



Advancing women Advancing transportation

➤ January - March 2024

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



The first quarter of 2024 is off to an exciting start. In January we welcomed several new board members who are bringing energy and ideas to continue the work of WTS MN. I know that this group will do great things this year for WTS Minnesota.

I am thrilled to announce that Ramsey County has joined City of Saint Paul, Metro Transit, MnDOT, and Washington County as a public partner to WTS MN. Ramsey County employees can now take advantage many partnership benefits. If you would like to learn more about the benefits of becoming a public partner or think your agency may be a good fit, please contact [Ashley Hudson, Development Chair](#).

We are getting ready to send a group WTS MN members and friends to the [WTS International Annual Conference](#). This year's conference will be held in New Orleans May 8-10. This event offers participants learning opportunities including technical sessions, mobile tours, leadership trainings, as well as lots of networking opportunities. We received a record number of applicants seeking grant opportunities to attend the conference. A HUGE thank you to the public and private sector sponsors who make these grants possible and for their continued support of our mission.

One of the many benefits our chapter provides is great monthly programs. We kicked off 2024 with a member only event to connect with Metro Transit's General Manager, Lesley Kandaras. Members had the opportunity to learn about the efforts she is leading, including her commitment to riding every route Metro Transit operates during her first year in the GM role. Leslie is also a WTS Minnesota Honorary Member. Each year, WTS Minnesota has the opportunity to offer two honorary memberships, which is one way our chapter looks to attract individuals who are not active members of WTS and have been identified as leaders in the Minnesota transportation industry.

In February, we partnered with American Council of Engineering Companies to offer members and friends the opportunity to enhance their political savvy and be a part of a conversation with legislators about hot topics in transportation and engineering. In March we hosted a book club event for a deep dive into the highs and lows of public sector service detailed in *Herocrats* by Allison Bell. Allison is a local author and has worked in the public sector before starting her [own firm](#).

The Board is busy planning the annual Scholarships and Recognitions program. WTS is proud to support the early careers of young professionals entering the transportation field, as well as career growth for established professionals. With our recognition awards, we also celebrate individuals who exemplify WTS's core values, dedicating themselves advancing access and equity for women and underrepresented groups in our field. Mark your calendars for May 15th- registration details will come out shortly. We hope you will be able to join us for an amazing day.

Lisa Elliott

WTS MN President

CORPORATE SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT



MN OFFICES: Minneapolis and Saint Paul

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OFFERED:

Transportation, Transit, Community & Environmental Planning, Civil, Traffic, Structural & Water Resources Engineering, ITS, Landscape Architecture & Urban Design, Public Engagement & Visualization, and Construction Administration

WHY SRF SUPPORTS WTS MN:

SRF appreciates the many opportunities afforded by WTS-MN to cultivate a network of like-minded professionals and invest in our team members' professional development. These opportunities have in turn supported our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, which has been a cornerstone of our success.



MN OFFICES: Minneapolis, Duluth, Golden Valley, Maple Plain, Rochester, St. Cloud, and Woodbury

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OFFERED:

Transportation, Transit, Environmental Planning, Civil, Traffic, Structural, Water Resource Engineering, Landscape Architecture, ROW Services, Public Engagement, Surveying, Construction Administration, and Transportation Architecture.

WHY STANTEC SUPPORTS WTS MN:

At Stantec, we create opportunity by inviting, embracing, and celebrating differences. Because we believe that truly transformative work is born from diversity, we champion diversity and inclusion throughout our organization. We support WTS Minnesota because it provides a platform for women in our industry to grow through professional development and networking.



Lisa Elliott
President



Erin Jordan
Vice President



Adele Hall
Past President



Kara Langford
Treasurer



Allie Futhey
Secretary



Ashley Hudson
Development
Director



Catherine Judd
Membership
Director



Karen Scheffing
Programs Co-
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Ella Rasp
Programs Co-
Director



Maddie Garces
Marketing
Director



Emily Bowen
Scholarships &
Recognitions
Director



Jennifer Wiltgen
Diversity &
Inclusion Co-
Chair



Emma Lucken
Diversity &
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Chair



Sylvie Guezon
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Alicia Valenti
Special Event
Co-Chair



Greta Kurtz
Special Event
Co-Chair



Sara Hage
Mentoring Co-
Chair



Jamie Bentz
Mentoring Co-
Chair



Michelle Kahl
Mentoring Co-
Chair



Zoey Mauck
Programs Co-
Chair



Margaret Donahoe
Programs Co-Chair



Kate Hvizdos
Social Media
Chair



Sara Allen
Website Chair



Cassie Pinta
Transportation
YOU
Co-Chair



Megan Danielson
Transportation
YOU
Co-Chair



Angie Bolstad
Volunteer
Coordinator



Sara Pflaum
Regional Board
Representative

Greetings from the 2024 WTS MN Board!

