



Minnesota  
Chapter

## American Public Works Association Minnesota Chapter

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June 1, 2020

2020 Awards Program  
American Public Works Association  
1200 Main Street, Suite 1400  
Kansas City, MO 64105-2100

SUBJECT: PACE Award – Minnesota Chapter

Dear Awards Committee:

On behalf of the Minnesota Chapter, I am very proud to submit for your consideration our application for the Presidential Award for Chapter Excellence (PACE). Our application clearly demonstrates how extremely energized and active our Chapter is in its rigorous support of the Public Works profession and our dedicated members through numerous educational, training, and outreach programs and activities.

The Minnesota Chapter is very proud to have received six national APWA awards in 2019, including the 2019 PACE Award! This adds to the many national awards our Chapter members have received previously, as well as a strong local awards program, all of which are discussed in our submittal.

In 2019, the Minnesota Chapter continued to see more member volunteerism and outreach in educating the public about the value of Public Works. The Chapter continued its support of young professionals in their student outreach through the establishment of Student Chapters at the University of Minnesota, University of St. Thomas, and Minnesota State University. In addition, the Chapter continued participation in several outreach activities and STEM events, educating others on Public Works and how it relates to their quality of life. The Executive Committee believes that these efforts help to better serve our members and our profession, both now and into the future.

Please accept this application for the 2019 Presidential Award for Chapter Excellence. Our Chapter would once again be much honored to be recognized with this prestigious award.

Sincerely,

Russ Matthys  
President, APWA-Minnesota Chapter

Enclosure

P.O. Box 46266  
Eden Prairie, MN 55344-9712

## **CHAPTER (EXECUTIVE) SUMMARY:**

The Minnesota Chapter of the American Public Works Association is a highly involved and active Chapter. In 2019, our Chapter continued to grow in member opportunities. Our total membership in December of 2019 was 1,039.

The Chapter continues to see more member volunteerism and outreach in educating the public about the value of public works. In addition, the Chapter continues to support young professionals in their student outreach through the establishment of student chapters at the University of Minnesota, University of St. Thomas, and Minnesota State University.

Further, the Chapter continues to provide valuable opportunities for members to be involved, gain continuing education, network with their peers through committee work, chapter outreach, semi-annual conferences, technical tours, etc. The Executive Committee strives to provide exceptional value for chapter members through their desired experience with the Chapter.

### **I. Membership**

#### **A. Current Membership**

As of December 2019, membership for the chapter was 1,070 members. This represents an increase following a slight dip from the previous year.

#### **B. Membership Recruitment Efforts**

The Minnesota Chapter's membership recruitment efforts have proven effective and fruitful both for recruiting new members, and for service to our existing members. In 2012, members of the Minnesota Chapter helped establish a Student Chapter at the University of Minnesota. The goals of the Student Chapter are to stimulate an interest in and understanding of the dimensions of civil engineering and public works, guide students in the steps required to become successful professionals in our field, promote a spirit of unity, and to serve as a gateway to connect civil engineering students with working professionals.

The APWA – MN Student Chapter hosted a series fun and impactful events in 2019. Students got to know chapter members through multiple networking events of various formats and learned about Specialized Environment Technologies (SET) during a Composting Facility Technical Tour.

The Chapter continues to recognize the YPs with an established Young Professionals Committee. Through a bylaw change in 2016, a Young Professionals director position was established and the first YP Director was elected in 2017. The YP Director is now a part of the Chapter's Executive Committee. In 2017, the Chapter voted to include a Director of Young Professional role on the Executive Committee. The Young Professionals Committee also hosts their own events, which included the 5<sup>th</sup>

Annual mini-golf event on July 17, 2019 with 13 golfers participating. Also, in 2019, the Executive Board provided a stipend to help cover PWX registration and travel expenses to a Young Professional in the Chapter.

For the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row the Public Awareness Committee organized APWA-MN's participation in STEM Day at the State Fair.

The kids, parents and volunteers had a great time as bridges and roadways were constructed from blocks and foam boards.



*STEM Day at the State Fair*



*APWA-MN Chapter booth during the 2019 Civil Engineering Day presented by the Science Museum of Minnesota*

For the second year in a row APWA-MN Chapter co-sponsored Civil Engineering Day at the Science Museum of Minnesota. Over 5,000 visitors had the opportunity to meet with civil engineers and tinker with activities that address every day challenges faced by civil engineers every day.

The APWA-MN chapter staffed a booth where kids had the opportunity to learn interactively about storm water, storm water pollution and public works.

