

Executive Director Message | December 2024

Happy December, MSNA members!

Wow, 2024 flew by with conferences, webinars, industry events, and so much more. Check out the [Year-in-Review](#) in this newsletter. It's always great to look back at the work and fun we had in the past year.

With the changing year, one looks backward and forward. In 2024, we had the largest Annual Conference attendance since pre-COVID. The SNIP Conference moved to a new location and also saw its highest attendance since pre-COVID. In August, we welcomed new board members and said goodbye to several who had diligently fulfilled their terms.



Speaking of the board, we had a two-day retreat and strategic planning meeting in October. The board is fully committed to continue the work of the previous board, and will work to ensure that MSNA is an asset to its members, financially stable, and forward-thinking as a voice of school nutrition throughout the state. All the board members are busy with their day-to-day responsibilities and yet give freely of their time and experience to the work of MSNA. I give my deepest appreciation to them.

Planning has started on the 68th Annual Conference in Rochester, to be held August 3-5, 2025. Glen Ritter, MSNA President-elect and Food Service Director for St. Michael-Albertville Schools, has selected his theme as "*Scratching the Surface, The Future Is Unlimited.*" In the coming months, we'll announce our keynote speakers, share a program outline, and release lodging information. We will have some new activities this year, including a welcome reception on Monday evening for all attendees and an 'Elite Industry Member & Director Breakfast' on Tuesday morning prior to the start of the exhibit show. This breakfast will replace the evening Elite reception, and will offer a chance for Elite industry members and directors to have concentrated networking time. In the coming months, look for more information on the conference on the MSNA website and in the monthly "*What's Happening at MSNA*" e-newsletter.

The Public Policy (PPL), Industry Advisory Board (IAB), and Membership committees have been meeting over the last several months. I'm pleased to share we had 20 MSNA scholarship applicants for 2025, up nine applicants from this past year. We'll be announcing the scholarship winners in the next month. I encourage members who did not submit an application or were not selected to check out SNA's [scholarship options](#). Attending national meetings offers members wonderful professional development opportunities and chances to network with other MSNA members and members from across the country.

Starting in January, our Leadership Development Committee (LDC) will be contacting eligible members to ask for their interest in running for election on the MSNA board. The LDC consists of Kristi Frank, Amy Kimmel, and past MSNA president and LDC Chair, Michele Hawkinson. In 2025, MSNA members will elect a Vice President, Nutrition Chair, and a new Leadership Development Committee member. Consider this awesome opportunity to bring your voice to the board and influence the work of MSNA.

On behalf of the Fusion Learning Partner's MSNA team, we wish you all a joyful holiday, a restful break, and a very happy new year.

Margaret I. Winchell
MSNA Executive Director
Fusion Learning Partners
mwinchell@fusionLP.org