

WTS
Minnesota Chapter
2024 Annual Report

January 2025



› **Minnesota**

Advancing women
Advancing transportation

Contents

- WTS Minnesota Mission 2
- Message from the President 3
- Board of Directors 4
- Committee Chairs 7
- Advisory Board 8
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion..... 9
- Membership 10
- Mentorship 12
- Programs..... 13
- Transportation YOU 17
- Scholarships and Recognitions..... 20
- Conferences..... 28
- Financial Report..... 30
- Corporate and Public Partners..... 31

WTS Minnesota Mission

Transforming the transportation industry through the advancement of women.

Message from the President



The 2024 WTS Minnesota Board of Directors is pleased to provide our members with the chapter's 2024 Annual Report. The report provides a summary of the chapter's activities, growth, and accomplishments over the past year.

The 2024 board included 11 directors, 16 committee chairs, and one Central Region Council member. Through this group's incredible energy and leadership, we were able to explore new initiatives and continue the good work of our established programs.

There is so much to be proud of and share about WTS in 2024. This year's highlights include:

- The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Committee, Programs Committee, and Development team joined forces to collaborate and strategize for specialized program offerings this year focused on championing gender equity. We had overwhelming success with sponsorship from Stantec, SRF, Bolton & Menk, HDR, and WSP.
- Our monthly programs continued to provide educational, welcoming, and fun events. I am grateful to the program committee and DEI committee, along with the presenters, tour guides, and other volunteers who made it all possible.
- My thanks to our special events committee, scholarships and recognitions committee, and volunteers who beautifully coordinated both of our largest events of the year.
- Our chapter continued to engage with students through our TYOU program, scholarship program, and with professionals at all levels through our Mentorship program.
- We welcomed two past presidents to the WTS MN Advisory Board. Thank you to Andrea Arnoldi and Sara Pflaum for your continued guidance and support. The advisory board is working on some exciting changes for 2025. Thank you to our Advisory Board members and subcommittee who are helping us strategize new ideas and initiatives of how this group can continue to support the mission of WTS MN.

Thank you to our Corporate and Public Agency Sponsors, your support has been critical in helping us promote our mission and serve our members and friends. Thank you to our 2024 Board, committee chairs and volunteers. 2024 could not have been a success without you!

Lisa Elliott
WTS Minnesota 2024 Chapter President

Board of Directors

PRESIDENT

Lisa Elliott, Minnesota Department of Transportation

VICE PRESIDENT

Erin Jordan, SEH

PAST PRESIDENT

Adele Hall, SRF Consulting

TREASURER

Kara Langford, SRF Consulting

SECRETARY

Allie Futhey, Isthmus Engineering

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Ashley Hudson, Bolton & Menk