The Chapter Membership Committee continues to host a variety of both technical and social events throughout the year for our members. 2019 tours included Split Rock Studios and Allianz Field, home of Minnesota United FC. Past tours included visits to the St. Anthony Village Advanced Oxidation Water Treatment Plant, the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant, the Historic Stillwater Lift Bridge, the St. Croix Crossing for the final outing before it opened to traffic, Target Field Station, the Fairmont Water Treatment Plant, Crashed-Ice Event in St. Paul, and a Green Line Tour.

The Minnesota Chapter of APWA has incorporated both a community outreach and an environmental service event into our membership recruitment efforts. Chapter members join together each year to volunteer with Feed My Starving Children, where they assemble meals to be sent to poverty-stricken children in third world countries of the Caribbean and Africa.

On October 10, 2019 nearly a dozen volunteers gathered on a brisk autumn day to clean up Highway 100 in Robbinsdale. Organized by APWA-MN's Environment & Sustainability Committee, the Adopt-A-Highway event gathered nearly 50 bags of trash which removed hundreds of pounds of waste from our roads and waters. This was the seventh cleanup event since the highway was adopted in 2016.

Annually, the Membership Committee provides:

- One new member summer golf outing.
- Membership networking activities at the annual Spring Conference.
- A vendor sponsored carnival and networking activities at the annual Fall Conference.
- A membership booth at events highlighting current Chapter initiatives and the various Chapter committees.

- ❑ New member personalized greeting from the Chapter President and a follow-up invite to breakfast or lunch by a Past President volunteer.
- ❑ A new member breakfast with the Chapter's Past Presidents at the annual Fall Conference and a new member luncheon in the spring.
- ❑ Brochures at conferences/gatherings highlighting Chapter membership benefits.
- ❑ Attendance Discounts – Chapter activities are offered at two cost levels for members and non-members.
- ❑ The Executive Committee monitors agency memberships working to maximize the use of available memberships for respective member agencies.
- ❑ The Membership Committee follows up with dropped members and encourages future relationships with the Chapter.

### C. Membership Development and Retention Efforts

The Minnesota Chapter has placed an extraordinary emphasis on member development and retention. Multiple networking and educational functions have been offered, with the intent of providing exceptional incentive for members to stay connected to the Chapter. These include:

- ❑ Hosting first ever Public Works Expo (PWX) at the Minneapolis Convention Center in 2016.
  - Record Attendance – 5,709 Registrations, 1,583 Full Registrations, 157 (1-day), 1,206 Exhibits Only, 387 Vendors
- ❑ Hosting the 2007 APWA Snow Conference (St. Paul, Minnesota)
  - Record Attendance – 547 Registrations, 289 (1-day), 807 Exhibits Only, 135 Vendors
- ❑ Hosting the 2005 APWA National Congress – Multiple National Congresses: 1997, 1972, 1961, 1944
- ❑ Development of a Chapter Leadership Academy following the National APWA Initiative – First Implemented during the fall of 2006. The twelfth class graduated in the spring of 2017.
- ❑ Development of a new Student Membership Pilot Program following the National APWA Initiative – Implemented 2006.
- ❑ Development of a Young Professionals Group.
- ❑ Annual Spring and Fall Conferences/Banquets.
- ❑ Annual “Day Before” Fall Conference Training
  - Specialized daylong curriculum focusing on specific public works issues/subjects.



*2016 PWX Board Reception Committee*

- ❑ Regular Workshop offerings
  - Municipal Underground Utility Inspectors School.
- ❑ Chapter sponsorship/direction of North Hennepin Community College Public Works Certificate Program.
- ❑ Chapter member cities host all “Click, Listen and Learn” webinar sessions.
- ❑ Sponsorship and Chapter participation (curriculum development) in the Spring and Fall Maintenance Expos/Fall Snow Rodeo & Skid Steer Competition.
- ❑ Participation in annual Job Fair Engineering Outreach at the University of Minnesota.
- ❑ Frequent content changes to the Chapter website.
- ❑ Active Scholarship Program via the Education Committee.
- ❑ Active Awards Program.
- ❑ Diversity Committee with a current focus on City of Minneapolis Public School Outreach.
- ❑ Active Public Awareness Committee with outreach activities that range from STEM Day at the State Fair to various grade and high school career presentations.
- ❑ Active partnerships/collaborations with public professionals (City Engineers Association of Minnesota, Local Road Research Board, University of Minnesota Center for Transportation, Minnesota Society of Professional Engineers, and the American Water Works Association).
- ❑ Active liaison with League of Minnesota Cities Local Governmental Legislation Lobby representation.
- ❑ Two golf outings held each year.
- ❑ Special activities; bowling or carnival at the Fall Conference.
- ❑ Annual Publication of Membership and Ad Directory.



