

THE MINNCO Winter 2025

Messenger



16

organizations

227

families

466

children

1557

gifts

We have never left an angel behind.

Story on following page.

A graphic for the Minnco Credit Union Angel Tree program. The background is a dense collection of wrapped Christmas gifts in various colors and patterns. The Minnco Credit Union logo is at the top left. The words "Angel Tree" are written in a large, black, outlined font across the center. The letter 'A' has a yellow halo around it.

Minnco CREDIT UNION Angel Tree

According to Shelly Miller, Minnco Community Engagement Coordinator, the 2024 Angel Tree program provided over 1500 gifts to 466 children in our communities. Kids from Cambridge, Isanti, Princeton, North Branch, Big Lake, Andover, East Bethel, and St. Francis were blessed by the generosity of Minnco members and staff.

Most of the recipients come from area schools, who send us anonymous lists. Others come from community organizations. From these lists, employees create “angel” tags, which are placed on Christmas trees at Minnco offices. Members and non-members stop in and select angels off the tree. The tags include information that helps gift-givers in their shopping. Several years ago Minnco began posting angels on a “virtual tree,” which can be accessed online. This has made it possible for more people to participate.

Shelly said the program generates wonderful feedback every year. She shared a comment she received from a school counselor:

“Please thank all of your staff who bought presents for the Angel Tree. Our families were very grateful, and I know you helped make their Christmas a bit more merry. Several families are struggling with homelessness, mental health crises, family deaths and sometimes all of this can feel lonely and overwhelming. You and your staff really are truly making a difference in their lives.”

As the deadline to participate draws near, what happens to names still on the trees? “We first reach out to our members,” Shelly said, “then to our staff. If there are still some left after that, Minnco will shop for them.” She pointed out that this year all that was needed was one simple, final request. “Two days before the Angel Tree ended this year, we put out a call to members that we needed help filling the last 30 names. Within 24 hours, all the names were taken,” she said with a smile.



As Doug Hallstrom, Minnco President/CEO, recently told a local newspaper, “We have never left an Angel behind.”





Doug Hallstrom
President/CEO

President's Report

As we “enjoy” another winter with little snowfall to date, I wonder if we’ll ever return to a “normal” winter, one with 2-3 feet of snow on the ground, perhaps a couple of snow days for the kids, and the need to get the snowblowers out and running. For many Minnesotans, a winter without snow is unthinkable and unbearable. Snowmobiling, skiing, snowshoeing, sledding, snowball fights and snowmen all require—you guessed it—snow. As we’re seeing with Minnesota-based Arctic Cat, entire industries are dependent on snow for their survival. Whichever side of the (snow) fence you’re on, I hope you have a safe and enjoyable winter, and a happy new year!

We closed out November with assets of \$532,000,000 and over 34,000 members. Each day more people join Minnco to enjoy a better banking experience: better rates, better products, and better service. This fall we were once again recognized by the *Isanti-Chisago County Star Readers Choice for Best Place to Work - Large Employer* and *Best Financial Institution*. Thank you for your votes and for recommending Minnco Credit Union to your family, friends, and co-workers.

2024 was another eventful year for Minnco Credit Union as we continued to grow, diversify, and expand our products and services. One of the notable achievements in 2024 was establishing *Minnco Mortgage*. Andrew Deans was hired in May as Minnco’s Senior Vice President, Mortgages, to lead this initiative. His role entails developing a complete mortgage division, with expanded mortgage products, additional mortgage loan originators, and in-house mortgage servicing. To be sure, Minnco has offered mortgage products to members for many years, but aspects were sometimes managed by affiliated partners. The goal in 2025 is to bring all processes in-house, improving the member experience, from application, to closing, to servicing the loan.

Likewise, Minnco’s commercial business line is also gearing up for growth. Bruce Montgomery, a long-time commercial lender in our market, was added to our lending team as Vice President of Commercial Lending. Bruce joins Brian Anderson, Vice President of Commercial Lending, and together they are developing new commercial offerings to serve small- to mid-size businesses. In addition to our menu of lending products, enhanced services include a revamped commercial checking account, remote deposit capture for businesses, and expanded ACH services. Minnco will also soon offer a new insurance product that protects deposits over the traditional \$250,000 limit of FDIC and NCUA.

