



Advancing Women Advancing Transportation

May - September 2025

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Dear WTS Minnesota Community,

Returning to work after parental leave this August brought a wave of familiar “back-to-school” jitters—only this time, the questions were different. Could I still do my job well? Would I find the same energy and passion I had before? Like many of you, I started to be more aware of the need to balance home and work and prioritize my time in new ways.

What I didn't expect was how motherhood would help deepen my understanding of our mission as transportation professionals. Navigating the world with a little one has given me a lens that sees more clearly the need for safer, more inclusive transportation options for everyone. It's made me more empathetic, more curious, and more committed. I'm looking forward to experiencing that lens adjust even more each year. I'm grateful to be back, coffee in hand, and excited for what's ahead - especially for this WTS-Minnesota Chapter!

Speaking of... we have a lot to cover for Quarters 2 and 3 in this newsletter! Please page through to find information about what we've been up to and what you can look forward to.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge the many challenges our communities are facing at this time. It can feel overwhelming and it's easy to feel powerless. But I know that communities like ours have the ability to make change happen. If anything, I hope that we can provide stability, opportunity, and a sense of hope by lifting each other up and not taking for granted our ability to make our world better through our work.



Thank you for being here!

Erin Jordan, PE

WTS Minnesota President
Associate | Traffic Engineer, SEH inc.

CORPORATE SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT



MN OFFICES: Saint Paul, Brainerd, Saint Louis Park

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OFFERED:

Transportation Planning, Traffic Engineering, Highway Design & Engineering, Multi-Modal Planning & Design, Bridge Design, Environmental Documentation and Field Investigation, Cultural Resources Right-of-Way Acquisition, Survey, Construction Administration.

WHY KLJ SUPPORTS WTS: KLJ supports WTS and the mission of broadening opportunities for all and the active role the organization takes in promoting the advancement of women in transportation. The training and networking provided by WTS creates opportunities for our future engineers, planners, and other technical staff. These opportunities help determine the paths for our next generation of transportation professionals.



MN OFFICES: Brainerd, Duluth, Grand Rapids, Hutchinson, Mankato, Minnetonka, Rochester, Saint Cloud, Saint Paul, Virginia

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OFFERED:

Transportation and Urban Planning, Highway Design, Traffic Engineering, Transit Design, Safety Action Plans, Civil, Structural, Construction Services, Environmental Documentation, Visualization, and Community Engagement.

WHY SEH SUPPORTS WTS: SEH is proud to continuously support WTS Minnesota with its mission of advancing the transportation industry through engaging and diverse programs, professional development, networking opportunities, scholarships, and so much more. Many of our employees have benefited greatly from the resources and relationships built through WTS-MN. At SEH, we believe that these opportunities and relationships are instrumental in growing strong, collaborative, and welcoming teams and communities.

INTERNATIONAL/REGIONAL CONFERENCES RECAP

In May, more than 20 members of WTS-Minnesota traveled to Toronto, Ontario for the first WTS-International conference held outside the US. Attendees joined sessions about transportation modes ranging from biking and light rail to ferries, community engagement, coastal resilience and flood protection, women in leadership, and balancing personal fulfillment with career fulfillment.



Several sessions discussed advancing equity through transportation. One described how a transit rider's race and gender can affect their experience; women, gender nonconforming people, and people of color ride transit at higher rates than men, cis people, and white people, but have longer travel times and are more frequently subjected to harassment. Tools that can create a safer, more comfortable environment include providing better lighting, running buses more frequently during off-peak hours so that everyone—especially parents with strollers or riders with mobility devices—can be sure they'll have a seat, and allowing passengers to depart a bus in between stops after 9 p.m. and before 5 a.m.

Two sessions emphasized the importance and benefits of having women and people of color in positions of leadership. Studies have shown companies perform better with at least one woman on the board, and one speaker asserted that demonstrating inclusive behaviors within senior leadership is critical to embedding inclusivity as a core competency throughout an organization.

These speakers emphasized the importance of leaning into your strengths and supporting your teammates, noting that caring is valued outside of work and should be considered a strength at work as well. They also noted that there should be investment in mid-career professionals for training and growth opportunities, while ensuring balance to maintain focus on one responsibility at a time; multi-tasking isn't as efficient as you might like, and it gets more difficult with age.