MARKETING DIRECTOR

Maddie Garces, SRF Consulting

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

Catherine Judd, HDR

PROGRAMS DIRECTORS

Karen Scheffing, Bolton & Menk

Ella Rasp, Stantec

SCHOLARSHIPS & RECOGNITIONS DIRECTOR

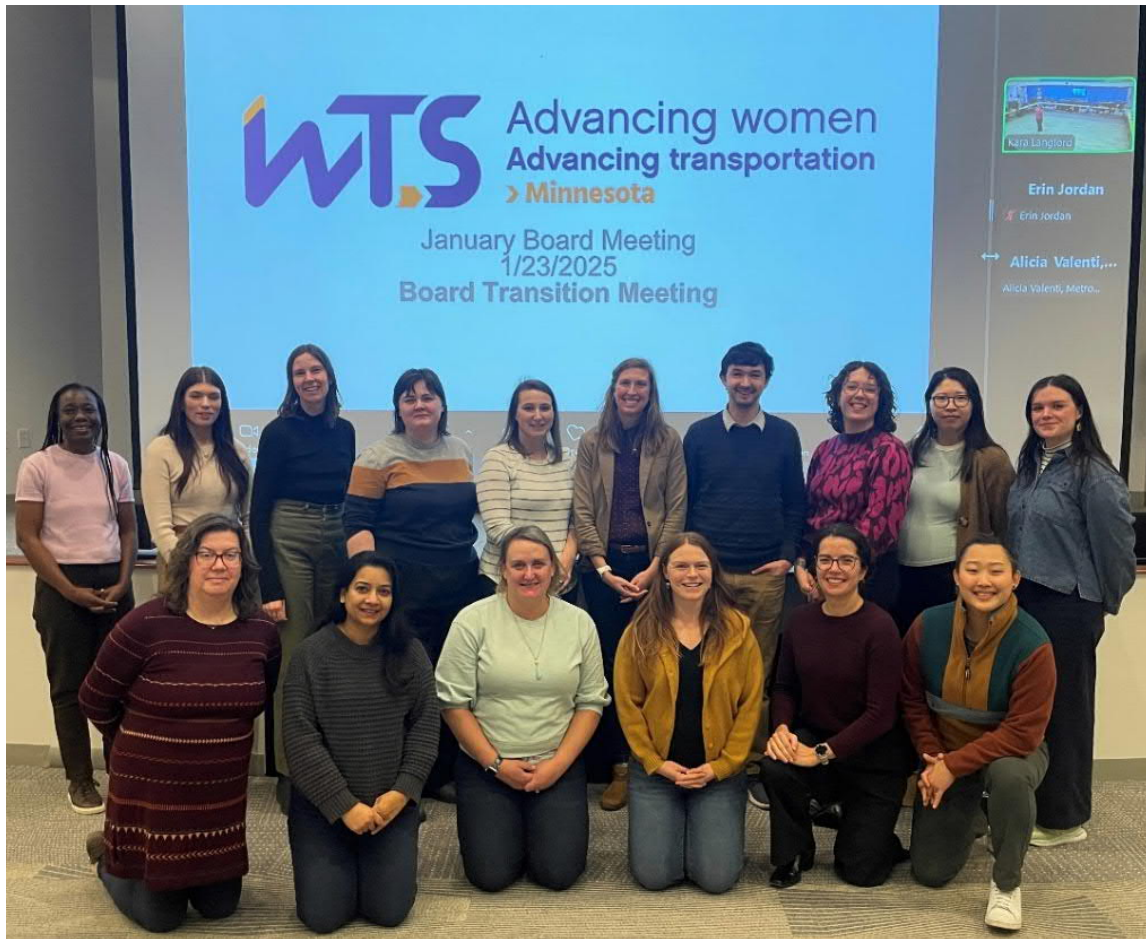
Emily Bowen Goodell, Hennepin County



2024 WTS Minnesota Board Members



2024 WTS Minnesota Board Members



2025 WTS Minnesota Board Members

Committee Chairs

DEVELOPMENT

Sylvie Guezon, Student at Humphrey School of Public Affairs

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Emma Lucken, Ramsey County

Jennifer Wiltgen, Minnesota Department of Transportation

MEMBERSHIP

Nicole Bitzan, SRF Consulting

MENTORING

Michelle Kahl, Kismet Consulting

Sara Hage, HNTB

Jamie Bents, WSP

PROGRAMS

Zoey Mauck, Alta

Margaret Donahoe, Transportation Alliance

REGIONAL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

Sara Pflaum, Minnesota Department of Transportation

SOCIAL MEDIA

Kate Hvizdos, Bolton & Menk

SPECIAL EVENTS

Alicia Valenti, Metro Transit

Greta Kurtz, SRF Consulting

TRANSPORTATION YOU

Cassie Pinta, TKDA

Megan Danielson, Kimley-Horn

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Angie Bolstad, KLJ Engineering

WEBSITE

Sara Allen, Washington County

Advisory Board

Morgan Abbott, Metro Transit

Andrea Arnoldi, Kimley-Horn

Kristin Asher, City of Richfield

Biz Colburn, Retired

Margaret Donahoe, Minnesota Transportation Alliance

Chelsey Hendrickson, Kimley-Horn

Gloria Jeff, Minnesota Department of Transportation

Ann Johnson, PE Services

Jessica Laabs, Kimley-Horn

Scott McBride, Bolton & Menk

Amber Nord, Isthmus Engineering

Katie Roth, Metro Transit

Fay Simer, Minnesota Department of Transportation

Molly Stewart, SRF Consulting

Kristin Thompson, Metro Transit

HunWen Westman, City of Saint Paul

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Committee for the Minnesota Chapter of WTS meets monthly and develops content for programs and trainings and advocates to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the transportation industry.

The DEI Committee's mission is to develop skills and knowledge within WTS Minnesota members to be advocates in individual workplaces to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the transportation industry and to increase and support diversity within WTS Minnesota membership, leadership, and program participants to better reflect our communities.

As a part of this mission, our committee has been very active in implementing programs that expand knowledge of issues related to underrepresented groups within the transportation industry. This past year, our committee has held a series of events that have highlighted these groups and educated members.

The DEI Committee began an online series called "WTS The Future of Transportation" where transportation professionals discuss their role in the transportation industry, specifically how innovation and technology are being used to advance it. In June, the DEI Committee sponsored a panel event focusing on small businesses in the Metro area, asking them about their experiences, challenges, and opportunities operating in the industry.

As a part of the Land Acknowledgement Action Plan, the Committee also held a volunteer event at the Division of Indian Work in the Twin Cities where members performed much needed outdoor work while networking.

To engage youth, two committee members also engaged in a joint panel with NCITE and ACEC at the University of Minnesota to discuss career opportunities in the transportation industry. In August, the DEI Committee sponsored a Learning from Place: Cedar-Riverside event touring important places in the community and learning about the vibrant history of the neighborhood.

In addition to events and programs, the DEI Committee also provided a second round of a professional development grant, specifically targeted to women that identify as Black, Indigenous, or as women of color. This \$2,500 grant was offered both to members and non-members to expand its reach to the greatest number of recipients.

Finally, the DEI Committee continues to make progress on its workplan and identifying new programs and trainings to offer to our WTS membership.

Membership

The 2024 membership goals included:

- Make Membership Director/Chair more visible and accessible
- Engage more transportation professionals in the Aviation Industry
- Pair honorary member with programmed event
- Collaborate with COMTO on an event

Starting the year off with 147 active members, the chapter gained over 30 new members in 2024. Thank you to everyone that joined as a new member and to all our existing members for helping share the value of the organization with their colleagues.

The Connect with Coffee program had lower momentum during Q1 2024 so the membership team organized a program with event called Crafting and Connecting for Career Growth to promote our goal of making the Director and Chair more visible and encourage new membership participation with a bring-a-friend drawing. Attendees who brought a friend to this event received a small gift and an opportunity to enter a drawing for a gift card. The event featured a local artist and woman-owned business founded while she was hospitalized waiting for a heart transplant in the Winter of 2022. Feedback from participants showed members really appreciated the opportunity to connect and be creative and engage through activity and proceed from the sales were applied to the WTS Scholarship foundation.



The Membership Spotlight continues to feature members in the chapter newsletter. Individuals with diverse perspectives were featured and invited to share a photo, brief biography, and a few words about why they are members and what transportation means to them.