Another project this past year was the introduction of the *Card Manager* service/app to our online and mobile banking platforms. *Card Manager* allows Minnco card holders to manage their Minnco debit and credit cards on mobile devices. Members can set up purchase notifications, set spending limits and other controls, and immediately turn their card off and on for security reasons. The launch of *Card Manager* was so successful that in its first month the number of members using it increased by 150% over the former card management app. By November the number of users doubled to almost 1100. If you haven’t tried it, I encourage you to do so today. To enroll using the *MinncoMobile* app, click on the **More** tab in the lower right, click on the *Card Manager* icon, then agree to the terms and conditions. To enroll within online banking, select *Card Manager* in the blue menu bar on top, then agree to the terms and conditions. All debit or credit cards associated with your account will automatically be added.

At the end of November, members of Cities Credit Union in Vadnais Heights, MN, overwhelmingly voted to approve a merger into Minnco Credit Union. The official date of the merger is January 1, with the date of moving the approximately 3,000 members onto the Minnco platform around mid-May. We’re excited to welcome the former Cities members, and to offer another metro location to Minnco members in 2025.

I’m excited about the future of Minnco Credit Union and want to thank you for your trust and loyalty in our institution. We realize you have other options to choose from, and we strive every day to earn and maintain your loyalty. Speaking of which, Minnco recently developed an acronym based on our core principles. **STRIVE** stands for Strength, Trust, Respect, Integrity, Value, and Engagement. Next time you stop into a Minnco office, look for the **STRIVE** branding. It’s our commitment to members to fulfill those principles every day.



2024 Holiday Moments

In partnership with the *Minnco Foundation*, Minnco Credit Union made a number of local organizations very merry this holiday season. As part of its commitment to the communities it serves, donations were made to twelve non-profits. Each Minnco office selected the organization(s) they wanted to bless. Starting at the top right and going clockwise, here are the recipients of the *2024 Holiday Moments*.



Hope 4 Youth provides shelter, food, and other resources to homeless youth.

Anoka Community Mission supplies food and clothing to community members in need. They also use donated foreign coins to buy diapers and baby wipes for families in need.

Soup for the Soul provides a warm meal for any family in need. Every Monday night around 100 meals are provided. It is run by volunteers and supported by cash and food donations.

Passing the Bread is a food distribution center serving the Zimmerman and Princeton communities. Donations are used to purchase food through *Second Harvest*, where \$1 buys \$10 worth of food.

Mora Food Pantry provides food distribution to those experiencing a food emergency in Kanabec county.

Books for Better MN provides free books. Their mission is to give books to kids in need, knowing that literacy begins with having books in the homes.

NACE food shelf (North Anoka County Emergency food shelf) supplies food and clothing to community members in need. They have food drives and clothing giveaways throughout the holiday season.

NOT PICTURED:

Big Lake Community Fund provides food and supplies for families in the Big Lake community. They also direct them to other services that may be helpful, always in a manner that preserves their dignity and respect.

Isanti County Beyond the Yellow Ribbon supports military families and provides educational scholarships.

New Pathways' mission is to provide shelter and basic needs to families in central Minnesota while creating long-term independence and stability.

Family Pathways provides healthy food for families and individuals in crisis. They allow people to shop free of charge for items including food, household products, and hygiene products. They have locations in Chisago and Isanti counties.

New Pathways Shelter and Support provides for central MN families experiencing homelessness, helping them regain their independence.

Family Pathways North Branch Area Food Shelf has worked with individuals, businesses, and organizations for 45 years to enhance lives in the 6 counties they serve.



Minnco's Community Involvement



Minnco Credit Union employees (and family and friends) were out in our communities the past several months serving others. “Doing what?” you may ask. Decorating floats for winter parades, chucking pumpkins, ringing bells, distributing food, packing meals, handing out treats, making hot chocolate, volunteering at thrift stores, shopping for gifts, wrapping presents, and so much more! A big reason why serving others is so meaningful is doing it with co-workers and friends!

