

Lindsay Matts-Benson and Maggie Snow

Meet Us in Minneapolis!

The Bold North has Much to Offer

We are excited to welcome you to Minnesota, the North Coast, the Bold North, where the rivers flow in three directions (north to Hudson Bay in Canada, east to the Atlantic Ocean, and south to the Gulf of Mexico) and all roads, including the Great River Road along the mighty Mississippi, lead to Minneapolis and the 2025 ACRL Conference.

About Minnesota

The word “Minnesota” is derived from the Dakota name for the area, Mni Sota Makoce, meaning Land Where the Waters Reflect the Sky.

There are 11 federally recognized tribes throughout Minnesota:

- [Bois Forte Band of Chippewa](#)
- [Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa](#)
- [Grand Portage Band of Ojibwe](#)
- [Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe](#)
- [Lower Sioux Indian Community](#)
- [Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe](#)
- [Prairie Island Indian Community](#)
- [Red Lake Nation](#)
- [Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community](#)
- [Upper Sioux Community](#)
- [White Earth Nation](#)

We invite you to explore the following resources to learn more about the Dakota and Indigenous culture in Minneapolis and greater Minnesota before you arrive and while you are here.

- [Why Treaties Matter](#)—an online exhibit of treaties and land theft in Minnesota.
- [The On Being Project Land Acknowledgment Resources](#)—features resources dedicated to Indigenous culture and history in Minnesota.
- [Local Dakota Land Map](#)—downloadable visual and audio Dakota land maps of Minneapolis, St. Paul, and surrounding areas by local artist Marlena Myles.
- [Ojibwe People’s dictionary](#)—features a searchable, talking Ojibwe-English and English-Ojibwe dictionary that speaks in the voices of Ojibwe Elders.

Minneapolis is located on the traditional, ancestral and contemporary lands of Indigenous people including the Dakhóta Oyáte (Dakota People), who are the original stewards. We

Lindsay Matts-Benson is the teaching and learning program lead at the University of Minnesota Libraries, email: matt0341@umn.edu. Maggie Snow is director of Minitex, email: msnow@umn.edu.

recognize that all libraries in this place occupy the stolen ancestral and contemporary homelands of the Dakota and Anishinaabe peoples. We also recognize that Indigenous people from other Native nations live and work in Minnesota, and that vibrant Indigenous communities are found in rural and urban settings across the state.



["Minneapolis"](#) by Doug Kerr, licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#).

Minneapolis, Minnesota's largest city, and St. Paul, the state's capital, together make up the Twin Cities. Including the surrounding metro area, the Twin

Cities are home to a number of colleges and universities, robust public library systems, an eclectic blend of museums and galleries, and industry.

Minneapolis has around 180 parks with 55 miles of biking and walking paths. The Minneapolis park system also has 22 lakes and 12 gardens. Iconic spots like Lake Harriet, and Minnehaha Park with its stunning 53-foot waterfall, offer experiences that blend art, nature, and history. The Grand Rounds is one of the country's longest continuous systems of public urban parkways. You can explore The Grand Rounds' lakes, creeks, woodlands, playground, and gardens by foot, bicycle, and even cross-country skis!

You may think we are joking about the skis, but in Minnesota, we don't believe in bad weather, just bad clothing choices. We can have snow as early as October and as late as May. Most Minnesotans have a story about a large snow-related event, especially the unforgettable 1991 Halloween Blizzard. But don't let the unpredictable weather intimidate you! While you might experience all of the seasons while you are here, maybe all in one day, if you don't want to brave the elements, the [Minneapolis Skyway](#) system (think of an above-the-street sidewalk encased in glass, over 10 miles of pathways connecting around 80 city blocks) will get you where you need to go.

Colleges and Universities

Minnesota is home to nearly 200 private and public higher education institutions. The University of Minnesota-Twin Cities campus enrolls the most students with approximately 54,000 students. The University of St. Thomas, located in St. Paul, has the largest campus-based enrollment for a private institution in Minnesota. St. Thomas is also home to the [Bach-Dunn Collection of Luxembouriana](#): a unique genealogy and history source researched by people around the world.

Consider visiting the [Metro State University Library](#), celebrating 20 years of partnership with the St. Paul Public Library this year. When constructed in 2004, the Library and Learning Center was the first joint-use library in Minnesota to house both an academic library and a public library and is currently one of only seven such libraries in the United States.

Hamline University's [Brass Rubbings Collection](#) of approximately 1,100 rubbings, is one of the larger collections in the world and undoubtedly the largest in United States, includes a broad range of military, civilian, and ecclesiastical brasses from the fifteenth, sixteenth, and early seventeenth centuries.

Clean Water, Land, and Legacy

Don't let the Land of 10,000 Lakes motto fool you, Minnesota is home to 11,842 (more than 10 acres) and 69,200 miles of rivers and streams. In 2008, to maintain, clean, and protect the waters, Minnesota's voters passed the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment (Legacy Amendment) to the Minnesota Constitution to protect drinking water sources; protect, enhance, and restore wetlands, prairies, forests, and fish, game, and wildlife habitat; preserve arts and cultural heritage; support parks and trails; and protect, enhance, and restore lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater.