The Membership team invited a new honorary member in alignment with the chapter's goal to advance WTSI's initiative to engage more professionals in the field of aviation. Membership Director Catherine Judd and 2024 honorary member Heather Leide, Director of Projects and Airport Development at the Metropolitan Airports Commission, co-hosted a fireside chat where attendees were able to learn about Heather's career journey. WTS Minnesota was privileged to have three additional guest speakers to share remarks approaching this transitional year. Women leading

transportation agencies in aviation, department of transportation and transit graciously accepted the invitation to attend and provide opening remarks for the program, which was hosted at an extremely unique venue on an airfield. Vice President Bridget Rief, P.E., from Metropolitan Airports Commission, Commissioner Nancy Daubengerger, P.E., from the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and Metro Transit General Manager Lesley Kandarar, who was recognized in January 2024 as the Chapter's 2023 honorary member.



Nene Israel, our honorary member candidate from last year has been on the move but is still engaged with WTS Membership and will be the honorary member for 2025. Ms. Israel serves on the COMTO Board of Directors, and our Chapter is excited for her participation and look to pair our objective of collaborating with COMTO on an event with her recognition.

Membership's goal to pair the honorary members with a program impacted the timing of featuring each honorary member, and with a full programs calendar for 2025.

Mentorship

The Mentoring Committee organized a 2024 mentorship program that started and ended in large group events. We had 28 participants that were matched into 14 mentor/mentee pairs, and we had some commitment shifts over the year where we worked with mentors and mentees to make some reassignments. One mentor took on a different mentee during the year after her first mentee needed to leave the program, all while continuing to mentor her WTS mentee from the prior year!

Our program develops one-on-one mentoring relationships through WTS for one year, with goals of supporting individuals' career goals and developing new industry partnerships. Most of the work happens between mentors and mentees in monthly mentoring meetings. The mentoring committee sets up the partnerships, kicks off the year with expectations and support, hosts a summer social event, and wraps up with a concluding event. We check in with mentoring pairs through the year and provide support where needed.

The 2024 program kicked off with an in-person introduction event in February 2024. As partners built their relationship over the year, we had a summer social event in July 2024 at Minneapolis Cider Company, where we played pickleball and enjoyed snacks and beverages; we opened registration up to the greater WTS community after mentors and mentees signed up so we could support more networking among our members. We celebrated our year together at the WTS Holiday Party in December 2024, where we promoted the mentoring program by identifying our mentors and mentees with mentoring name badge ribbons and gathering for one last thank you.

Programs

JANUARY 2024 | HONORARY MEMBER FIRESIDE CHAT

We kicked off our 2024 programming with the annual Honorary Member event, celebrating 2023 honorary member Lesley Kandaras, Metro Transit General Manager. The event was hosted by Metro Transit and featured a fireside chat with Ms. Kandaras followed by a discussion and question period moderated by Kristin Thompson.



FEBRUARY 2024 | JOINT ACEC EMERGING PROFESSIONALS/WTS “POLITICS IN ENGINEERING” EVENT

Held jointly with the Minnesota Chapter’s ACEC-Emerging Professionals committee, WTS members and friends gathered at the Green Mill to listen to a panel discussion about politics and engineering with Representative Steve Elkins DFL (50B) and Representative Larry Kraft DFL (46A). Attendees were encouraged to ask questions and listen to strategies each panelist had regarding infrastructure funding and how proposed legislation might affect the engineering industry, how to get involved with your local representatives, and other issues that were important at the Capitol this session.

MARCH 2024 | FIND YOUR CAPE



Our March program featured a book club event at the Saint Paul Coven location. The book we read and discussed was Herocrats by Allison Bell. Allison joined us for a short reading of her book, conducted a small exercise with the group and entertained a lively discussion.

APRIL 2024 | SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER AND MEMBER DRIVE

In April WTS met at Malcolm Yards for a scholarship fundraiser and membership drive. Polymer clay and metal jewelry artist Katie White brought her custom jewelry for folks to design their own creation or choose from something that was already made. Prospective members mingled with members and crafted lovely creations.

MAY 2024 | SCHOLARSHIPS AND RECOGNITIONS EVENT & ETHICS TRAINING

One of the May events was the annual Scholarships and Recognitions event, a summary of which is included in the Scholarships and Recognitions section.

MAY 2024 | ETHICS TRAINING: WTS MN PARTNERING WITH ACEC

WTS partnered with NCITE and Stantec’s Erin Perdu to facilitate AICP and PE ethics training with interactive components for planners and engineers. The training was hosted at Kimley Horn offices and very well attended. Erin was MN APA’s AICP Ethics Chair for 2024 and 2025 MN APA Chair.

JUNE 2024 | FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION

Kimberly Williams, Chief Innovation Officer at Houston METRO, joined us for a webinar series highlighting women leaders from across the country who are building the future of transportation technology and infrastructure. In the last twenty years, the transportation sector has seen major investments and technology disruptions that changed the landscape of our communities and altered

how we travel. Kimberly shared stories from her time in leadership and offered insights into how she built unique solutions through expertise and drive.

JUNE 2024 COFFEE AND CONNECTIONS

The membership team hosted a networking breakfast at FLAVA Café in St. Paul where members met for breakfast, coffee and mingling.

JULY 2024 | JOINT SUMMER SOCIAL WITH MSES, WTS, ITS-MN, AND NCITE

Take us out to the ball game! With nearly 200 attendees, our WTS members and friends had a great opportunity to socialize with MSES, ITS-MN, and NCITE at the July 17th St. Paul Saints baseball game. It was a hot night on the field and the home team's bats were even hotter with the Saints bringing in a 14-7 win. Thanks to all the members and friends who helped make this event possible!

JULY 2024 DEI COMMITTEE SMALL BUSINESS PANEL

The WTS-MN DEI Committee put together a panel discussion with Twin Cities small business owners working in transportation. The panel discussed the unique obstacles faced by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), Targeted Group Businesses (TGBs), and small businesses who provide professional and technical services in our industry, as well as the strategies they have used that led to their success.

