



Advancing women  
Advancing transportation  
January and February  
2021 Newsletter

**PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

Dear WTS Members and Friends,

I want to welcome you all to a new year! 2020 threw us some curve balls but through those challenges we have adapted as a chapter to thrive in our virtual environment. Our Executive Board and Committee Chairs bring great energy to serving our chapter with new initiatives and goals for this year.

As we progress into 2021 we are focusing on how we can best serve the chapter. WTS means many different things to all of us, so we would appreciate your feedback to prioritize

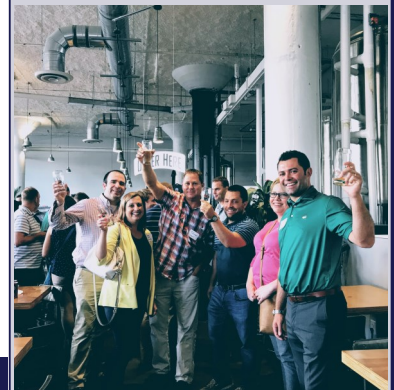
our efforts in bringing you programs and opportunities that best meet your needs. Look for a link to the member and friends survey on page four of this newsletter. Already we've hosted two great programs; in January the Virtual Walk Audits and Strategies for Inclusive Public Engagement, and most recently a talk with Kim Collins and Carolyn Flowers which was hosted by our Diversity and Inclusion Committee in celebration of Black History Month. These programs showcase the amazing leaders and skills we have within our transportation community and capture one of our best strengths as an organization, which is the ability to share and inspire each other. Going forward we'll continue to bring a variety of programs to our members and friends, hosted virtually until it is safe to gather in person again.

Finally I'd like to say thank you to our 2020 Board for their dedication and service to this organization over this last year, and to our members for giving me the opportunity to serve as president this year. I look forward to all the wonderful things we will accomplish together.

Andrea Arnoldi  
President WTS MN Chapter

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**Alicia Valenti**  
Special Events  
Co-Chair



**Allie Futhey**  
Programs Director



**Andrea Arnoldi**  
President



**Angie Bolstad**  
Volunteer Coordinator



**Belick Pha**  
Transportation YOU  
Co-Chair



**Caroline Miller**  
Mentoring Co-Chair



**Carrie Desmond**  
Membership Director



**Daniel Baxter**  
Special Events  
Co-Chair



**Eden Rogers**  
Treasurer



**Liz Morice**  
Diversity Chair



**Emily Bowen**  
Marketing Director



**Erin Jordan**  
Programs Chair



**Laura Melcher**  
Transportation YOU  
Co-Chair



**Jackie Dylla**  
Development  
Director



**Keelee Roggenbuck**  
Programs Director



**Lindsay Sheppard**  
Membership Chair



**Lisa Elliott**  
Mentoring Co-Chair



**Lyssa Leitner**  
Vice President



**Sandy Cullen**  
Website Chair



**Sara Pflaum**  
Regional Board and  
Past President



### Greetings from the 2021 WTS MN Board!

We're happy to serve our members to advance the inclusion & participation of women in the transportation industry! Our 2021 Board members are:

**President:**

Andrea Arnoldi, Kimley-Horn

**Vice President:**

Lyssa Leitner, Washington County

**Secretary:**

Tessa Schuenke, HNTB

**Treasurer:**

Eden Rogers, Washington County

**Past President:**

Sara Pflaum, MnDOT

**Scholarships & Recognitions Director:**

Emily Jorgensen, Washington County

**Programs Co-Directors:**

Keelee Roggenbuck, KLJ

Allie Futhey, Isthmus Engineering

**Membership Director:**

Carrie Desmond, Metro Transit

**Marketing Director:**

Emily Bowen, Kimley-Horn

**Development Director:**

Jackie Dylla, Braun Intertec

**Transportation YOU Co-Chairs:**

Belick Pha, Braun Intertec

Laura Melcher, Braun Intertec

**Sustainability Chair:**

Morgan Abbott, Washington County

**Volunteer Coordinator:**

Angie Bolstad, Stantec

**Social Media Chair:**

Kate Hvizdos, SRF

**Mentoring Co-Chairs:**

Caroline Miller, HDR

Lisa Elliott, MnDOT

**Hospitality Co-Chairs:**

Sara Allen, Washington County

**Website Chair:**

Sandy Cullen, University of Minnesota

**Membership Chair:**

Lindsay Sheppard, HNTB

**Diversity and Inclusion Chair:**

Liz Morice, Kimley-Horn

**Central Region Council Member:**

Sara Pflaum, MnDOT

**Programs Chair:**

Erin Jordan, SEH

**Special Event Co-Chairs:**

Alicia Valenti, SRF

Daniel Baxter, Michael Baker

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Theresa Maahs, PE, LEED AP

WTS Minnesota is launching a Member Spotlight as a new newsletter feature to share your stories on what being a WTS member means to you. This month's story features Theresa Maahs of Stantec.

### How did you come to join WTS?

I joined WTS at the encouragement of a co-worker who was actively involved in program development. Like other technical professional organizations, the programming offered was relevant to the work I do every day, but with an added conversation on diverse, equitable, inclusive design.

### How have you gotten involved in the organization ?

I had been intending to become actively involved for a while and found the WTS Diversity and Inclusion committee to be a great way to do that. I love that many of the committee members are moms, like me, with busy schedules but still able to work together to make change. I lead an Employee Resource Group at Stantec and am able to gather (and share) ideas between these groups. I am blown away by the creative and inspiring ideas, connections, and the group members provide.

### Why do you stay active?

One of the first things I noticed about WTS is also what keeps me engaged – the welcoming and supportive environment. I greatly appreciate that WTS provides the premium technical programming of a national organization but also delivers the feel of a tight-knit community.



### A Quick Word on Membership:

The WTS Minnesota Chapter is constantly striving to deliver high-quality programs, events, and opportunities to our members and supporters. In addition to our generous sponsors, we couldn't exist as a chapter without our members. A membership in the WTS Minnesota Chapter comes with benefits including networking and professional development opportunities, reduced rates for registration for local and national WTS events, invitations to members only events, and access to transportation leaders. If you are currently a WTS member, thank you! If you aren't, please consider joining. Please contact us with any questions on becoming a member at [WTSMinnesotaMembership@gmail.com](mailto:WTSMinnesotaMembership@gmail.com).

## WTS Minnesota Member & Friends Winter 2021 Survey

The WTS Minnesota Board is seeking input on a variety of topics to guide its programming and better serve its members. This survey should only take 5-10 minutes to complete. Everyone who completes the survey will be entered into a raffle for one of the following prizes: (2) passes to the Science Museum of MN or (2) one-day passes to Hyland Hills. Thank you so much for providing your input!  
**Survey responses are due by Friday, March 12, 2021.**

Survey Link: <https://forms.gle/4W6iFJtoP4EtPHL56>



## CORPORATE PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:



# ALLIANT

### TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OFFERED:

Planning, Environmental, Traffic Engineering, ITS, Preliminary and Final Design, Structures and Construction Management.

# BRAUN INTERTEC

**The Science You Build On.**

### TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OFFERED:

Geotechnical Engineering, Construction Materials Testing (CMT), Drilling Services, Environmental Consulting, Pavement Analysis and Design, Deep Foundations Design and Testing, Pre-Condition Surveys and Vibration Monitoring, Construction Inspection Services, Quality Management Services

### MN OFFICES:

MINNEAPOLIS

### WHY ALLIANT SUPPORTS WTS MN:

At Alliant, we build better communities with excellence and passion. We have an inclusive culture which supports diversity in our workplace and we know that organizations like WTS Minnesota are essential to advancing the transportation industry and providing scholarship, mentorship and advancement opportunities to the incredible women in our profession!

### MN OFFICES:

DULUTH, HIBBING, MANKATO, MINNEAPOLIS, ROCHESTER, ST. CLOUD, ST. PAUL

### WHY BRAUN SUPPORTS WTS MN:

Braun Intertec is an employee-owned firm with a rich history in transportation. Our team is focused on building trust-based relationships working with clients through every phase of the project lifecycle. We are focused on growing our diversity while also striving to provide a supportive environment for all of our employees. Through this initiative, we created the Empower Women group which is dedicated to creating a community, attracting, developing, and retaining women leaders. We also encourage and support our employees to become active members in various external professional organizations, such as WTS Minnesota.