The Legacy fund supports arts, arts education and arts access, and the preservation of Minnesota's history and cultural heritage through libraries, local history museums, and the Minnesota Historical Society. Minnesota ranks first in the nation on public arts funding: \$9.62 per capita in 2024. This focus is reflected in the Twin Cities vibrant arts scene that offers an abundance of theaters, music venues, and museums, studios, and galleries to explore.

Books, Libraries, and Literature

The Twin Cities boasts an impressive literary scene that includes more than 100 libraries, bookstores, and literary events. The [Loft Literary Center](#) helps engage writers throughout the community. Meet Minneapolis has a [great list of local bookstores](#) for every genre from Mystery at [Once Upon A Crime](#) or [Uncle Edgar's Mystery Bookstore](#) to romance at [Tropes & Trifles](#). [Black Garnet Books](#) in St. Paul is an independent bookstore offering a curated selection of books and art by authors and illustrators of color.



["Minneapolis Central Library"](#) by Zachary Korb, licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

The [Minneapolis Central Library](#)—the largest collection in the Hennepin County public library system—has [fascinating special collections](#), and the [Cargill Gallery of community engaged exhibits](#). Not to be outdone, the [University of Minnesota \(UMN\)-Twin Cities' 12 Libraries](#) feature collections like the [Kerlan collection](#), a part of the Children's Literature Research Collections; the [Mapping Prejudice project](#), which sheds new light on the historic practices of racial covenants; [the Umbra Search](#), which makes African American history more accessible, and the [Wangensteen Library of Biology and Medicine](#) which houses 80,000 rare books, journals, and manuscripts in diverse medical and biological subjects spanning from approximately 1430 to 1930.

Another fun fact about the University of Minnesota Libraries is that it houses the [Minnesota Library Access Center](#) (MLAC). MLAC is a high-density storage facility for



[“Spoon Bridge and Cherry”](#) by Adam Fagen, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#).



[“Weisman”](#) by Justin Ladia, licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

Minnesota libraries that stores and makes available important but little-used books. The collection includes items from more than 20 academic, public, and government libraries across Minnesota. MLAC opened in January 2000 and is in the north cavern excavated under the Elmer L. Andersen Library on the West Bank of the University of Minnesota’s Twin Cities campus.

Museums and Theaters

The Walker Art Center with its [outdoor sculpture garden](#) is the one of the most recognizable museums in the Twin Cities and is about a 20-minute walk from the convention center. The [Minneapolis Institute of Art](#) features collections spanning a period of more than 5,000 years. If you want to take a drive outside the metro area, head to [Paisley Park](#) to explore Prince’s recording studio and see his shoe collection. Other museums of interest include the [American Swedish Institute](#), The [Weisman Art Museum](#) on the UMN campus, [Historic Fort Snelling](#), and the [Bakken Museum](#).

Located in downtown Minneapolis, the [Guthrie](#) is Minnesota’s flagship theater and is the birthplace of the American regional theater movement. Also close to conference hotels and within a block of each other are the Orpheum, Pantages, and State Theaters. [Meet Minneapolis](#) highlights five more innovative stages the Twin Cities have to offer.

Key Twin Cities Experiences

If you are a music fan, you will need to stop at [First Avenue](#) to either catch a show or snap a selfie [outside with the iconic stars](#). First Avenue is also known as one of the filming locations of the movie *Purple Rain*. If you are interested in [other famous movie locations](#) you can take the Green Line to downtown St. Paul to see Mickey’s Diner—a famous location shown in *The Mighty Ducks* and *A Prairie Home Companion*.

If you are taking the Blue Line to or from the airport, make a pit stop at the [Mall of America](#) for all of your shopping and indoor amusement park needs. Fun fact: the mall does not use a central heating system. Instead, a comfortable 70 degrees is maintained year-round with passive solar energy from 1.2 miles of skylights and heat generated from lighting, store fixtures, and body heat.

Come to Minnesota for ACRL, come back for the Minnesota State Fair. Referred to as the Great Minnesota Get-Together, the fair is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the region. During the 12-day run, [Sweet Martha’s Cookies bakes more than 3 million](#)

[cookies a day](#), we drink 26,000 gallons of milk at the All You Can Drink Milk stand, and the [Crop Art](#) exhibit is a must-see.

Food Scene

Try a Jucy Lucy, a cheeseburger with cheese on the inside. Two bars claim to have invented the burger —Matt’s Bar and the 5-8 Club. We’ll let you judge which is better. If molten cheeseburgers are not your thing, we have plenty of other options to satisfy your hunger.



The state’s vibrant culinary scene includes a diverse range of chefs and restaurants recognized for their excellence. In 2024 five chefs and two local establishments were semifinalists for James Beard Awards. From farm to table, Minnesota is an agricultural powerhouse, home to the nation’s top producers of sugar beets, oats, wild rice, and red kidney beans, and second in sweet peas and sweet corn. [“Jucy Lucy”](#) by David Cruse, licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

Conclusion

Over the next few months, we’ll share with you some recommendations and dine-around options, as well as more highlights of the Twin Cities’ arts and culture scene and transportation tips to get you around town. 🍴