

## **All Members Should Consider Participating in the 2021 Conference and Show**

Hello to all members!

I would like to let everyone know that many things have been discussed since the board of directors recently met at our fall board meeting in Bemidji, MN. One of the main items on our agenda was the upcoming Conference and Show. The main question that was proposed was: will we have Conference and Show this year? The board was all in agreement that we should still have our regular in-person Conference and Show. Naturally there will be some that feel it is not in their best interest to attend due to so much uncertainty pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our board was in agreement that members can make their own decision on whether they choose to attend in-person or not. For those who plan to attend I can personally say that Tammy Tisland and the staff at the Sanford Event Center have talked over many aspects pertaining to COVID-19 and Social Distancing while hosting this event and working within CDC guidelines. Board members were able to get a brief tour of the facility in Bemidji and I feel the Sanford Center is going to be a great venue for the MSAA in 2021.

The next item that was discussed was how we can assist those who don't feel they can attend in person. The board considered providing a virtual attendance option, such as utilizing Zoom, so members could still take advantage of all the educational benefits that the C&S has to offer. There are a number of things that will have to happen logistically to make this work, but the board feels this is something that can ultimately be put together to accommodate those who wish to be involved with Conference and Show but don't feel comfortable meeting in a large gathering. This is an opportunity that gives all members the freedom to choose how they want to participate.

I would urge everyone to truly consider participating in the 2021 Conference and Show this year in Bemidji, MN from January 13-16, whether it be in-person or via a virtual option. With multiple options on ways to participate, I feel this is a major benefit to all members that should be taken advantage of. A lot of things could still change between now and January 13, but one thing all members can be sure of is that this Association truly cares about giving all members the opportunity to take advantage of educational benefits as well as other benefits that the MSAA has to offer. I hope all can participate in the upcoming Conference and Show - whether in person or virtually!

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