Panelists included:

- Abdullahi Abdulle, Humanize MN
- Craig Vaughn, Transportation Collaborative & Consultants (TC2)
- Edna McKenzie, Midwest Select Contracting
- Joy Miciano, Zan Associates



JULY 2024 | COOL PLANNING FOR A HOT FUTURE



Registrants participated in an engaging bike tour of downtown Hopkins with local planning leaders to learn about recent investigations of increased heat in Hopkins. Hosted by WTS MN and APA MN, participants listened to a technical presentation on a recently completed Urban Heat Vulnerability Study. This tour explored the technical details of the study led by Laila Imihy (City of Hopkins) and helped participants understand how Extreme

Heat mitigation applies to their own work.

AUGUST 2024 | DEI LEARNING FROM PLACE CEDAR RIVERSIDE TOUR

The WTS-MN DEI Committee hosted a Learning from Place: Cedar-Riverside/West Bank Tour on August 2nd offered in partnership with Minnesota Humanities Center in collaboration with Pillsbury United Communities/Brian Coyle Center. This tour was sponsored by WTS-Minnesota. A discussion at the Brian Coyle Center followed the tour.

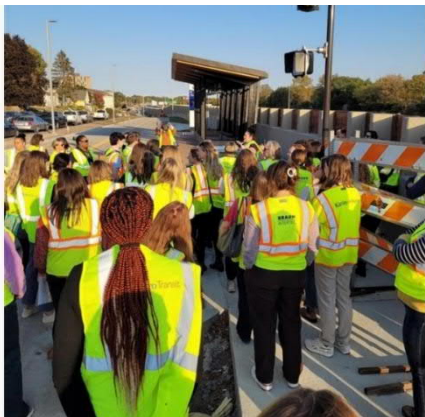
AUGUST 2024 | BOARD RECRUITMENT

WTS hosted a board recruitment event at Metro Transit Chambers during the monthly board meeting, and a social hour followed to create opportunities for interested future board members to connect and ask questions about future openings on the board.

SEPTEMBER 2024 | ART IN PUBLIC SPACES

Participants met at the North Loop Green park under I-394 to discover the intersection of art, infrastructure, and community. Registrants spent an enlightening afternoon focused on learning from the recent collaboration between the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), Hines, and local property developers at North Loop Green to highlight the Utilizing Arts and Culture to Mitigate the Negative Impacts of Transportation Infrastructure on Communities study by MnDOT and partners had been recently released.

OCTOBER 2024 | GOLDEN GIRLS OF GOLD LINE



Members were invited to participate in a special tour of the METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) construction project, led by women at every stage of its decade-long development. This \$500 million project has seen women in key roles across planning, design, and implementation, including project management, engagement, communications, civil engineering, and more. Many of these leaders are your WTS colleagues.

OCTOBER 2024 | CHAMPIONING GENDER EQUALITY PART 1

In this interactive workshop—the first of a two-part training series from Strategic Diversity Initiatives—participants explored this cultural moment, how it's affecting us and our workplaces, what it means to show up as allies and advocates in the face of sexism & misogyny, genderism, racism, ableism, ageism, and other biases. Using a frame of Emotional Intelligence (EQ), attendees practiced pushing against imposter syndrome, reframing stereotypes and microaggressions, and finding agency in liberatory new ways.

NOVEMBER 2024 | SERVICE PROJECT AT DIVISION OF INDIAN WORKS



As part of WTS-MN's continued work on Land Acknowledgement and Action Planning, a volunteer opportunity and educational experience at Division of Indian Works (DIW) located in Minneapolis, MN was provided. Volunteers took the time to learn about DIW, tour the facility, and assisted with yard maintenance and other light cleaning and fall decorating activities at the facility. November 2024: Work-Life

Balance Panel

WTS MN treasurer Kara Langford participated in a Work-Life Balance roundtable discussion in partnership with the Engineering Education Foundation of America (EEFA). Discussion was held around finding the right balance between balancing time between work and personal needs. Panelists included Kara Langford, Dan Ensner, Katie Toghramadjian, and Jason Tschida.

NOVEMBER 2024 | CHAMPIONING GENDER EQUITY PART 2

The second part of the Gender Equity training was successfully held in November.

DECEMBER 2024 | HOLIDAY PARTY

The 2024 WTS Minnesota Holiday Party was held on December 19th at the University of Minnesota Campus Club. More than 150 members and friends gathered for delicious food, a cash bar, and great company! The event also included a cash raffle, members-only gift card drawing, and silent auction which raised more than \$4,000 for the WTS scholarship fund.

Transportation YOU

2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

In January, Transportation YOU mentors Cassie Pinta, Zoey Mauck, and Mario Ratnaraj led a presentation about the different users of a street (cars, transit, pedestrians, bikes, and other micromobility vehicles) as well as physical elements of a street that are needed (curb and gutter, lighting, streetscape amenities, etc.). They then shared the ranges of dimensions required for each aspect, and talked about how incorporating different elements may change the function or feel of the street for different users. After the presentation, the mentors split into several groups with the mentees and each group used Streetmix.net to develop a certain "type" of street, such as car-oriented, pedestrian-oriented, and transit-oriented. Each group then presented the street cross section they created to the whole group, and explained why it would work for their desired users and how the street environment felt towards them.

In February, mentors and mentees toured the University of Minnesota's Energy Plant, College of Science & Engineering campus, and the Minnesota Nano Center.



Mentors & Mentees at U of M's Energy Plant



At our April meeting, Mario Ratnaraj and Andrea Arnoldi spoke to the students about types of bridges, what goes into designing and building bridges, and different careers that are involved in bridge design. Thanks to our partners at MnDOT, the mentees were able to work together to build their own bridge. Mentees with their bridge they built during our April 2024 lesson.