## **PROGRAMS UPDATE**

### **JANUARY PROGRAM RECAP—VIRTUAL WALK AUDITS AND STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSIVE ADA PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**



The Minnesota Department of Health, Alta Planning + Design, and This Inclusive Life worked together to recommend opportunities to design walk audits, a public engagement technique, that are more inclusive of people with disabilities. The webinar took participants on a virtual walk audit to highlight strategies to lead more inclusive public engagement via virtual and in person techniques. Attendees learned how to apply virtual walk audits and other tools to their own projects. Participants also learned techniques for making meetings more inclusive of people with disabilities, whether they occur online or in person. Lessons learned were applicable across disciplines to planners, designers, engineers, and disability advocates. The project's lessons learned equipped practitioners to conduct more inclusive engagement online as the pandemic continues to evolve. Lessons learned also encouraged practitioners to more deeply consider equity aspects of in person engagement when it is safe to meet in person.

### **FEBRUARY PROGRAM RECAP—WTS MN BLACK HISTORY MONTH PROGRAM**

On February 16, the Programs and Diversity & Inclusion committees collaborated to present a Black History Month Celebration, featuring Carolyn Flowers (InfraStrategies, LLC) and Kim Collins (MnDOT), with Gloria Jeff (MnDOT) moderating. Carolyn Flowers served as Vice President of Americas Transit Market Sector at AECOM and acting administrator of the Federal Transit Administration under President Obama. Kim Collins was recently appointed as the MnDOT Deputy Commissioner. Gloria Jeff is an innovative transportation executive and urban planner. She is currently serving as Livability lead and Project Director – Rethinking I-94 for the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Over 60 participants joined the personal and moving conversation about the highlights and challenges of navigating careers in transportation as women of color.

Both speakers observed that, as women of color, they are often more visible in their roles. Collins noted that it's important to allow yourself to be human-- to make space for failures, and never forgetting to acknowledge and celebrate successes. Flowers added that you have to have confidence in your convictions, even when others may doubt you.

Jeff asked an evocative question about how to influence a difficult decision, or move an institution in a new direction, without being perceived as an "angry black woman." Both speakers remarked that that label is intended to diminish the voices and contributions of black women. Flowers draws strength from her analytical mindset, presenting data-driven justifications. Collins shared that, when she recognizes this dynamic is in play, she will strategically shape her message so it can still be heard-- concluding that it is "pitiful" to have to think about when white male colleagues do not.

The session closed with each panelist offering their recommendations to attendees on how to best care for themselves amid current stresses and uncertainties. Collins' advice was to give yourself permission for downtime, and be mindful of holistic health (body, mind, spirit). Flowers suggested staying connected with others and to simply "take a walk."

### **UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

WTS MN is excited to offer more interesting programs this year. Be on the look out for more information!



*CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS: We are growing as a chapter and have so many ways to get involved. See what opportunities are available [here](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PHYKBD) (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PHYKBD>)!*

### MEMBERS AND FRIENDS ON THE MOVE

Celebrating milestones for our members and friends. Have member news to share? Send in snippets about job changes, life milestones, and other accomplishments to [Emily Bowen](#) so we can recognize our colleagues!

**Mona Elabbady**— Promoted to Vice President at SRF.

**Kara Langford**— Promoted to Associate at SRF.

**Anna Potter** - New position as a City Planner at the City of St. Paul.

### THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 SPONSORS:

We appreciate your support! You make all our programs, scholarships, and outreach possible .

#### ADVOCATE



ALLIANT



SEH



#### SUPPORTER LEVEL:

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Bolton & Menk	Stonebrook
HR Green	Terracon

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Isthmus Engineering	Professional Engineering Services
LV Engineering	Rani Engineering
Minnesota Transportation Alliance	Sambatek
MN Best	Zan Associates

#### PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERS :

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Washington County