*2017 Minnesota Chapter past Presidents Breakfast*



*STEM Outreach – Creativity Festival for 3rd & 4th Graders*

## II. Service to Chapter Members

### A. Number of Members Attending Meetings

The Minnesota Chapter of APWA continues to experience excellent participation for Chapter events. In addition, attendees for all events and educational offerings are actively encouraged to complete evaluation sheets provided to each attendee. The Chapter’s activities provider carefully monitors this feedback and attendance and works diligently to improve and/or continuously modify offerings to provide the best service delivery possible to Chapter members.

Attendance	2019
Fall Conference and “Day Before” Workshop	531
Spring Conference	198

### B. Member-to-Member Outreach

The Minnesota Chapter serves its membership with many member-to-member outreach activities. Among the highlights previously identified, a more in-depth examination of service delivery/outreach to the Chapter is as follows:

- ❑ **Meeting/Event Notices** – Notices of events and meetings are sent to the membership via email blasts and are posted on the Chapter’s website.
- ❑ **Chapter Website** – [www.apwa-mn.org](http://www.apwa-mn.org) - The Minnesota Chapter offers members an effective website linked through the national APWA website. The Chapter website includes news and information about events, mission statement, historical information and contact information to keep the Chapter’s membership communicating.
- ❑ **Annual Spring Conference** – The Minnesota Chapter celebrated spring in 2019 with the 73<sup>rd</sup> APWA Minnesota Chapter Spring Conference in a relaxed northern Minnesota resort setting. Each year, participants enjoy concentrated educational sessions featuring local and nationally recognized keynote speakers. The typical Spring Conference program includes approximately 12 hours of training/education and an afternoon of networking and community engagement activities sponsored by the Membership Committee.
- ❑ **Annual Fall Conference** – An effective membership outreach activity for over 30 years, the annual Chapter Fall Conference is offered in the metropolitan Minneapolis/St. Paul area. The 2019 Fall Conference was facilitated by the University of Minnesota, College of Continuing Education, and was again a tremendous success.



*Chapter Website*

The 2019 Fall Conference program offered some very interesting and thought-provoking sessions. Our conference keynote speaker, Denise W. Barreto offered a thought-provoking presentation

focused on learning about inclusive leadership starting with a broad definition of diversity and practical tips for building a more inclusive work environment. She discussed historical implications of inclusion and identifying and managing bias while building the skills we need as public works teams to best serve our communities. This presentation gave our members the tools to own their leadership journey and return to their respective facilities renewed, energized, and equipped to drive inclusive change. Additional sessions included “Minnesota’s High Salt Diet: Perspective on Chlorides in Water Resources,” “How to Lead with Five Generations in the Workplace Today,” “Predictive Flood Mapping Tools to Improve Emergency Response and Flood Preparedness,” “Recycling Right: How I learned to Stop Wish-Cycling and Love the Bin” as well as numerous other educational sessions. The Minnesota Chapter also hosted its annual awards ceremony which recognized professional associates and projects for outstanding service locally, statewide, and nationally.

- ❑ **Municipal Underground Utilities Construction Inspectors School (UUCIS)** – Over the years, the Education and Training Committee of the Minnesota Chapter has hosted this educational outreach program. In 2019 the Chapter’s Education and Training Committee continued its efforts to provide this training. The training itself was revised in 2018 to be a sustainable workshop curriculum that was offered for the first time in 2009. This revised curriculum was patterned after the APWA underground inspector training course. The Underground Utilities Construction Inspectors School provides practical information to enable people with underground utility inspection responsibilities to expertly and confidently do their jobs. The instructors for each course topic are experienced professionals in each area. The first class of 25 public works employees to take this course graduated during the spring of 2010. The most recent 2019-2020 school year was very successful. Metro location classes were again hosted at the City of Bloomington’s Public Works Facility. A total of 30 of students earned their certificate in the Bloomington location. Through the years of this successful program, we have added an outstate location to extend our out-reach and develop connections with area professionals. This year’s outstate location chosen to be our partner was Sioux Falls, SD. They had 30 students participate and earn their certificate. In years past, the Chapter has offered to pay the \$600 fee for one individual that graduated from this class to take the online APWA test and become APWA certified. This past year we offered this to an individual from the outstate location as well. Each year the UUCIS program has been improved and has gained in popularity. The course itself is designed to provide practical information to enable people with underground utility inspection responsibilities to expertly and confidently do their jobs. Course topics include:

- Pre-Project/Construction Preparation
- Project/Construction Safety
- Underground Pipeline Construction Inspection
- Scope Changes
- New Pipe Installation Technologies
- Contract Administration
- Regulatory Overview

The Chapter is looking forward to many years of successful implementation of this training.

