



TCN Celebrates 30th Anniversary

The Tobacco Control Network (TCN) has served for 30 years as a channel of collaboration and communication among members and partners in preventing and reducing commercial tobacco use. TCN began in 1994 as an information-sharing initiative between CDC, the National Cancer Institute, and all state and territorial tobacco control programs. It has since transformed to foster connectedness after CDC's formation of the [National Tobacco Control Program](#) in 1999, with a focus on raising tobacco control as a public health priority across all jurisdictions. In 1994, [one in four adults smoked cigarettes](#). Today, supported by the hard work of TCN members through effective prevention and cessation programming, sound policies, and strategic partnerships, adult smoking rates have dropped to [11.5%](#), the lowest recorded since 1965.

Over the years, TCN has amassed a collection of resources made available on the [TCN website](#) and developed a bi-weekly newsletter to keep members regularly informed of relevant news, policy advancements, important litigation, events, trainings, job postings, and more. Throughout the past two years, TCN subscribers have increased by more than 22%, now encompassing a total of 775 subscribers. The [Help Your Peers](#) process has been a valuable resource for members in search of support and solutions to the challenges many encounter in the field, and compilations have been made accessible to members on the TCN website through the [Document Sharing Center](#). The [Peer Mentor Program](#) has also been successful in providing coaching between new and experienced program managers and has matched 13 pairs of mentors and mentees since 2019.

Enhanced features and improvements were recently made to the TCN website, thanks to the feedback from TCN members. These include updates to the [TCN Member Directory](#) to filter tobacco control program staff by role across jurisdictions (e.g., evaluators, cessations specialists, etc.). The [State Policy Map](#) has added more policy filters, including e-cigarette tax policies and jurisdictions that have received JUUL settlement funds. An [Events Calendar](#) was added to increase the visibility of tobacco-related events among partner organizations and the [TCN Resources page](#) had its search functionality improved to locate resources by topic and year of publication. In the coming months, TCN will relaunch its [Forum](#), a private, members-only platform that can be used for discussions, sharing of resources, and increased collaboration.

Other notable accomplishments in recent years include the development, publication, and promotion of the [2022 TCN Policy Recommendations Guide](#), the drafting of the [2022-2025 TCN Strategic Map](#), the relaunching of the Peer Mentor Program, the administration of the [Workforce Development Pilot Learning Community](#), and the publication of [Tobacco 101 Resources](#), [TCN Guiding Principles](#), and [ALA State of Tobacco Talking Points Guide](#).

TCN priorities are established by a peer-elected [Executive Committee](#), with elections conducted annually. In 2024, TCN experienced a record number of votes cast during the peer elections, indicating high levels of engagement among program managers. Over the past five years, the TCN Executive Committee has had 31 jurisdictions represented in various roles across all regions. The following testimonials were provided by members who have served on the TCN Executive Committee:

"TCN is an amazing network that has helped our tobacco prevention program connect with other tobacco programs across the state. While serving as the Western Region Representative

and as Policy Officer on the Executive Committee, I have had the pleasure to work with incredible people from many different states and have been able to learn from them about challenges and successes that they have experienced in tobacco prevention in their state. TCN serves as a conduit for communication between states and a curator of resources for staff who are new to the field. The Policy Recommendations Guide has been an integral resource for California's tobacco prevention program that we have referenced when providing education on policy options aimed at reducing the harms caused by the tobacco industry."

Liz Hendrix, Strategic Planning and Policy Unit Chief (CA)
Western Region Representative (2017-2020) | Policy Officer (2020-2023)

"Engaging with the TCN Executive Committee has truly been a career highlight for me. I am immensely grateful for all the opportunities, learnings, and friendships that the Executive Committee afforded me. I have grown professionally and personally in my work as a public health and tobacco control professional as a direct result of my participation with TCN."

Emily Carlson, Chief, Office of Tobacco Prevention and Cessation (AZ)
Western Region Representative (2020-2021) | Chair-Elect (2021-2022) | Chair (2022-2023) | Past-Chair (2023-2024)

"When I became the State Program Manager in WI, I took advantage of the Peer Mentor Program and was paired with an experienced program manager that shared insight into supporting a statewide program in a state bureaucracy and the importance of local and state partners that are key to moving policy development forward. Because I found the Peer Mentor program so valuable, I have volunteered and mentored several state program managers over the years, hopefully providing some insight into leading a complex statewide program. I am now looking forward to again serving on the Executive Committee as the Chair-Elect for the 2024-2025 term and continuing to expand the network and support to our colleagues across the country."

Vicki Huntington, Section Chief, Commercial Tobacco Prevention and Treatment Program (WI)
Midwest Region Representative (2006-2007) | Secretary and Treasurer (2007-2009) | Chair-Elect (2024-2025)

Thank you for your engagement with TCN and efforts to reduce the burden of commercial tobacco use. While there is much to celebrate, the momentum must not wane as hurdles to our work persist, especially the constant legal challenges and policies that hinder advances in tobacco control and addressing new, emerging products aimed to attract youth. We must also implement equitable solutions for populations who face the largest burdens of tobacco use and are not represented in the downward trend of smoking rates. This progress relies on your continued action. We greatly appreciate your dedication.