To build on the mentees' knowledge from our bridge design lesson, we were able to get a tour behind the scenes tour of the Minnesota Zoo's Treetop Trail in May. Thomas Root, the Zoo's Director of Planning and Construction, and Mary Springer, an architect at Snow Kreilich who was on the team of architects who oversaw the design of the bridge, gave a short presentation on the design and engineering process of the bridge and led the mentees on a tour of the trail.

Group of mentees on the treetop trail during the Minnesota Zoo field trip

CAPITAL SUMMIT

In June, Megan Danielson and Zoey Mauck, along with three Blaine High School mentees, traveled to the Washington, D.C. area to participate in the 2024 WTS International Capital Summit. Some highlights included visiting the U.S. Department of Transportation, the U.S. Capitol, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Carmen Turner Facilities, a river boat cruise down the Potomac River and rock climbing at the University of Maryland College Park.



Makena, Zoey, Izze, Megan, and Reema at the Russell Senate Office Building in D.C.

2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

The 2024-2025 Transportation YOU year kicked off in September with 7 mentors and about 30 mentees gathered at Blaine High School! Our first lesson included an overview on the program, presentation from 3 students who attended the Capital Summit in D.C., and an exciting round of get-to-know-you bingo.

In October, Mario Ratnaraj, Ellie Tian, Morgan Ellis, and Alanna Pohlman toured the Stone Arch Bridge repair project with their Blaine High School Transportation YOU mentees. The contractor led the group through key points of the restoration from identifying stones that needed replacement, procuring the new stones from the quarries of the original construction, and placing and securing the stones on the structure.



From the vantage point below the bridge, other historic repairs to the bridge were seen including concrete repairs/encasing to several eastern piers following the 1965 flooding and subsequent sinking of pier 7. Students were also able to tour HNTB's Minneapolis office and participated in a panel Q&A with several female leaders in the company.

Transportation YOU group at the Stone Arch Bridge

The theme for our December Transportation YOU lesson was lead pipes. Cassie Pinta started off the lesson by teaching the mentees about the lead water crisis in Flint Michigan. We were lucky enough to have Kristian Gaasland from City of Blaine Public Work attend. He presented Blaine's lead pipe water service initiative and showed the students how they can check for lead pipes in their homes. Lead pipes lesson at Blaine High School.



2025 SCHEDULED EVENTS

Upcoming events for Transportation YOU include a field trip to the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport with Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) employees towards the end of January 2025 where students will be able to tour the airfield, field maintenance building, and the MSP fire station, as well as a Q&A with female MAC leaders. Other spring events closing out the 2024-2025 school year include: an in-person speed networking and college prep lesson; a Gold Line BRT tour; and an end of the year celebration in April 2025. Beyond the 2024-2025 school year is the 2025 Capital Summit in D.C. and planning for the upcoming 2025-2026 school year.

Scholarships and Recognitions

On May 15th, over 150 WTS Minnesota members and friends gathered at the Solar Arts Building in Minneapolis to celebrate the 2024 Scholarship and Recognition Award recipients. Through our scholarship program, WTS is proud to support the burgeoning careers of young women entering the field of transportation as well as career growth for established professionals. This was an exciting year for the scholarship program as we were able to expand our reach with the partnership of the Minnesota Society of Engineers and Surveyors (MSES). In partnership with MSES, we were able to award three additional scholarships. With our annual recognition awards, we are also thrilled to celebrate individuals who exemplify WTS's core values of collaboration and inclusivity, dedicating themselves to creating access and equity for women and other underrepresented groups in our field.

PAST PRESIDENT AWARD

Adele Hall (SRF)

Adele Hall, transit planner and enthusiast, leads the transit planning practice at SRF Consulting Group. She has worked on transit projects in the Twin Cities and increasingly across the country since 2007 and has been a member of WTS almost as long. Adele has served on the WTS-MN board in several roles and was the chapter president in 2023. Adele holds a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from the Humphrey School and a Bachelor's in Economics from Carleton College.



MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Kristin Thompson (Metro Transit)

Kristin Thompson has been the Director of Asset Management at Metro Transit since 2022. She leads a growing team that supports the agency's cross-functional asset management program. She began her career with Metro Transit in 2006 and previously held several roles within Service Development.

Kristin is a graduate of the Humphrey School of Public Affairs and Macalester College. She serves as the executive sponsor of the Metropolitan Council's Pride Employee Resource Group. She is a member of the WTS Minnesota advisory board and is active in the American Public Transportation Association and the Institute of Asset Management.



WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Joy Miciano (Zan Associates)



Joy Miciano is the President and CEO for Zan Associates, where she brings together her passion for building community and connections with people, and continually strives to improve and implement best practices in engaging communities.

Over the last 30 years, Joy has personally and professionally worked with and among a variety of communities to learn, engage and share experiences, from being a Peace Corps volunteer in Paraguay, a parent educator for Way to Grow in Minneapolis, a public health professional supporting youth and teen parents, and working in environmental health, to a transportation communication and engagement consultant.

Since 2007, when Joy started down a new career path and was hired to be the public information coordinator for construction contractor team for the 35W Crosstown reconstruction project in Richfield and Minneapolis, Joy has brought her communication and engagement expertise to some of the largest transportation and transit planning, design and construction projects in the Twin Cities and Minnesota including Gold Line BRT (opening in spring 2025!), Green Line in Minneapolis, Rush Line/Purple Line, Riverview Corridor, Northern Lights Express, Northstar Commuter Rail, Midtown Corridor/B Line; 494 Corridor; 35W reconstruction between downtown Minneapolis and 42nd Street, construction of 35W North E-ZPass between Lino Lakes and Minneapolis and Highway 10 Anoka. In addition, Joy worked and continues to work on local innovative transportation projects such as the Maryland Avenue 4- to 3-Lane conversion and East 7th Street and Arcade Street redesign both in East Side Saint Paul, and the Lyndale Avenue South 4- to 3-Lane pilot project in Minneapolis.