- ❑ **Public Works Certificate Program** – This Chapter outreach has been in existence for over 30 years and has seen hundreds of public works professionals complete the program during that time. For

many front-line maintenance workers, the program has helped them to advance into public works supervisory roles. This past year 19 people graduated from this certification program.

Students each year are provided an opportunity to attend specifically oriented public sector class offerings in a college setting. Moreover, students are given the opportunity to better understand why public agencies function as they do, and how they might be better prepared to be tomorrow's public works leaders. Through this program, students take away new skills and insight enabling them to be more productive members of any work environment. Students are also encouraged to more readily embrace and recognize their full professional potential. Courses are designed to familiarize students with general management principles, technical and operational aspects of public works, human resource issues including screening, interviewing, and hiring in the public sector, and public relations issues among hundreds of other areas of management/oversight.

The program consists of 20 credits. The five public works courses that make up the credits of the program are:

- Office and Professional Skills for Public Works
- Public Works Organization and Administration
- Public Works Management and Communication
- Technical Aspects of Public Works
- Public Works Operations and Maintenance

Virtually all new Public Works managers hired in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area over the past twelve years are graduates of this very successful program. Instructors have historically come from within the Chapter and are practicing public works managers/professionals in the area.

- ❑ **Roadway Maintenance Training and Demo Day** – The Minnesota Chapter has actively supported this educational activity primarily designed to target frontline public works employees for more than 17 years. Working in cooperation with the MN Local Road Research Board, the Minnesota Local Technical Assistance Program and the Minnesota Department of Transportation; The Roadway Maintenance Training and Demo Day is a one-day event that is held at a single location, which rotates throughout the state annually. This past year the event was held in Rochester. The event offers a half-day of classroom roadway maintenance training, followed by a half-day of outdoor maintenance activity demonstrations Chapter members help provide training to almost 3,000 maintenance employees and managers annually. Seminar sessions include topics such as safety, vegetation management, gravel road maintenance, asphalt preservation and snow & ice technology ice operations.
- ❑ **Annual Membership Golf Outings** – As previously mentioned, the Chapter's spring golf outing is a member outreach function providing networking opportunities for members. The annual Chapter summer golf outing is also a member outreach function with an additional emphasis on recruiting new members. Current Chapter members are encouraged to bring new potential members and introduce them to the Minnesota Chapter in a social setting. Free golf is offered the following year for 10 new memberships. The typical summer golf outing consists of 36 foursomes (144 golfers) and most of the golf holes are sponsored by Allied Chapter members. Everyone leaves with one of the many prizes, and the events are always very successful.



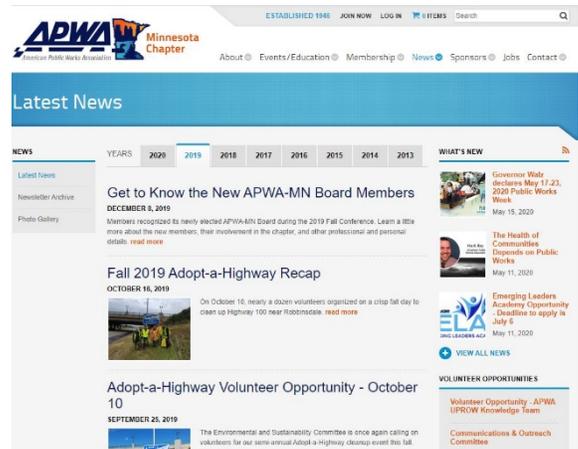
- ❑ **New Member Breakfast** – Each year the Chapter hosts a new member breakfast outreach as part of the Fall Conference. The event is hosted by the Membership Committee. A message board located in a well-traveled area is prepared welcoming and identifying all new member names. During the breakfast, new members and representatives from the Executive Committee and the Chapter President get to know one another. Typical attendance is 8 to 12 new members. After breakfast, new members enjoy a short presentation on Chapter opportunities, publications and newsletters, committees, and other benefits of membership.
- ❑ **Leadership Academy** – Following the national initiative brought forward during 2004, Minnesota Chapter members participated in national APWA meetings where many Chapters brought the best of their training efforts to the table to develop a “prototype” for a Leadership Academy format. The Minnesota Chapter subsequently entered into an agreement with the Hamline University Graduate School of Public Administration and Management in St. Paul, Minnesota to develop the new training program that began with a class of 24 in the fall of 2006. The training occurs annually over an eight-month period with 90 hours of graduate school level education required for the certificate. In 2019, students from the thirteenth graduating class of the Leadership Academy were awarded their certificates. The program this past year reached its registration capacity very quickly which speaks to the success and quality of the course. The Leadership Academy is a mini-master’s program covering topics ranging from personnel management to technical skills, to understanding financial relationships among federal, state, and local governments.
- ❑ **Advanced Human Resources for Public Works Certificate** - This course was established to help professionals develop a better understanding of the foundations of public sector human resource management. The course certificate program covers a range of topics including authority in public sector relations, developing employees and measuring performance, effective discipline and administering a public works contract. The Minnesota Chapter has partnered with Hamline University and provides 48 hours of training, meeting once a month for seven months.

