Advancing women
Advancing transportation
Fall 2023

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Adele Hall  
President, WTS Minnesota

The WTS-Minnesota Chapter was very well represented at the WTS Central Region Conference in Chicago in September! I loved seeing so many familiar faces along with many new ones from chapters across the Midwest. It was a small but mighty conference—the transportation commissioners from MN, WI, and IL were all there! Former Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood was there!—and it had the trademark friendliness of a WTS event.

Speaking of WTS events: we have had an exciting lineup this fall! Please join us as WTS-Minnesota continues to put our land acknowledgement plan into action with a Dream Catcher and Dinner event that took place on Wednesday, October 25 at Braun’s Bloomington office. Over breakfast on November 1 many members and friends joined to get a professional headshots taken at our Click and Connect event at Gatherings at Station 10 in Saint Paul. And then finally, we’ll close the year with our fabulous holiday party on December 21 at the Science Museum of Minnesota. Mark your calendar!

As always, please reach out to me if you’re interested in the work of the WTS board, want to plan a program, or with any other questions. Thanks for being part of WTS!

Wishing you warmth and hygge this fall,  
Adele
DEI Update:

Dreamcatcher Making Event

WTS-MN hosted a family-friendly event at the Braun Intertec Bloomington Office for a special Dreamcatcher Making event led by the DEI committee’s Michelle Lagarde! Members, friends, and family had a wonderful time creating beautiful dream catchers together. Thank you to all who attended!

Mentor Program Wrap Up:

The Mentor Program held a wrap up event lunch in Mid-August. We reflected on the benefits of mentorship and even more about our favorite spots at the State Fair. We are in the midst of pairing mentors and mentees for this year’s program, starting in November. If you’re interested in joining the Mentor Program for this upcoming year, please visit Mentor Program WTS-I (wtsinternational.org) to sign up. We will be kicking off the program this month.
Programs Update

August Program: Board Recruitment Event

WTS members and friends were invited to join the August Board meeting either in-person at the SRF St. Paul office or virtually to learn more about how WTS-MN board meetings are fun and ask questions about joining the board! Everyone was then invited to Dual Citizen Brewery for beverages and dinner provided by Spicy Feta. This event sparked a lot of excitement and interest in joining the open positions for the 2024 WTS-MN Board! Thank you to everyone who joined and expressed interest.

September Program: Learning from Place: Bdote Workshop

Members and friends joined together to experience an all-day workshop sponsored by WTS-Minnesota and in partnership with APA and ASCE Minnesota Chapters. As one of the first events outlined in our Land Acknowledgment Action Plan established by the DEI Committee, we were excited for this opportunity to learn from Ethan Neerdaels and Ramona Kitto Stately of the Minnesota Humanities Center. Participants braved the rainy fall weather to participate in this unique event to develop a deeper understanding about Dakota people’s relationship to Minnesota and understand the negative impact exclusion from the state’s history and narrative have had on Dakota individuals and communities. WTS-MN was able to donate the registration fee proceeds from the workshop to the following organizations. Click the links to learn more about each organization’s mission.

We Are Still Here
Dakhota Iapi Okhodakichiye
MIGIZI

We look forward to offering follow-up programs to continue educating our members and friends. If you have any questions or would like to receive additional resources to support your learning, please contact Jennifer Wiltgen at Jennifer.wiltgen@state.mn.us.
Early November Program: Networking Event "Click and Connect"

Professional headshots help our members and friends create good first impressions and market themselves and their work. This month, WTS-MN was proud to host an opportunity where members and friends could connect and get professional headshots done. Thank you to all who attended the event and thank you to our hosts at the Gatherings at Station 10 for providing a welcoming and well-lit space.

Upcoming Events

12.21.23

Registration is now open for the WTS holiday party! This year’s event will be held at the Science Museum of Minnesota on Thursday, December 21; additional information will be sent later this month. We are still looking for volunteers to assist with the silent auction, which is held during the party to raise funds for our scholarship and mentorship programs. If you’ve been looking for a way to get involved with WTS, this is a great opportunity to meet new people at whatever level of effort works for your schedule. Please contact Alicia Valenti (alicia.valenti@metrotransit.org) or Daniel Baxter (dbaxter@mbakerintl.com) if you’re interested in assisting.

12.21.23

Join WTS-MN and our public sector partner Metro Transit for a fireside chat with the agency’s first female General Manager Lesley Kandaras! This event will take place on January, 18th 2024 at Metro Transit’s North Loop Garage and is open to members only, (this includes employees of WTS-MN’s public sector partners). Please keep a look out for further details and a registration link on our events page. Space will be limited. We hope to see you there!
Boozhoo/Aaniin! Michelle nindizhinikaaz. Gaawaabaabiganikaag nindoonyjibaa. Braun Intertec nindanokii. Hello everyone! My name is Michelle, and I am an enrolled member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe. I obtained by B.A. from the University of Minnesota (U of M), Morris in 2016, and my M.S. in Earth Sciences from the U of M, Twin Cities in 2018. I’m a Staff Scientist and Geologist at Braun Intertec and focus on environmental assessments and investigations including Phase I Environmental Site Assessments, Phase II Drilling Investigations, environmental construction monitoring, geotechnical and environmental borehole logging, and soil and groundwater sampling on transportation projects. In addition to my involvement on the WTS-MN DEI Committee, I’m an Advisory Board member for the Department of Earth & Environmental Sciences at the U of M.

As a member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe and an environmental consultant for transportation projects, it felt like a natural connection to become involved in WTS. I’m involved in the Land Acknowledge and Action Plan that the DEI Committee is actively pursuing, and I want to assist in educating the transportation industry about indigenous communities in Minnesota. I also want to help make the indigenous communities aware of WTS and how we can potentially provide support. WTS is a wondering professional organization to be involved in, and I’m grateful to have various opportunities to build connections with the private and public sectors through WTS programs as well as learn more about different aspects of the transportation industry!

2024 Scholarship Applications

The 2024 Scholarship applications are now open!

The WTS Minnesota women scholarships are competitive and are based on the applicant’s specific transportation goals, academic record, and transportation-related activities or job skills. Minority applicants are encouraged to apply. Financial need is not a primary consideration.

- Dan Meyers High School Scholarship—$2,000
- Katherine Turnbull Undergraduate Leadership Scholarship —$2,000
- Donna Allen undergraduate Scholarship —$2,000
- WTS Minnesota Graduate Scholarship —$2,000
- WTS Technical Scholarship —$2,000

New this year, WTS is partnering with MSES (Minnesota Society of Engineers and Surveyors) on the WTS/MSES Workforce Development High School Scholarship ($2,000) and the WTS/MSES Advancing Women in Transportation Graduate Scholarship ($2000).

Applications for all scholarship are due by Friday, December 15th at 5 PM. Apply here. Learn more about last year’s winners here. Reach out to Emily Bowen at emily.bowen@kimley-horn.com with any questions.
MEMBERS AND FRIENDS Updates

Morgan Nelson and her husband Jacob welcomed their daughter Lorraine Marie Nelson (10lb, 3oz & 21.75" long), on October 5th. Congratulations!

THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 SPONSORS!

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

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AECOM, HNTB, Stantec, HDR, Kimley-Horn, Alliant, KLJ, Braun Intertec, SEH, SRF, WSP, WSB

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