In 2011, Joy became the first employee of Charleen Zimmer's one-person consultant company, Zan Associates, where together, over ten years, Joy helped to grow the company by setting high expectations for engagement and communications on the projects she worked on and supporting the ever-growing staff. In 2021, Joy became the President and CEO, and today Zan Associates is 30-people strong, and, in addition to its office Minneapolis, has an office in Portland, Oregon. Joy continues to share her passion and expertise for engagement strategies that are equity-focused, authentic and creative with her staff and the projects they work on, so all voices can be heard.

Joy has served on the WTS MN Advisory Board, is a member of the University of MN's Center for Transportation Studies Executive Committee, and has a bachelor's degree from the University of California-Santa Barbara and a Master's of Public Health from the University of MN-Twin Cities. Joy has lived in Uptown, Minneapolis for over 27 years, and is supported by her husband of 21 years, Steve; her daughter Maya, a sophomore at San Diego State University studying urban studies; her son, Oliver, a soon-to-be graduate of Minneapolis Washburn High School and an incoming freshman this fall at Tufts University focused on engineering; and a grumpy but lovable, 14- year-old Shih Tzu named Murphy.

WOMAN TO WATCH AWARD

Jackie Nowak (SRF)

Jackie leads the Transit Data Sciences practice at SRF Consulting Group. In this role she strategizes and oversees data analysis work on a variety of projects from transit capital investments to service design to ongoing performance monitoring. Since beginning her role with SRF in 2019, Jackie has worked to enhance data-driven decision making on projects to align with the values of individual transit agencies. Her goal is to build data competency in the industry as data becomes more accessible. To this end she excels at telling stories with data. The growth of the Transit Data Sciences practice at SRF has allowed Jackie to build and support a team of women in an area of practice often dominated by men. She has found fulfillment in this aspect of her role and looks forward to continuing to empower women in the industry as her career progresses.



EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Metro Transit



Metro Transit, Minnesota's largest transit agency, is strongly committed to being a welcoming and inclusive employer and service provider.

To attract, support, and promote women, the agency offers apprentice, leadership development, and mentorship programs, supports Employee Resource Groups, including Advancing Women in Transit, and ensures women voices are prominent in conversations about workplace culture. Women also led recent efforts to expand and improve lactation rooms, earning the agency a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace designation from the Minnesota Department of Health.

In 2023, the agency welcomed its first female general manager; three women sit on Metro Transit's executive team and six of the agency's 19 director-level positions are filled by women. A quarter of the more than 400 operators hired in 2023 identified as female. In addition, the Metro Transit Police Department has joined the 30x30 Initiative, setting a goal to have women represent 30% of sworn officers by 2030.

As part of an effort to be more welcoming to all riders, Metro Transit recently revised and prominently posted its Code of Conduct, which prohibits harassment, and has introduced a new team of non-sworn personnel who ride transit to help riders feel more comfortable. Building on these efforts, the agency will soon introduce an anti-harassment campaign.

ROSA PARKS DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Brigitte Bjorklund (Zan Associates)

Brigitte is the Director of Education and Equity at Zan Associates. Her experiences as a Black professional and her 20 years of work as a teacher, trainer and equity and inclusion specialist provides her with a unique perspective to guide and advise on diversity, equity and inclusion. As Zan's equity director, Brigitte created the Zan Equity Scorecard Tool, which helps to guide staff in assuring that project tasks are diverse, equitable and inclusive. In all of her professional roles, Brigitte has focused on partnering with diverse communities, making space for deep listening around specific challenges and strengths, and working together to reach shared goals. Brigitte is a certified as a REACH (Respecting Ethnic and Cultural Heritage) trainer, National Urban Alliance Coach, Cognitive Coach, Courage Conversations



Trainer, and holds an equity certification from U of MN (ECHO). She has a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from Hamline University and a bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of Minnesota.

INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS AWARD

East 7th Street/Arcade Improvement Project, Minnesota Department of Transportation

The East 7th St/Arcade Avenue Improvement Project, located in Saint Paul, committed to an extensive, multi-lingual, public engagement process and used public feedback as a catalyst to transform the project to more closely meets the community's multi-modal and economic needs. A federal RAISE grant award in 2021 elevated a simple mill and overlay project to one that alters the geometric design of the roadway to ensure safety for all travelers, with an innovative aesthetic design process. The project team remained flexible and swiftly navigated an atypical project development process to make sure local government partners, elected officials, community-based organizations, and the public were supportive. An extensive visual quality advisory committee process and community design workshop largely determined the aesthetic and landscape elements of the project, resulting in an innovative community supported design, Placemaking and Urban Design Framework Guide, and maintenance solutions. Women from MnDOT, Zan Associates, WSB (to name just a few important partners!) have been the forefront of project leadership and support. The project is slated for construction in 2025.

HONORABLE RAY LAHOOD AWARD

Rob Hume (Kimley-Horn)

Rob has been in transportation engineering for 35 years. The last ten of those years have been centered locally on light rail transit. Rob recalls that in college, the ratio of men to women in his civil engineering program was 25 to 1. Thankfully, over the years the ranks of women in transportation have grown substantially, and with that growth has come greater balance. Balance in perspective, balance in decision making, and most importantly balance in leadership. Throughout Rob's career, he has focused on investing his time and attention where the talent and energy is. By taking this approach, Rob has had the privilege of working with some very talented women in transportation.



WTS MINNESOTA GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Molly Hill (Colorado State University)



Molly currently works as a water resources design engineer for the transportation team at Bolton & Menk. She is also enrolled as a full-time civil engineering graduate student through Colorado State University online. So far, Molly has taken courses in infrastructure management, project management, urban stormwater, pipeline engineering, and water resources planning. Having just graduated from MSU, Mankato last spring, she is truly grateful for the WTS Graduate Scholarship!