We're happy to serve our members to advance the inclusion & participation of women in the transportation industry! Our 2024 Board members are:

President:

Lisa Elliott, MnDOT

Vice President:

Erin Jordan, SEH

Past President:

Adele Hall, SRF

Treasurer:

Kara Langford, SRF

Secretary:

Allie Futhey, Isthmus Engineering

Development Director:

Ashley Hudson, Bolton & Menk

Membership Director:

Catherine Judd, HDR

Programs Co-Directors:

Karen Scheffing, Bolton & Menk
Ella Rasp, Stantec

Marketing Director:

Maddie Garces, SRF

Scholarships & Recognitions Director:

Emily Bowen, Kimley-Horn

Diversity and Inclusion Co-Chairs:

Jennifer Wiltgen, MnDOT
Emma Lucken, Ramsey County

Development Chair:

Sylvie Guezon, U of MN

Membership Chair:

Nicole Bitzan, SRF

Special Event Co-Chairs:

Alicia Valenti, Metro Transit
Greta Kurtz, Metro Transit

Volunteer Coordinator

Angie Bolstad, Stantec

Mentoring Co-Chairs:

Sara Hage, HNTB
Jamie Bentz, WSP
Michelle Kahl, Kismet

Programs Co-Chairs:

Zoey Mauck, Alta Planning + Design
Margaret Donahoe, MN Transportation
Alliance

Marketing Chairs

Social Media- Kate Hvizdos, Bolton &
Menk
Website- Sara Allen, Washington County

Transportation YOU Co-Chairs:

Megan Danielson, Kimley Horn
Cassie Pinta, TKDA

Regional Board Representative

Sara Pflaum, MnDOT

PROGRAMS UPDATE



January Program – Fireside Chat with Lesley Kandaras

WTS sponsored a lovely fireside chat with Honorary Member and Metro Transit GM Lesley Kandaras. WTS members and Metro Transit staff were able to have a casual conversation with Ms. Kandaras to talk about her career and the future of Metro Transit.



February Program – Joint ACEC/WTS-MN Program: Politics in Engineering Panel

Another successful year of jointly hosting this event with ACEC at the Green Mill in Saint Paul. Attendees were able to ask questions about the upcoming legislative session to Senators Larry Kraft and Steve Elkins. Conversation and questions varied from automated vehicles to engineering and climate change.



March Program – Book Club with Herocrats Author Allison Bell

Book Club with [Herocrats](#) Author Allison Bell. WTS members met with Herocrats author Allison Bell at the Coven in Saint Paul. Allison gave an overview of her book and what inspired her to write it. Attendees were also able to participate in an interactive exercise to find their own cape and determine where their superpowers and supertraps lie. A wonderful discussion was had and the event was successful.



2023 Holiday Party Recap



On December 20, WTS members and guests gathered at the Minnesota Science Museum to catch up, enjoy the season and celebrate a year of chapter development. Past President Adele Hall and 2023 President Lisa Elliott reviewed the chapter's achievements of 2023. presented the 2024 board and gave a preview of what's planned for the next year.

The Silent Auction included 40 items from donors including many of our corporate sponsors, Minnesota's pro sports teams, and several local businesses. Combined with the 50/50 raffle, we raised more than \$5,300 for the WTS scholarship fund. It was a joy to see everyone again and we were thrilled to take advantage of the opportunity to gather.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Chloe McGuire

WTS MN is relaunching a Member Spotlight as a newsletter feature to share your stories on what being a WTS member means to you. This month's story features Chloe McGuire, Planning and Development Director for the City of Plymouth. Read what Chloe has to say about her membership below!

