

MINNESOTA MAJOR POLITICAL FIGURES, IDEAS, & INDUSTRIES

Minnesota tends to be known throughout the country for its lakes, mosquitoes, hockey, funny accents, and being “Minnesota Nice”. Minnesota has a lot more going on than just county fairs and snowmobiling. What is not as well known across the country or even across our own state is that Minnesota people, ideas, and industries have been a major part of what shapes our country today.

Industries and Ideas:

Minnesota was once at the center of the fur trade and agriculture. Minneapolis was formed primarily because of the flour mills here! Later, Minnesota became known as a giant producer of raw materials like lumber and iron-ore. Although we are still using our lumber resource to make things like paper and pulpwood products, we are actually growing more trees than we are cutting down! The Iron Range, which is located in the northeastern part of the state, was vital in the production of iron ore in our country for over a century. In 2004 we were still producing 75% of the Iron Ore for the country! Taconite is primarily mined now, which is used to make steel. If you have ever been to Duluth, MN you have probably seen Taconite being mined or shipped on the large barges out in Lake Superior. It is quite a site to see! Minnesota now farms and raises a good deal of the country's supply of turkeys, peas and sweet corn (amongst other things).

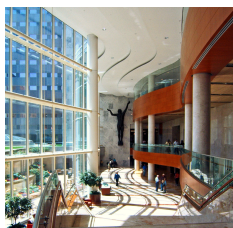


Agriculture, Forestry, and Mining are still a very important part of our economy in Minnesota, but I bet you would be surprised to know that agriculture only makes up 1% of our economy now! Minnesota is now known for more than just what we can pull out of the earth. In fact, finished products and services are the main parts of our economy now. We have some very major national companies headquartered in Minnesota such as: [Target](#), [United Health Group](#) (the second largest health insurance company in the US), [3M](#), [Medtronic](#) (a leader in the biomedical industry), [General Mills](#) (think Cheerio's and Yoplait), [Hormel](#) (think chili and hotdogs), [Land O' Lakes](#) (dairy), Polaris Industries (snowmobiles) and Best Buy. There are many other companies based in Minnesota that are not listed above- do you know ones not named here?



Some really fantastic and creative ideas have come from the minds of Minnesotans and Minnesota companies. It would be safe to say that you may use a Minnesota idea almost every day! Post-it notes was an invention of 3M, a Minnesota company and Rollerblades were created by a couple of hockey playing brothers in MN who wanted to be able to skate in the summer months instead of waiting for ice to form in the winter.

Honeywell, a Minnesota company, was at the forefront of thermostat technology. You know, that thing on your wall where you can turn on your furnace or air conditioning. Minneapolis has the largest skyway system in the world. It winds around for over 8 miles! The stapler was even invented in Spring Valley, MN. Have you used any of these things recently?



The Mayo Clinic based out of Rochester MN is one of the most famous Health Centers in the entire world. People come from all parts of the earth to be seen and treated by the excellent medical staff there. They are known for their treatments of Cancer, organ transplants, Alzheimer's disease, and more. The University of Minnesota and St. Jude Medical are also national leaders in research and medicine. The first open heart surgery in the United States was held at the University of Minnesota!

We even have some homegrown companies too. Cargill is one of them. Cargill is the largest privately owned company in the entire United States! Cargill makes all kinds of farm products like the eggs they use at McDonalds and feed for animals. These companies provide jobs for a large population of Minnesotans and provide food, products, and services for people all over the country and world.

Political Figures:

Hubert Humphrey must have done something pretty important to have a stadium and airport named after him. Mall of America Field was once called the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome and Terminal 2 used to be called the Humphrey terminal. I think most people still call them by those names out of habit. Who was Hubert H. Humphrey? Hubert H. Humphrey was a politician. He started his career in Minnesota attending the University of Minnesota and working for many different companies and schools. He later became the campaign manager for Franklin D. Roosevelt, one of our past and most influential presidents. He was the mayor of Minneapolis for several years and then he served in the US [senate](#) for Minnesota and held that position for 16 years.

Humphrey later became the vice president under Lyndon Johnson. If you haven't been able to figure out what party Humphrey belonged to by the presidents he supported he was a member of the Democratic Party. He received support from the Republican Party as well for some of his ideas and beliefs, including: the Civil Rights Act, Nuclear Test Ban [Treaty](#), and defending our participation in the Vietnam War. Humphrey ran for president of the United States in 1968 and lost to President Richard Nixon by one of the slimmest margins ever, approximately 510,000 votes.



Another influential Minnesota politician is Walter Mondale. Mr. Mondale was born and raised in Minnesota and also attended the University of Minnesota. In fact, you are going to see a lot of similarities between Mondale and Humphrey. Mondale was also a member of the Democratic Party, became a US senator representing Minnesota and also became our vice president. Mondale served as our vice president under Jimmy Carter from 1977-1981. In 1984 Mondale was the Democratic nominee for president but lost to President Ronald Reagan in the election.

Michele Bachmann moved to Minnesota at age 12. In 2006 she was elected to the US House of [Representatives](#) for Minnesota. She was the first female Republican to hold that position for Minnesota. Mrs. Bachmann ran for the Republican nomination for President in 2011 but dropped out of the race. She later announced in 2013 that she will not be running for re-election in her district.

Other influential politicians with roots in Minnesota include: the author of Roe vs. Wade, Harry Blackmun who grew up in St. Paul, Warren Burger a past Chief Justice on the U.S. [Supreme Court](#), Jesse Ventura a pro-wrestler turned politician from Minneapolis who is the first Reform Party candidate to win a statewide office in 1999. Ventura was Minnesota's Governor from 1999-2002.

