



Advancing women Advancing transportation

Winter 2022 Newsletter



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Dear WTS Members and Friends,

With my last President's letter I'd like to celebrate all that we've accomplished in 2021. At the beginning of the year we were cautiously optimistic that we could return to our core practices of providing opportunities to support and promote people in their career, and despite the challenges of the pandemic we were still able to do this. We offered a number of programs, happy hours, and celebrations, both virtually and in person. Summer let us stretch our legs with a great bike tour in St. Paul, and in October we had our first

hybrid program which was really successful. Finally we were so thankful to be able to celebrate all the accomplishments of 2021 with the end of year holiday party where we were able to spread out and gather safely together in person.

2021 could not have been a success without the help of many people. 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 committee chairs and volunteers. Everyone is busy, work and family commitments are high, but we had 40+ people raise their hand to give back to this organization through a variety of volunteer efforts. And finally thank you to our 2021 Board. It has been wonderful to serve this chapter with you and I'm so proud of what we've been able to accomplish. I look forward to all the great things to come in 2022 as we celebrate our 40th anniversary as a chapter.

Andrea Arnoldi
President WTS MN Chapter

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Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Article:

Written By: Jennifer Wiltgen, MNDOT, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Member

On January 17th, 2022, we celebrated our 36th Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. For many, the holiday is a time to set aside for volunteerism in honor of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Junior's own life, memory, and dedication to service. It is also a time to reflect on his legacy, the Civil Rights movement, and the progress that still needs to be made.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee encourages WTS members to focus on the work that remains to be done. Rev. Dr. King's words on the [steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963](#) remain important because he spoke truth to the broken promises of democracy and called for an end to injustice. They inspire because they resonated with folks' sense of how they wanted America to be.



There are many everyday Americans who worked in the Movement and who continue to work to fulfill its promise of equality and equity for all. One who helped make that famous 1963 speech possible is Ella Baker, an instru-



mental figure in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)—all organizations that helped organize and lead the nonviolent protests that were a hallmark of the Civil Rights Movement. To learn more about Ella Baker's role in the movement you can read about her contributions [here](#) and [here](#). Ella Baker shows us that the often-unsung work of organizing, recognizing, and cultivating leadership is heroic, even if it's not recognized as iconic.

The work to achieve Rev. Dr. King's dream continues. Even the recognition of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as a national holiday was a fifteen-year battle that involved multiple champions, including Congressman John Conyers, Congressman John Lewis, Coretta Scott King, the congressional Black Caucus, Stevie Wonder, and sixteen million signatories. You can read more about the efforts for a national holiday honoring Martin Luther King Jr. from the National Museum of African American History & Culture [here](#).

Dr. King's youngest daughter, Rev. Bernice King, provides ongoing leadership as the Chief Executive Officer of the King Center in Atlanta, GA. She is leading the transformation of the institution to remain relevant and viable and effectively leveraging its resources to achieve positive social impacts.

To reflect on the messages of Rev. Dr. King is to also recognize the work it takes to move and change the hearts and minds of many in our country. Achieving the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion requires hard work. It requires daily work, and it can often be exhausting. Some days, the inspiration is there, and it sustains you enough to tackle seemingly insurmountable challenges. And as hard as that work is, please remember that there is an additional, usually uncompensated, emotional toll for those who identify or are identified as Black or African American to engage in these conversations and this work. To learn more, there is a great article discussing the emotional toll of DEI efforts: "[Carrying DEI: The Emotional Labor of Educating a White Workforce](#)" by Britt McClintock.

In closing, we'd like to end with a call to action in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day:

- ◇ Commit to listen,
- ◇ commit to learn, and
- ◇ commit to do the work that must be done to eliminate injustice.

It takes all of us working together to achieve equity, and our colleagues must not feel alone in this work. Listen, speak up, organize, lead, and fight systems of injustice you see at work, at home, and in your communities.

To start- The DEI committee is putting together a working/support group as a follow-up to last spring's DEI training series. The training series, conducted last spring, included three topics: understanding intersectionality, diversity recruiting and retention, and bystander intervention; materials on these topics can be provided to those who did not attend.

Beyond training participants, we want to extend an invitation to the broader WTS MN membership to join. While we will tailor the group's objective to the preferences of those participating, our initial ideas for this group are to:

- ◇ set individual goals for applying lessons from the training in our respective workplaces,
- ◇ provide support in brainstorming strategies to put ideas into action as well as how to address challenges that arise while implementing those strategies,
- ◇ learn from each other's experiences,
- ◇ and share best practices and lessons learned with the broader WTS MN chapter.

If you are interested in participating and would like to indicate your availability and ideas for the group, please respond to [this brief poll](#) by Friday, January 28.