A partial listing of events that Minnco participated in or volunteered at: *Every Meal Food Distributions, Medicare Seminars, CU Forward Day, Cambridge Surplus Food Distribution, Shalom Shop Volunteering, Life Rice, Princeton's Pumpkin Chuckin', St Francis Trick or Treat, Downtown Cambridge Trick or Treat, Hope 4 Youth, Snowflake Parade, Light up Princeton Parade, Salvation Army Bell Ringing, Illuminate Isanti Popcorn Hut, MINGO, and Light Up Princeton Hot Chocolate Hut.*

Volunteerism can improve YOUR well-being while helping others

- + Reduces stress by fostering a sense of purpose and connection.
- + Enhances overall mental well-being and happiness.
- + Helps combat feelings of loneliness or depression.
- + Boosts self-esteem and confidence.
- + Provides opportunities for social interaction and building community.
- + Encourages an active lifestyle, improving mobility and cardiovascular health.
- + Reduces stress hormones, potentially lowering blood pressure.
- + Improves immune function through reduced stress.



Check out Minnco's **HIGH-YIELD** student spending accounts!

Students, imagine earning a **high-yield** on your deposits. You can when you open a new spending account with Minnco! **smartSTART** and **stepUP** accounts are currently paying **5.00% APY** on balances up to **\$1,000!*** There's no catch, no minimum balance, and no monthly qualifications! A contactless debit card is available. **smartSTART** is designed for students ages 10-12. **stepUP** is for students ages 13-22.

Minnco's
smart
START

Minnco's
stepUP
Student Spending Account

Give your child a **step up** on their financial future.

*Annual Percentage Yield. 5.00% on balances up to \$1,000; .05% on balances over \$1,000. Rates are subject to change.

Federally Insured by
NCUA

Candidates needed for volunteer positions

Minnco is seeking candidates to fill open positions on the Board of Directors and Supervisory Committee. If you have an interest in serving, pick up an application at a Minnco office, indicate which position you're interested in applying for, and include a short biography. Applications must be returned by **Friday, February 14, 2025**. If you have any questions or would like more information, please call the credit union at 763-689-1071, and leave a message for the nominating committee.



PRIVACY NOTICE AND DISCLOSURE

Minnco Credit Union's Privacy Notice and Disclosure can be viewed online at

<https://www.minnco.com/resources/privacy-policy>

Princeton office wins *Chamber Business of the Year*

During just its second year of operation, Minnco's Princeton office won the *Princeton Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism's Business of the Year* award! Businesses were nominated and voted on by other chamber members. The criteria for the selection was based on a business's contributions to the community, including sponsorship of events, volunteerism, and their presence in the community. As you can see by the list at right, the Princeton staff was well deserving of their win! ***Congratulations, Princeton office!***



VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES

- Ruff Start Rescue
- Kinship Reading Buddies
- Princeton High School Just Desserts
- Tiger Community Connections
- Princeton High School Mock Interviews
- Princeton Primary and Intermediate School Book Fair
- Princeton Intermediate School Carnival
- CU Forward - Sterling Pointe
- Princeton School District Career Crawl
- Light Up Princeton Volunteer Day
- Chamber Board Member
- Princeton Chamber Leadership Series

EVENTS

- Rum River Festival Booth
- Rum River Festival Parade
- Rum River Festival Duck Decorating Entrant
- PACCT Golf Tournament
- Milaca Golf Tournament
- Princeton Splash Park Day
- Mille Lacs County Daycare Day
- Princeton Homecoming Paint the Town
- PACCT Daytime Trick or Treat
- Kinship Pumpkin Chuckin'
- Light Up Princeton Parade

SPONSOR

- Princeton Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism
- PACCT Basket
- Princeton Youth Wrestling Basket
- Rum River Festival Big Duck
- Rum River Festival 5K
- Mille Lacs County Fair
- Princeton High School Sports Calendar
- Princeton High School Sponsor
- Princeton High School Breakfast Club
- Light Up Princeton - Decorate Business Tree
- Light Up Princeton - Minnco Hot Chocolate Hut
- East Central Minnesota Chorale

Special Holiday Hours

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Monday, January 20, 2025

All lobbies and drive-ups will be CLOSED all day for employee training.

President's Day Monday, February 17, 2025

All Minnco lobbies are CLOSED. Drive-ups are OPEN from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm at all offices except Minnco Center's; its drive-up is OPEN 10:00 am to 6:00 pm.



Your **Community** Credit Union.™
www.minnco.com | 763-689-1071



Andover | Big Lake | Cambridge | Isanti | Minnco Center | North Branch | Princeton

Your savings federally insured to \$250,000 by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA).
We do business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Housing Opportunity Act.