MINNESOTA TECHNICAL SCHOLARSHIP

Ruby Daniels (University of Minnesota, Twin Cities)

Ruby is currently a student at the University of Minnesota's Electrification engineering program. As one of the inaugural students of the program she is excited to apply technical skills she learns in the program to her current work with electric bus infrastructure at Metro Transit. She is enthusiastic about the future of electric buses and happy to contribute to the transition of public transit to Zero-Emission buses.



DONNA ALLAN UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Sophie Hardman (University of Minnesota, Twin Cities)

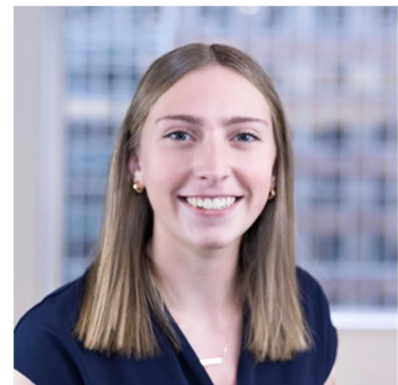


Sophie is a 3rd year undergraduate student studying transportation engineering at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. Last summer, she completed an internship with HNTB in Milwaukee this past summer working on a bus rapid transit and a passenger rail project. Sophie is passionate about the importance of public transit in creating more resilient places and environments.

KATHERINE TURNBULL LEADERSHIP UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Elizabeth Hying (University of Minnesota, Twin Cities)

Elizabeth is a junior in Industrial & Systems Engineering at the University of Minnesota. Previous internship experience and coursework sparked her interest in Traffic Engineering. Elizabeth's favorite leadership experiences thus far include being a UMN Welcome Week Leader and a College of Science and Engineering (CSE) Ambassador. Elizabeth is excited to delve further into the world of transportation as she pursues a career post-graduation.



DAN MEYERS HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

Naveena Srinivasan (Roseville Area High School)



Naveena is a senior at Roseville Area High School. She is involved in Art Club and Band, and outside of school she dances and plays the piano. Next year, Naveena plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison, majoring in Civil Engineering. She hopes to focus on safety in transportation, but also the many Human Factors that affect how people react to traffic and environmental regulations. Naveena hopes to encourage a new mindset of engineering and inspire other women to join this field!

WTS/MSES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

Nasra Wagad (SPPS Online High School)



Nasra is a senior at SPPS Online High School. She is the founder of a local book club that highlights underrepresented authors and emphasizes diversity in literature. She also helps the Somali adults in her community as a language learning assistant. Nasra hopes to pursue an education that makes transportation accessible for all. Her motivation stems from personal experiences with inaccessibility in the world of urban planning.

Erin Siemienas (Chaska High School)



Erin is a senior at Chaska High School. At school she plays the bass clarinet in band, is a captain of the swim team, and a member of the National Honor Society. In her free time, she works as a lifeguard and swim instructor, and is working on earning a Private Pilot License. Next year Erin is attending the University of North Dakota with a double major in Commercial Aviation & Safety and Operations. Her plan is to fly for the airlines someday and inspire other women to join this incredible profession.

WTS/MSES ADVANCING WOMEN IN TRANSPORTATION GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

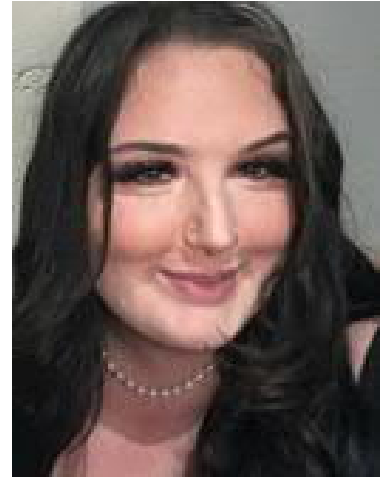
Emma Verkuilen (Humphrey School of Public Affairs)

Emma is a Humphrey School of Public Affairs graduate student working towards completing her master's degree in urban and regional planning. This spring she obtained her bachelor's degree in urban studies with minors in African and African American Studies and Sociology at the University of Minnesota. Emma is part of the 4+1 program at Humphrey, which allowed her to complete her first year of graduate school and senior year of undergraduate simultaneously this past school year.

Emma's passion for planning lives within her, as a child who grew up constantly absorbing the world around her. She couldn't understand why people weren't being housed. Driving on 94, she always noticed the change in landscape, from industry and old houses to green space and new suburban developments. Today, all those observations drive her to ask questions that haven't been asked. Question why things can't be changed and what is in place that is barring change.

Emma is grateful to be recognized by WTS as a 2024 scholarship recipient. She wants to recognize her fearless boss, Hally Turner, who has seen Emma's value, supported and advocated for her growth and success since Emma's first day on the Policy Planning team at MnDOT.

As a woman in a predominantly male field, Emma does not see gender as a barrier to her ability to make a change, but as a strength. To reinforce daily to colleagues the importance of empathy and place-making, and de-emphasize purely technical planning approaches that neglect how humans interact with our decisions. New ideas and approaches eventually get implemented; once it is realized, the old way can't be sustained through menial changes anymore.



Conferences

WTS INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The WTS International Conference was held in New Orleans, Louisiana in 2024. WTS Minnesota subsidized conference attendance for nine of our members who submitted requests, including the chapter president. Additional WTS members from Minnesota attended as well, and we were well represented at the conference. The scholarships and awards gala was a highlight of the conference, and WTS Minnesota was recognized at the event as a “Silver” chapter in the WTS Circle of Excellence. The WTS Chapter Circle of Excellence Awards recognize the outstanding achievements of WTS chapters across North America. The criteria for earning annual CCE recognition includes achieving benchmarks in membership recruitment and retention, operations, communications and events, EDI initiatives, and professional development programs. Award criteria also consider chapter size, compliance and usage of WTS International systems.



