles and targeted policy recommendations, this living agenda moves toward reclaiming the term “equity” and defining it in our terms through our strategies.

2) Convened conversations around Actualizing Equity

From “Who Speaks for the Neighborhood” to “Race, Class and the Outdoors,” the Alliance convened 9 events in 2018 to curate conversation and insight on critical areas of community importance, including housing, transportation and community engagement. The Actualizing Equity event series created space for organizers throughout the region to build relationships, share knowledge and strategize together in our shared work to change the policies and systems that influence racial, economic, environmental, and health equity.

3) Expanded the use of the Equitable Development Principles and Scorecard

Created in partnership with more than a dozen local organizations, the Equitable Development Principles and Scorecard helps communities ensure that the principles and practices of equitable development, environmental justice, and affordability are available to all residents. In 2018, the Alliance worked with West Side Community Organization, Cycles for Change, Metro Blooms and others to showcase how their communities and organizations are adapting and leveraging the scorecard for their issues and geographies. From grassroots organizers to government staff, more than 120 leaders joining the Scorecard Enthusiasts table, an opportunity to come together on a regular basis to share their successes and learnings with the Scorecard.

The Alliance is adept at working to uplift and amplify issues impacting marginalized communities. Their solidarity and extensive work with community-identified issues, like housing justice, is both effective and deeply meaningful. Kadra Abdi, founder and CEO of Synergy Consulting, and co-founder, writer, and curator for Ubuntu: The Collective.
4) Secured millions in wages for construction workers of color

HIRE Minnesota, a campaign to end employment disparities, continues to make dramatic strides in moving the state from worst to first in construction employment equity. Thanks to consistent monitoring and accountability meetings, people of color are now performing nearly 19% of MN Department of Transportation project workforce hours in the metro area, which represents nearly $5 million in estimated wages. In 2018, significant focus on the 35W highway reconstruction project resulted in 28% of hours for the multi-year project going to people of color. This is the highest percentage for a MnDOT project and will result in a projected $6.7 million in wages to people of color.

5) Coordinated hundreds of local leaders to attend national summit

By supporting the leadership of community based organizations and connecting many groups across geographic and cultural communities doing similar work, the Alliance plays a role in developing a stronger set of relationships, collaborations, best practices, and understanding of collective power. In 2018, the Alliance organized a delegation of more than 225 leaders from the Twin Cities to attend a nationally recognized conference on racial and economic equity issues. Hosted by PolicyLink, the Equity Summit attracted nationally known speakers and lifted up the efforts of local, community-based organizations. The Alliance administered a stipend fund that helped to offset the costs for dozens of conference attendees, convened a conference kick-off conversation in Minneapolis and hosted a Twin Cities delegation convening during the Summit.

6) Embedded community leaders in identifying housing solutions

Through Equity in Place, the Alliance convenes community organizers to reframe narratives and elevate solutions that allow every resident to live where they want and have access to opportunity. In 2018, we helped to convene the Twin Cities cohort in the PolicyLink All-In Cities Anti-Displacement Policy Network, which engaged local elected leaders, staff, and community based organizations from 10 cities across the country with the mission of preventing displacement. The Alliance also worked with the Fair Housing Implementation Council — a regional body of government staff that coordinate efforts to affirmatively further fair housing throughout the Twin Cities metro — to secure funding for community-based organizations to engage tenants in identifying solutions to their housing challenges.
From left: Monica Bravo, Executive Director of the West Side Community Organization, has been working to adapt and integrate the Equitable Development Principles and Scorecard into her community’s development decision-making process; leaders from the Make Homes Happen coalition, which secured $40 million in affordable housing funding in the 2019 Minneapolis city budget.

7) Advanced significant affordable housing production and funding

While the Twin Cities faces a housing crisis that impacts thousands of families in our communities, public awareness and political will to create and preserve more affordable homes is building. In 2018, the Alliance and New American Development Center worked with East African communities in Eden Prairie to advocate for the preservation and expansion of affordable housing, ultimately securing the approval of nearly 100 new units in Eden Prairie — including 2- and 3-bedroom apartments — at 50% of area median income.

For many years, the Alliance has advocated for strong, mandatory inclusionary housing policies that ensure new multi-family development include affordable units and, in 2018, the City of Minneapolis passed an inclusionary housing framework that provided meaningful leadership for municipalities across the region. In Minneapolis, the Alliance also worked with the Make Homes Happen coalition to secure $40 million for the city’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund in the 2019 budget.

8) Pressed for equity in large-scale developments

In Ramsey County, the Alliance and partners continued to press for the inclusion of affordable housing in the development of the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant in Arden Hills, the region’s largest tract of vacant land at more than 425 acres. The Alliance also continued to monitor the site planning process and city decision-making for the 125 Acre Ford Auto Plant development to ensure follow-through on the commitment to build 760 affordable housing units on the site, half of which being priced to be affordable to people at or below 30% of the area median income.
I’ve had the pleasure to work with and witness the powerful, strategic, and justice-centered organizing that happens in and around The Alliance. They are a highly effective agent of change, utilizing their skills in engagement, coalition building, and advocacy to serve as a force driving our region toward equitable outcomes.

Ani Koch, Senior Program Manager, Blue Cross Blue Shield Center for Prevention
2018 Financials

Statement of Financial Position - 12/31/18

ASSETS

Current Assets
- Cash and Cash Equivalents $653,987
- Certificates of Deposit $200,746
- Prepaid Expenses $11,069
- Grants Receivable $24,925

Total assets $890,727

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities
- Accounts Payable $5,473
- Accrued Expenses $38,324

Total liabilities $43,797

Equity
- Restricted Net Assets $125,002
- Unrestricted Net Assets $721,928

Total equity $846,930

Total liabilities & equity $890,727

Statement of Activities - 12/31/18

REVENUES

- Contracts $185,377
- Grants $302,140
- Donations $6,769
- Earned income, in-kind, membership and other $6,095

Total revenues $500,381

EXPENSES

- Management $44,158
- Fundraising $23,832
- Programs $482,538
- Regional Equity Project $31,119
- HIRE Minnesota $65,237
- Transit Equity $47,562
- Capacity Building $117,363
- Affordable Housing Strategies $140,198
- Equity in Place $81,058

Total expenses $550,528

NET INCOME ($50,147)