On the whole, the conference was engaging and energizing, and left attendees excited to bring these conversations out of WTS and women-specific organizations and into the broader workplace.

2025 WTS CENTRAL REGION CONFERENCE

This summer, several members of our WTS chapter attended the 2025 WTS Central Region Conference, held jointly with the Great Lakes District ITE (GLITE) in Indianapolis, IN. The event featured technical sessions, leadership development workshops, and networking opportunities. Highlights included the Student Leadership Summit, the GLITE Race, a lively scavenger hunt supporting the ITE Endowment Fund, and the WTS Members Happy Hour, which offered connection and networking. We are happy to support attendance to bring back new ideas and refreshed energy to support our chapter!

2025 SCHOLARSHIP & RECOGNITIONS RECEPTION

The 2025 Scholarships & Recognitions Reception was a great success. We had over 150 people join us at the Como Conservatory Rain Forest Auditorium in May to celebrate our awardees and their accomplishments.

WTS-MN, in partnership with MSES, was able to award \$14,000 in student scholarships at the 2025 reception. These scholarships provide funding for high school, undergraduate, and graduate students planning to pursue a career related to transportation. Scholarships awarded this year include:

- Dan Meyers High School Scholarship
- Katherine Turnbull Undergraduate Leadership Scholarship
- Donna Allen Undergraduate Scholarship
- WTS Minnesota Graduate Scholarship
- WTS Board Scholarship
- WTS/MSES Workforce Development High School Scholarship
- WTS/MSES Advancing Women in Transportation Graduate Scholarship

Thank you to our donors who sustain these scholarships and for the Minnesota Surveyors and Engineers Society for their continued partnership.



RECOGNITION AWARDS



Past President
Lisa Elliot
MnDOT



Member of the Year
Carrie Desmond
Metro Transit



Woman of the Year
Marie Cote
SRF



Woman to Watch
Erin Clarkowski
Washington County



Honorable Ray LaHood
Steve Barrett
Metro Transit



Employer of the Year
Alta Planning & Design



**Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership:
Advancing Women in Transit
Chairpersons**
Metro Transit



**Innovative Transportation Solutions:
Gold Line**
Metro Transit

PROGRAMS UPDATE

May Program

May was busy with the annual Scholarships and recognition event and a special field trip: **Bookclub on the Borealis**. 30 Members and friends took the Amtrak Borealis train from St. Paul's Union Depot to Red Wing where we spent the day exploring the riverside town. The day also included a special presentation from MnDOT's Chad Hanson about the Highway 63 River Bridge replacement and finished with a book club discussion of *"When Driving is Not An Option"* by Anna Zivarts.

June Program

June included the Capital Summit annual trip to Washington DC and another successful networking event at the Como Dockside Pavilion.

July Program

WTS members, family and friends participated in the annual WTS/MSES/NCITE Saints Game and socialized at the Mentorship networking Social.

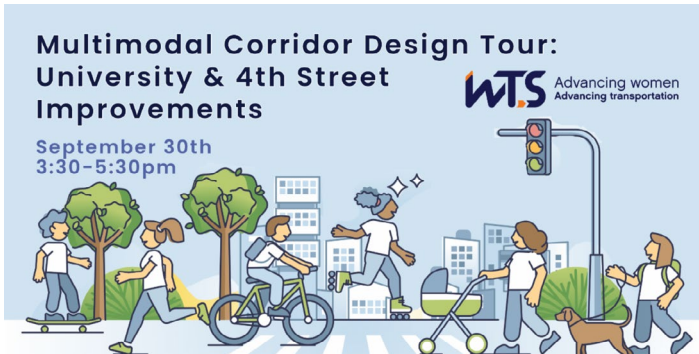
As a fun summer substitute to the July in-person board meeting, 20 members met up for a social bike ride that toured through north Minneapolis and enjoyed happy hour afterward at Pryes Brewing.

August Program

August was spent networking at a quarterly coffee and connections at SK Coffee and recruiting new board members at the board recruitment event at our monthly board meeting.