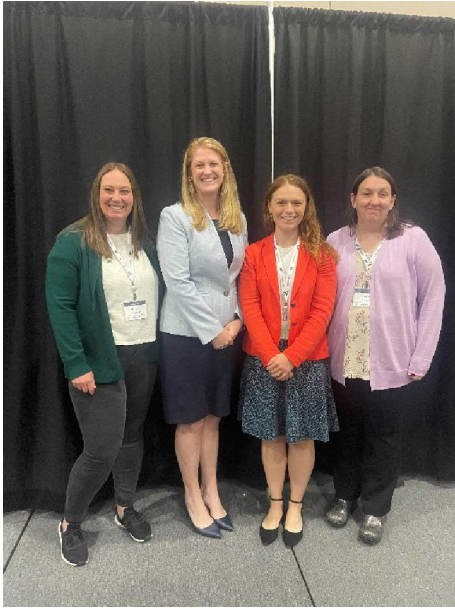
2024 International Conference in New Orleans, LA



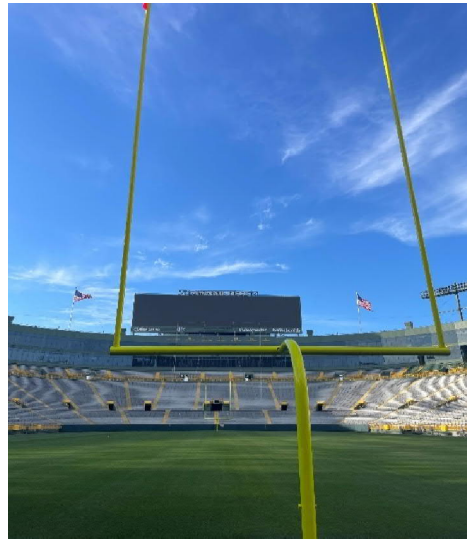
WTS CENTRAL REGION CONFERENCE

The WTS Central Region Conference was hosted in Green Bay, Wisconsin in 2024 and was jointly held with the Great Lakes Region of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). The Minnesota Chapter supported conference subsidies for two members who submitted requests, including the chapter vice president. Attendees had opportunities to learn from speakers about transportation topics, mobility, safety, funding, and delivery mechanisms and discuss challenges faced by others and shared experiences. Erin Jordan gave a presentation on her work with Safe Routes to School and Equitable Transportation Planning Methodologies. Attendees had the opportunity to participate in a number of events to expand their professional networks and meet other regional WTS members by

attending the Lambeau Field Welcome Reception and Stadium Tour, small dinners, and a hosted dinner event.



2024 Regional Conference Attendees (Angie Bolstad, Sara Stickler, CEO of WTS-International, Erin Jordan, And Sara Pflaum



Conference included a tour of Lambeau Field

CHAPTER LEADER TRAINING

The WTS Chapter Leadership Training was held in Rosemont, Illinois on November 14 and 15, 2024. WTS Minnesota subsidized training participation for two Minnesota Chapter leaders representing development and programs.

Training and best practice modules educated participants about WTS tools and resources and were complemented by speaking and large group presentations that were both interactive and engaging. Attendees were expected to expand WTS connections by alternating seating through each module to foster introductions and engagement with multiple attendees. Participants found value in learning more about their roles and counterparts in other regions but also from the opportunity to learn more about one another. Examples of such great learning are how helpful it is to highlight stories of past scholarships recipients on chapter websites using QR codes, links, and other promotions; boosting a membership drive for a period of time with dollar amount towards a sports team for instance; and invite a woman to share her story as a professional development workshop. One outstanding suggestion was a mentor/mentee strategy with another chapter.

Financial Report

INCOME

Membership Dues	\$6,300
Monthly Programs	\$3,600
Holiday Party	\$8,500
Scholarships & Recognitions Event	\$3,800
Miscellaneous (DEI Special Progaming Funding)	\$12,000
Corporate and Public Partnerships	\$36,500
FY 2023 Revenue Roll Over	\$17,500
TOTAL	\$88,200

DONATIONS TO SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Scholarship Donations - Individual Donors	\$500
Scholarship Donations – Holiday Party Fundraiser	\$7,367
TOTAL	\$7,867

Individual Donors

- Bill Troe

EXPENSES

Monthly Programs	\$7,500
Travel/Board Member Training	\$16,015
Transportation YOU Capital Summit**	\$11,577
Supplies/Communication	\$1,300
Membership Development	\$445
Professional Development Fees (AICP)	\$1,254
Insurance	\$1,182
Scholarships & Recognitions Event	\$11,183
Holiday Party	\$14,170
Transportation YOU	\$1,262
Mentoring Program	\$180
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	\$16,045
TOTAL	\$81,668

**Paid for by the Foundation Account

Corporate and Public Partners

All the accomplishments in this report would not be possible without our Corporate and Public Partners. WTS Minnesota's Corporate Partnership Program began in 2012 with just one firm. In 2024, we reached 27 corporate and six public partners who committed a combined \$36,500. Those contributions have greatly advanced the chapter's educational, scholarship, and leadership programs. WTS Minnesota recognizes that financial backing is only possible with strong voices expressing why this is a valuable organization, so we thank the following organizations and their people for their support in 2024.

ADVOCATE LEVEL PARTNERS



SUPPORTER LEVEL PARTNERS

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SMALL BUSINESS/DBE PARTNERS

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› Minnesota

Advancing women
Advancing transportation