

MERRICK

Community Services
Growing. Stronger. Together.

Backpack Distribution is on the Way!



One of our volunteers at last year's distribution!

Summer is well and underway! With that, we want to invite you again to our Backpack Distribution in August.

Join us on Thursday, August 20th to celebrate our youth with a fun-filled evening at Merrick and getting them ready for school!

We are still looking for help in a variety of ways: community partner tabling, volunteering and monetary or school supplies donations.

Registration and Volunteer sign up forms will be on our website

Monday, July 20th, 2026.

[Donate to support Backpack!](#)

Support Merrick at The Gnome & Brunson's

Looking for a fun patio for the summer? Head on over to **The Gnome** and **Brunson's Pub!**

We're thrilled to share that Merrick now has a second pull tab location at The Gnome, joining our existing pull tab location at Brunson's Pub! **Net proceeds go towards supporting Merrick's work** and mission on the East Side of Saint Paul.

Stop by both spots to play some pull tabs, enjoy great food and drink, and support your community!

The Gnome

498 Selby Ave
Saint Paul, MN
55102



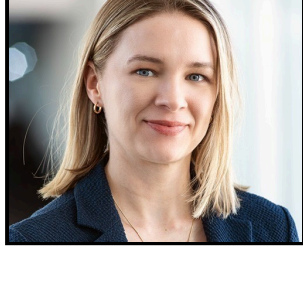
Brunson's Pub

956 Payne Ave
Saint Paul, MN
55130



New Board Members

Merrick is excited to announce three new board members: **Beth Lokken, Christian Schweitzer, and Soua Yee Vang!** Learn more about them below!



Beth Lokken

A Communications Manager at 3M, Beth is super excited to join the board here at MCS. With a wide array of previous experience working with non-profits, such as the Common Roots Montessori School, Beth will help bring a strategic perspective, and communications expertise, and a desire to help support our community. "I care deeply about giving back to the St. Paul community and supporting organizations that show up for people in tangible, consistent ways."

Thank you and welcome!



Christian Schweitzer

Having served on a number of boards previous to MCS, Christian is bringing us experience in advocacy and policy change from his many positions on St. Paul committee's such as the Board of Zoning Appeals, as well as technological expertise from his role as a Global Technical Lead at 3M. "I have admired the MCS mission and programs for their nuanced, holistic approach and their commitment to sustainable gains." We are very excited to add his skills to our board and welcome him to the MCS family!



Soua Yee Vang

Soua has been a part of the MCS mission for some time now, delivering Meals on Wheels to our community. With previous experience as the Director of MN DARE as well as serving as Treasurer for the Blaze Foundation, Soua brings financial expertise to our team and experience leading change in the non-profit realm. "Merrick offers amazing programs that support and give back to the community... I am proud to be a part of keeping the programs strong." We are so excited to have her join us in this new capacity.

A special "thank you" to our outbound board members,

James Lockwood and Brian Swedeen.

Both James and Brian have been on our board for a number of years and have contributed a great deal to Merrick and the Greater East Side community. Their support has been a huge factor in shaping Merrick into what it is today! THANK YOU both for your board service, and we are grateful to have Brian continue as a member of the Finance Committee!

New Staff: Erin, Julia, Gao, Meeghan

We are also excited to welcome some new faces to the Merrick Team! Learn more about them below.



Erin Ingram

Interim Meals on Wheels Assistant Coordinator

Erin is currently serving as part of the coordinating staff for our Meals on Wheels program and is hoping to take on a permanent role in the future. "I was looking for work that was meaningful and consistent, and... Working with colleagues and volunteers, meeting members of the community, and seeing all the other great services that are provided through Merrick makes me really proud to call myself a Merrick employee."



Gao Lor

Data Implementation & Donor Development Specialist VISTA

Gao is our new VISTA intern and has been helping to support the development team improve how Merrick manages data and support programs across the organization. She will also be helping with day-to-day food shelf operations! "I'm excited to learn how good data, strong relationships, and teamwork can help improve programs and better serve people." Thank you to the Sanneh Foundation for facilitating Gao joining our team!



Meeghan Olson

Marketing/Communications Intern

Currently a student at the University of St. Thomas, Meeghan has been with us for a couple of months, helping to assist the Development team in the creation of promotional materials and the management of MCS socials. "I have been loving working at MCS. As someone who's goal is to support mission-driven organizations, MCS has been so easy to work for. I'm so grateful for this opportunity to serve the East St. Paul Community." Welcome Meeghan!



Julia Ronning

Food Shelf Intern (St. Paul Area Synod)

Currently a student at Luther College, Julia is supporting Brad in the food shelf and helping with the transition to a digital system of participant intake. Julia is joining us through the St. Paul Area Synod internship program. "This is our first time partnering with Merrick. I am so happy to be a part of the team." Welcome Julia!

Movie Night Recap



Summer couldn't have kicked off in a better way!

Our first Community Movie Night brought together participants, families, and neighbors for a showing of *The Wild Robot* — plus plenty of pizza, popcorn, and hot dogs. It was such a joy to connect with our community in a new and meaningful way. A huge thank you to everyone who attended and all who made the night unforgettable!

New Donation Payment Processor

Merrick is upgrading our donor platform, which means a new donation payment processor starting July 15! If you have a recurring gift with Merrick (thank you!) you should have received an email from MCS staff with the new giving link, also accessible below. Reach out to development@merrickcs.org with questions!

[New Donate Link](#)

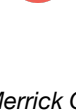
Dates to Remember

- **Backpack Distribution**
 - August 20th, 2026: Backpack Distribution for Back to School — MCS south (back) parking lot
- **Give to the Max Day**
 - November 19th, 2026
- **Merrick Fall Fundraiser**
 - November 19th, 2026: At Wandering Leaf again! More details to come.

[Click Here to Donate](#)

[Click Here to Volunteer](#)

[Click Here for Planned Legacy Giving](#)



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Our mailing address is:

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