### C. Chapter Best Practices Compliance

The Minnesota Chapter was extremely pleased to be provided the “template for success” created by national APWA in the form of a listing of Chapter Best Practices. This document has helped focus energy and resources at our local level during semi-annual goal setting Executive Committee retreats. Attached to this submittal is the Best Practices for APWA Chapter Capacity Building. The Minnesota Chapter is pleased to check “yes” to nearly all the items included in the list. Items that garner further comment are noted below.

- Number 14 - *The chapter treasurer serves a minimum of two years and has a transition plan for a successor.* The Minnesota Chapter Treasurer serves a term of one year. However, the person elected to Treasurer continues to serve as the Chapter’s Vice President, President, and Past-President. Altogether it’s a four-year commitment. The four-year leadership track provides continuity at the Executive Committee level and serves as a transition plan for incoming officers. Newly elected Treasurers can rely on the Vice-President, President, and Past-President’s to get up to speed quickly on the Chapter finances. In 2013, a deputy treasurer position was created to ensure consistency in financial reporting. The deputy position will likely be held by one individual for a 4-5-year period in which time he or she will work closely with the treasurer in performing the daily functions of depositing revenue, making payments and reimbursements, and reconciling the budget.

- Number 48 - *The chapter has a regular newsletter it distributes to members.* To “go green,” the Minnesota Chapter ended the distribution of a quarterly newsletter. Today, members receive a **Latest News** email blast that is sent approximately once a month. The email highlights various news items that can be found on the Chapter website. By clicking on a provided link to **Read More**, members feel more engaged and are provided with more timely communication than was previously occurring with the newsletter.



**Latest News Email Blast**

## D. Chapter to Chapter Outreach

The Minnesota Chapter extends a warm and gracious welcome to neighboring Chapters for virtually all events and offerings. We share Chapter newsletters, the House of Delegates, and the members of the APWA Wisconsin and Dakota Chapters that are regionally close by taking advantage of our educational outreach. In the past, the Minnesota Chapter has shared Chapter dinner facilities with the Dakota Chapters; in addition, members of our board have attended the joint Mid-America conference. As mentioned previously, the Minnesota Chapter partners with our neighboring states to include one site per year in our Underground Utilities Construction Inspectors School program which has been a great success.

## E. Chapter Diversity

Through the efforts of individual chapter members, the Minnesota Chapter Diversity Committee was revitalized in 2012. The Minnesota Chapter was very supportive of individual efforts on behalf of minorities, and in the past has provided scholarships to encourage students to pursue college engineering degrees. In 2012, the Chapter decided it wanted to do more, throughout the State, in promoting outreach to minorities and underprivileged populations. Because of this, the Diversity Committee was re-formed in 2012 at the Chapter level.

The Diversity Committee consists of 10 active members. Their established mission is summarized as follows:

- To advance inclusiveness throughout the APWA-MN Chapter – placing value on all individuals and their different perspectives and promoting the process for all to be part of the chapter.

The Diversity Committee’s goals are to retain, recruit, and encourage diverse populations to the field of public works.

The Chapter’s Diversity Committee meets monthly, one month they meet as goal sub-groups, and the next month they meet as a full committee.

## F. Young/Emerging Professionals

In 2016, the Chapter recognized the growth and commitment of the Chapter’s younger professionals by establishing a Young Professionals (YP) Committee. Through a bylaw change in 2016, a Young Professionals director position was established and the first YP Director was elected in 2017. In his past

year 2019, the YP Director was the first director that ascended through the ranks of the original group that established the YP Committee. The YP Director is part of the Chapter's Executive Committee. The Executive Committee continues to allocate resources to encourage and promote YP's involvement through scholarships to encourage YP's to participate in National Conferences and/or various educational programs.

The YP Group is composed of fun and outgoing public works professionals interested in building new networking connections. The group gives members the opportunity to have fun, meet, and spend time with other public works colleagues outside of the traditional work setting. The group encourages public works professionals in their 20s and 30s to become active in this group as time allows.