UPCOMING EVENTS



9.30

What: Multimodal Corridor Design Tour: University & 4th Street Improvements

Where: University of Minnesota, Oak & 4th St – Northeast Corner at Huntington Bank Stadium, Minneapolis, MN 55414

When: 3:30pm - 5:30pm

Join WTS, Hennepin County and project partners for a two-mile walking tour highlighting key features of the University Avenue and 4th Street SE corridor improvements in Minneapolis.

Register for the event [here](#).



9.30

What: KL Engineering Open house

When: 4:00pm - 7:00pm

Where: 56 East Broadway Avenue, Suite 204, Forest Lake, MN 55025

KL Engineering is hosting an Open House on Tuesday, September 30th! They just opened a new office in Forest lake, MN, and have extended the invitation to the WTS Minnesota members!

RSVP to [KL Engineering Marketing](#).



12.04

What: WTS Minnesota Holiday Party

Where: Lumber Exchange Event Center

When: 5:30pm - 8:30pm

Mark your calendars for our annual celebration!

Registration information to come.



TRANSPORTATION YOU UPDATE

In April, we held our end of the year event at Blaine High School (BHS). Girls were able to reflect on what they learned and shared with favorite field trip. The Transportation YOU program will pick up this fall!

WTS Minnesota member Morgan Ellis, with two BHS Transportation YOU mentees, traveled to the Washington D.C. area to participate in the 2025 WTS International Capital Summit. Some highlights included visiting the Maryland State Highway Administration, Air and Space Museum, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) command center and driver training facility, Baltimore Washington International (BWI) Airport, a boat cruise on the Potomac River, and a tour of the U.S. Capitol, including access to the house gallery where the House of Representatives meet when in session. The girls asked lots of questions on all the tours and also had the chance to really bond back in the dorms where they had a door decorating contest related to transportation.



MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Membership has spent much of 2025 focused on growing student involvement with the chapter. We are making connections with universities and colleges around Minnesota to share upcoming programs and opportunities with students. First up - the September 30th bike tour of Hennepin County's University and 4th project. There is also a student shadowing day in the works, where students will be able to learn what a day in the life looks like for a variety of positions in the local transportation industry. Ever wonder what a landscape architect for a transportation engineering company does, or someone who plans Bus Rapid Transit routes, or Marketing and communication specialists behind the scenes? Stay tuned for more details!

Looking to reconnect with your summer interns? Reach out and remind them that a student membership to WTS is FREE and a great way to stay involved with the industry year-round! There's nothing like a personal invitation to get them started on a great note with WTS.

Are you interested in helping WTS MN reach more people and make a meaningful impact for members? We are looking to form a Membership Committee in the coming months and would love to hear from you! Committee members would help the Membership Director and Chair maintain connections with key new member groups (like students), help coordinate events focused on member growth or retention, and think creatively about how to keep current members engaged while growing our WTS MN community. Reach out to [Erin Daly Davenport](#) or [Ian Girardeau](#) to learn more.

MEMBERS ON THE MOVE

We're proud to celebrate the accomplishments of our WTS-Minnesota members. This month, we highlight members who have taken exciting new steps in their careers through promotions and by joining new firms. Join us in congratulating them on their continued growth and success!



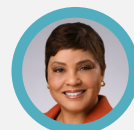
Kaitlyn Denten is now an Infrastructure Policy Researcher at the University of Minnesota Institute for Urban and Regional Infrastructure Finance!



Natalie Lyon joined Alta Planning & Design as a Planning Associate!!



Megan Day is now a Senior Healthcare Marketing Coordinator at HGA Architects!



Kim Collins joined HNTB as a Practice Consultant.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS!

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

ADVOCATE LEVEL PARTNERS



SUPPORTER LEVEL PARTNERS



SMALL BUSINESS/DBE



PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERS



CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer with our Holiday Party committee! Our chapter is seeking out volunteers to help lead silent auction coordination and support other planning tasks. Email [Greta Kurtz](#) to express interest.

Serve as a mentor with our Transportation YOU program and get involved with outreach activities with students at Blaine High School. Email [Megan Danielson](#) if you are interested.

Are you interested in volunteering with our chapter? Please email [Angie Bolstad](#) to share what kind of opportunities you'd be interested in or learn more about ways to help!