Hi – I am Chloe McGuire, AICP. I am the Planning and Development Manager for the City of Plymouth and a new member of WTS Minnesota. I have been in Plymouth for two years, and prior to that worked in the same role for the City of Ramsey for five years. I am the Treasurer for the American Planning Association – Minnesota Chapter, where I am the liaison to the Women in Planning and Emerging Planners Groups.

I keep hearing my friends speak about the relationships and benefits of joining WTS, so I finally bit the bullet and signed up! I deal with transportation issues almost daily in my planning and development work, but we're often stuck in our own 'silos' at work, and I'm trying to break out of that. On a personal note, I've always found the most value in meeting, mentoring, and being mentored by other women in the field, so I'm excited to join WTS and find another space to discuss our professional work and development.



MEMBERS AND FRIENDS ON THE MOVE

Ella Rasp is taking a new role at Stantec as a Transportation Planner in their Urban Mobility team

Greta Kurtz started as an Arterial BRT Planner at Metro Transit in August 2023

Congrats to you both on your new roles!

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

We are growing as a chapter and have so many ways to get involved including, but not limited to: **special program assistance, education outreach (school visits and tabling), mentorships, scholarship applications review, and fundraising assistance.** If you are interested in one of these roles or learning about other ways to get involved in other volunteer opportunities please contact our volunteer coordinator [Angie Bolstad](#).

WTS-MN Transportation YOU Update



Transportation YOU at Blaine High School has been bustling with activity, with about 30 enthusiastic mentees and 7 dedicated mentors participating in the program. In January, T YOU held an in-person meeting on the topics of Planning and Street Mix Design, offering valuable insights into transportation career skills. In February, T YOU took a field trip to the UMN campus which included tours of the UMN Energy Plant, CEGE facilities, and Nano Center, providing firsthand exposure to transportation-related studies and research. On April 1, T YOU hosted another in-person meeting, this time focusing on bridges and structures, further enriching the mentees' understanding of transportation infrastructure.

Looking ahead, the program has applied for 3 girls and 2 mentors to participate in the prestigious annual DC Capital Summit this summer, which offers a unique opportunity for further learning and networking.

Upcoming Events

4.09

What: Craft Fundraiser
Where: Graze Provision and Libations 520 N 4th St Minneapolis, MN 55401
When: 4:00pm - 6:00pm



Purchase or create a pair of lovely earrings from [Katie White Designs](#) for yourself or get ahead on your Mother's Day shopping. A portion of the proceeds will go to the WTS scholarship fund. Come and network with fellow members and support future leaders!

Bring a friend to this event and get a free gift of WTS swag and an entry to win a gift card.

[Register here!](#)

5.02

What: Ethics Training
Where: Kimley Horn's Saint Paul Office 767 Eustis St. Saint Paul, MN 55114
When: 1:30pm - 5:30pm



Join WTS MN and NCITE for an Ethics training led by Erin Perdu, a planner at Stantec and co-chair of AICP ethics committee. The training will satisfy the ethics continuing education requirements for both P.E. licenses and AICP certifications. We'll review real world ethics cases and play a Jeopardy-style game show to get you thinking more about ethics in the workplace. Happy hour to follow.

Register and find additional information on NCITE's [event webpage](#).

5.15

What: WTS MN Scholarships and Recognitions Reception
Where: Solar Arts Building NE
When: 3:30pm - 5:30pm



Save the date for WTS MN's annual Scholarships and Recognitions Reception! Keep an eye on your inbox for registration and additional details on where and when you can join us this Spring to celebrate the accomplishments of our winners!

Please direct any questions to [Alicia Valenti](#) and [Creta Kurtz](#).

WTS REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

2024 WTS International Conference

2024 WTS International Annual Conference, The Crescent City: Connecting Cultures, Connecting Communities will be held from May 8-10, 2024 in New Orleans, LA. WTS International Annual Conferences is an amazing opportunity for the transportation community to learn, connect, and build on leadership skillsets.

Find out more and register to attend at the conference [website](#).



2024 WTS Central Region Conference

This year, the WTS Central Region is partnering with Great Lakes District of ITE for its annual meeting/conference.

Taking place in Green Bay, WI from June 12-14, 2024, this conference is a unique opportunity to showcase your work and perspective to WTS and ITE members from across the region, learn more about local innovations, and network with new and old friends. Learn more [here](#).

THANK YOU TO OUR 2024 SPONSORS!

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

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