#### ***APWA Student Chapter Support and Outreach***

The Minnesota Chapter continues to support our Young Professionals in their student outreach through the establishment of student chapters at the University of Minnesota; University of St. Thomas; and outstate location, Minnesota State University, Mankato. The YP Committee is also spearheading a national student chapter competition with other APWA student chapters.

The Minnesota Student Chapter continues to be strong and gain momentum. Currently, the Student Chapter is based at the University of Minnesota. The UMN Student Chapter hosted an end of school year cookout outside of the civil engineering building on campus with a strong student attendance.

Student Chapter advisors worked with the University of St. Thomas (UST) to incorporate a public works track within its civil engineering program. The first three civil engineering graduates from the program graduated this spring. University of St. Thomas (UST) Student Chapter was officially established in late Fall 2019 and have since elected officers to organize and build their student chapter.

Student Chapter advisors continue to make headway in establishing an outstate student chapter at the Minnesota State University, Mankato.

### III. Advancement of Public Works

#### A. Chapter Awards/Recognition Programs for Members/Non-members

The Minnesota Chapter has had an annual awards program for more than 30 years. The program includes both project and personnel award categories and presentations for the awards take place at the annual Chapter Fall Conference.

Each year the Minnesota Chapter presents the Hugo G. Erickson Award for Chapter Service. This award is presented to an individual who has provided years of superior service to the Chapter, as well as assisted in furthering the Chapter's successful operation and goals.

In 2019, Sue Mason, Chapter President in 2016, received the **Hugo G. Erickson Award for Chapter Service**. Sue served as a Chapter Director from 2009 to 2011 and was instrumental in bringing PWX to Minnesota in 2016.



*Hugo G. Erickson Award Recipient  
Sue Mason*

Several Personnel Awards recognize the outstanding achievements of individuals at all levels within public works agencies. Besides presenting the award to the individual at the annual Fall Conference, committee members offer public recognition at local City Council and/or governing board meetings, as well as through press releases sent to the local newspapers. This process not only provides greater recognition to outstanding public works employees, but also provides greater recognition to the public works profession.

The 2019 Minnesota Chapter Awards were presented for the following public works employee classifications:

- Supervisor of the Year

The Awards Committee has established the following criteria for selection of these individuals:

- Innovative applications of new or existing technologies and equipment.
- Innovative applications of new or existing project management and service delivery systems.
- Outstanding service to citizens that enhances the public perception of public works services.
- Outstanding efforts in career and personal growth and development.
- Outstanding efforts in development of teamwork and cooperative working relationships.

Individual Personnel Awards presented by the Minnesota Chapter in 2019 included:

**Supervisor of the Year – Todd Berg, City of Brooklyn Park**

- ❑ Currently serving as Fire Chief, previously as Streets & Parks Supervisor.
- ❑ Took the responsibility of declaring snow emergencies and communicating snow removal plans to safely clear streets and avoid unnecessary towing.
- ❑ Took on the role of Acting Fire Chief while still maintaining his position as Streets & Parks Supervisor.
- ❑ He took quick action in responding to an emergency call where a car had struck a pedestrian bridge and was submerged in a creek. After effectively responding to the emergency he also went out of his way to ensure the repair of the damaged bridge.
- ❑ When interviewing for the Fire Chief position, he commented that he was in a “no lose” position, where he could fulfill a dream and keep the job he loves.



*Supervisor of the Year Recipient  
Todd Berg*

The **Project of the Year Award** is intended to recognize outstanding projects, both large and small, that highlight the many diverse facets of public works projects, while incorporating innovative applications of new or existing technologies. These projects typically involve innovative project management, financing, and multi-agency participation and provide future value to the public works profession and perception by the public. They also take social, economic, and sustainable design considerations into account.

In 2019, the Chapter awarded the Project of the Year award to the City of Bloomington’s Penn American Stormwater Storage Project.

The Penn American Stormwater Storage Project was initiated to serve the flood prone area southeast of the I-35 and I-494 interchange. This area is a highly developed industrial and commercial zone where natural low areas in the watershed are totally reliant upon storm sewer to relieve runoff from heavy rains. Key to the design was the requirement to not create any downstream impacts from the proposed system. Utilizing innovative construction management techniques such as stockpiling soil on site during winter months so that it could be used to backfill when the surrounding soil was frozen, and multi-agency, multi-disciplinary coordination was employed to make the project a success. Working around and with volatile aged PCCP watermains to keep the supply constant and safe for Bloomington’s residents was also a factor. Construction crews worked 24 hours a day for four days during inclement weather to meet a 10-day maximum road closure limit. The project included: \$10 million in construction, 700 feet of dual 16-foot x 9-foot culverts, 2,600 feet of 144-inch diameter corrugated metal pipe, 900 feet of 72-inch storm sewer, and more than 12 acre-feet of underground storage. Careful planning and



*Project of the Year  
City of Bloomington*

execution made the continuation of local businesses that were impacted by the construction able to stay open and serving their customers while construction continued.