2021 HOLIDAY PARTY RECAP:

On December 16, WTS members and guests masked up and gathered at the Machine Shop to catch up, enjoy the season and celebrate recent wins in our first large in-person event since December 2019. President Andrea Arnoldi and 2022 President-Elect Lyssa Leitner reviewed the chapter's achievements of 2021, presented the 2022 board and gave a preview of what's planned for the next year.



The Silent Auction included 36 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 \$3,900 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 safely.



PROGRAMS UPDATE:

JANUARY PROGRAM—BRIDGES TO PROSPERITY: LEARN ABOUT THE POWER OF CONNECTION

Join WTS-MN as we kick off our 2022 Programs with a virtual program on Thursday, January 27 from 10AM-11AM. The program will showcase the work of Bridges to Prosperity (B2P), a non-profit that works with isolated communities to create access to essential healthcare, education, and economic opportunities by building and promoting trail bridges over impassable rivers.

Join as we feature Nico Turrini, Manager of Global Corporate Partnerships and East Africa Marketing, who will share information about his work at B2P, their approach, community impacts, and how they elevate women in their organizations and communities.



The program will also hear from Tara Olds, Acting Executive Director of MnDOT's Connected and Automated Vehicles Program. She will share how her past experience working with B2P as a university student in South America and as an employee working in Central America has shaped her career and the way she works.

This unique program will definitely be one you won't want to miss! Register [here!](#)



Nico Turrini, B2P



Tara Olds, MnDOT

FEBRUARY PROGRAM— JOINT PROGRAM WITH NCITE – ETHICS: THE HEART OF THE ENGINEERING PROFESSION

February 16th, 10 AM—Noon, Virtual

Technology has advanced engineering, as a profession, over the past 40 years. While technology has changed, people have not, and we continue to face the same ethical dilemmas we faced 40 years ago. This presentation, "Ethics – The Heart of the Engineering Profession", will discuss why ethics is a core principle of our industry, while outlining some of the ethical issues that engineers encounter over their careers using pertinent case studies. We'll discuss the gamut of issues; review the engineering code of ethics applicable to professional societies, professional licensing boards, and our places of employment; and introduce tools and resources that will help engineers and planners stay on the right path, professionally.



Jim Johnson Jr., Verdantas

Jim is a Senior Consultant with Verdantas. His career has spanned over 40 years in both the public and private sectors. While in the public sector, Jim served as the Chief Engineer for the Delaware Department of Transportation and was the Executive Director for the Delaware River & Bay Authority, a bi-state transportation agency. He conducts lectures on ethics for engineering students at the University level, State Department of Transportation's and for Professional Engineers licensed in mid-Atlantic region. Jim is a registered Professional Engineer in Delaware and Maryland. He was recognized as Delaware's Engineer of the Year in 2004. Jim received a BSCE from Virginia Tech and a MS in Strategic Leadership from Neumann University. This program will qualify for 2 PDH (PE) and 2 CM (AICP) credits. Register [here!](#)

If you have ideas for future programs, please email wtsminnesotaprograms@gmail.com

CORPORATE PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:



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 Engineer-
ing, Landscape Architecture, Right of Way Ser-
vices, 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 the transportation industry to grow through professional development and networking. This foundation has been instrumental in the growth of many of our team members. We are proud to be the recipient of the 2020 WTS Employer of the Year award because at Stantec, we believe we are better together.



MN OFFICES:

MINNEAPOLIS AND SAINT PAUL

WHY SRF SUPPORTS WTS MN:

SRF appreciates the many opportunities afforded by WTS to cultivate a network of like-minded professionals as well as benefit from professional development opportunities.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OFFERED:

Transportation, Transit, Community &
Environmental Planning, Civil, Traffic, Structural &
Water Resources Engineering, Intelligent
Transportation Systems/Connected Automated
Vehicles, Landscape Architecture & Urban Design,
Public Engagement & Visualization, and
Construction Administration



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!

Adele Hall— Promoted to Principal (Transit Planning) at SRF.

Ally Willoughby— Promoted to Bridge Technical Manager in Michael Baker International's Minneapolis office.

Heidi Hamilton— Promoted to US North Central Transportation Regional Business Leader at Stantec.

Katie Roth— Promoted to Director of Arterial Bus Rapid Transit at Metro Transit.

Laura Melcher— Joined WSB as a Senior Business Development Coordinator.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 SPONSORS:

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

ADVOCATE



SUPPORTER LEVEL:

AET	Stonebrook
Bolton & Menk	Terracon
HR Green	TKDA
Michael Baker International	

SMALL BUSINESS/DBE :

HZ United	Pierce Pini & Associates
Isthmus Engineering	Professional Engineering Services
LV Engineering	Rani Engineering
Minnesota Transportation Alliance	Sambatek
MN Best	Zan Associates

PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERS :

Minnesota Department of Transportation
Washington County
Metro Transit