Seven project nominations were submitted for Project of the Year. The Awards Committee thought it was important to recognize an Honorable Mention Project of the Year. The City of Monticello's Fallon Avenue Overpass project was presented with this award.

The Awards Committee also considers nominations for the **Environmental Stewardship Award**. The award recognizes those in the field of Public Works who are working hard to protect the environment. Criteria for the award include:

- ❑ A sustained effort that demonstrates a commitment by a group, individual or organization to environmental conservation or protection.
- ❑ Benefits to the community and to the environment.
- ❑ Consideration of Public Works values, including cost effectiveness and long-term operation and maintenance.

In 2019, the awards committee recognized the Forest Lake Area Schools for their Water Stewardship Project and its Environmental Stewardship. Forming a partnership with the Rice Creek Watershed District to fund, design, and build more than \$500,000 of stormwater capture and reuse systems on school property is the hallmark of their efforts. Reducing potable water use by more than 4 MG a year at the Forest Lake High School Site. Creative design and collaboration also resulted in reduction of phosphorus and solids being discharged into nearby Clear Lake, as well as a working outdoor classroom environmental laboratory to teach students and the community about the benefits of stormwater reuse and responsible water stewardship.

The local recipients of APWA National Awards are also recognized at the Fall Conference as we realize that not all the Chapter members are able to attend the APWA National Conference every year. Additionally, Chapter members who attain the status of APWA Life Member are recognized.

The Minnesota Chapter of APWA actively supports the APWA awards program with multiple submittals to national annually. Below are listed the 2019 Minnesota Chapter National APWA award recipients.

- Professional Manager of the Year – Transportation, April Crockett
- Professional Manager of the Year – Engineering & Technology, Paul Pasko
- Exceptional Performance Award (Journalism), Bolton & Menk with children's book series
- PACE Award, APWA-MN Chapter
- Project of the Year, Small Cities / Rural Communities, City of Afton – Downtown Afton Revitalization Project
- Project of the Year, Transportation \$25-\$75M, Three Rivers Park District, 9 Mile Creek Regional Trail (9MCRT)



**Project of the Year Small Cities/Rural Communities  
City of Afton Downtown Revitalization**

Also recognized at the award ceremony are scholarship recipients and graduates of our North

Hennepin Community College Certificate program, many of whom are not yet members of APWA. The Membership and Outreach Committee make a concerted effort to follow up with these recipients and encourage them to join and/or become active in our Chapter.



*2019 Chapter PACE Award*

Also deserving recognition are the numerous individuals who spend many volunteer hours every year working to ensure the continued successful operation of the Chapter. These people serve on committees ranging from the Executive Committee to committees working on issues such as Education & Training, Conference Planning, Membership, Awards, Communications, History, Diversity. Chapter committee members are also recognized at the annual Fall Conference.

## **B. Public Works Promotion**

The Minnesota Chapter has had significant success with the promotional and educational outreach component of National Public Works Week.

Chapter leaders have worked together with the Minnesota Governor's office annually to procure a proclamation recognizing APWA and National Public Works Week highlighting the valuable services we bring to our communities. Governor Walz declared May 19-25, 2019 as Public Works Week.

The Minnesota Chapter developed its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan aligning initiatives with APWA's strategic goals. A timeline with deliverables was created with check-in dates for the Executive Committee to review the progress. Each chapter committee is encouraged to include the Strategic Plan as part of their agendas for discussion each time they meet.

The Minnesota Chapter organized Minnesota 2050 (MN2050) modeled after America's 2050 plan. The goal of the initiative was to articulate a convincing case for increased infrastructure investment across Minnesota. As part of their efforts, MN2050 partnered with Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) to produce a series of three videos addressing five categories of infrastructure.

During 2006, The Minnesota Chapter of APWA, along with the City Engineers Association of Minnesota, the League of Minnesota Cities, and the Minnesota County Engineers Association produced and distributed a forty-four-page Transportation "Primer" called The End of the Road – Challenges of Funding Minnesota's Local Road and Bridge Network. Chapter members are currently using this informational resource to raise awareness at the Legislature about the urgency of infrastructure funding shortfalls.

In 2019, the Minnesota Chapter expanded student outreach beyond scholarships with the founding of student chapters at the University of Minnesota, University of St. Thomas, and Minnesota State University Mankato. Membership continues to hold strong at 1,040 individuals.

### C. Professional Development

The Minnesota Chapter bi-annually completes a daylong Executive Committee Retreat to evaluate service delivery and examine short-term and long-term goals. An Outstate Development Committee was created to serve out-state public agencies and broaden the Minnesota Chapter membership statewide. A History Committee was identified, and Directors identified numerous additional funding initiatives to help meet the established goal of hosting a major conference every 4 years (PWX every 8 years–Snow Conference every 8 years–alternating 4-year intervals).

The Minnesota Chapter of APWA is continuously reevaluating, examining committees and task forces to reflect on the purpose and mission of each. Primarily in and through our service delivery to Chapter members is the high priority of offering exemplary professional development opportunities.

The Minnesota Chapter provides a host of educational opportunities to its members as identified in this submittal (Spring and Fall Conferences, “Day Before” Conference, Municipal Underground Utility Inspectors Training, Spring and Fall Maintenance Expos, North Hennepin Community College Public Works Certificate Program, and the Leadership Academy).

#### **2019 Chapter Scholarships**

##### **Dewey Kasma Scholarship**

- Rachel Vogl - \$2,500

##### **College Scholarships**

- Carl Lind - \$2,500
- Sumner Naess - \$2,500
- Colin Murphy - \$2,500
- Malachai Graupman - \$2,500
- Adam Hogquist - \$2,500
- Michael Volk - \$2,500

##### **Technical School Scholarships**

- Isaiah Edmunds - \$2,500
- Alec Strandberg - \$2,500

### D. Promotes Sustainability / Creative Innovation

The Minnesota Chapter is proud to be a group of professionals that is always looking forward. In 2009, Chapter leaders lead the formation of Minnesota 2050, a task force consisting of fourteen statewide agencies that are working together to explore what Minnesota will look like in the year 2050. The group has gained great enthusiasm from various organizations and now has a dedicated website ([mn2050.org](http://mn2050.org)) and mission statement. In 2015, the Chapter received a National Journalism award for the development of the MN2050 TPT videos.



Another great example of Chapter activity that demonstrated this pro-active approach is the Chapter’s Public Awareness (formerly Public Policy) Committee. Led by Chapter member Chuck Schwartz, this group holds periodic meetings of Public Works Directors, City Engineers, and Public Policy makers in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and throughout the State of Minnesota. These public officials meet

to discuss shared problems, seek successful solutions, and initiate and respond to legislative actions. They perform projects and take on assignments related to public works and infrastructure management policy in Minnesota. This group also tracks and influences legislative issues in cooperation with the City Engineers Association of Minnesota.

APWA Minnesota Public Awareness Committee Mission/Vision: Work to educate others so that they can choose to advocate for public works at all ages and in all places. We accomplish this by leveraging existing resources and being creative in bringing public works issues to people's attention.

## E. Advocacy Outreach

Over the years, the Chapter's Public Awareness Committee has provided a strong presence at the Minnesota State Capital promoting, educating, and influencing lawmakers about the benefits of a Local Street Utility. The group has worked hard with the City Engineers Association of Minnesota and the League of Minnesota Cities to advocate for a Street/Transportation Utility during the last four sessions of the Minnesota State Legislature. During the 2008 Minnesota State Legislative Session, groundbreaking transportation funding legislation successfully moved into reality thanks to years of hard work by this group. In 2011, Chapter members Lee Gustafson and Wayne Sandberg testified at the state capital on the effects on local governments and public works construction projects due to the 2011 Minnesota state government shutdown.

Another Chapter leader, Klayton Eckles, was the Minnesota Chapter's representative in 2011 on the recently created Minimal Impact Design Standards Committee (MIDS) created by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). MIDS represents the next generation of stormwater management and contains three main elements that address current challenges: 1) A higher clean water performance goal, 2) New modeling methods and credit calculations, and 3) A credits system and ordinance package. Through the proactive involvement of Chapter members such as Klayton, the Minnesota Chapter has been ensured a place at the table when it comes to discussing new environmental policy issues.

Raise Our Grade, Minnesota Campaign - The Chapter worked with a public relations marketing consultant to develop a website to communicate the status of the state's infrastructure based on ASCE's infrastructure report card. The purpose is to bring awareness to the public and actively involve them in being the voice along with public works professionals to legislators and the media. The website was developed

([www.raiseourgrademn.org](http://www.raiseourgrademn.org)) and launched in May 2019. On the premise that infrastructure affects all Minnesotans, the site divides the state into districts populated with unfunded projects and information specific to the district. By putting in a zip code, a viewer will be directed to their district.

The viewer can also choose to contact their legislators by using the email form letter prepared to express their concern. In November 2019, the chapter sent out a press release to municipalities and government agencies urging engineers and public works professionals to encourage Minnesotans to request infrastructure funding.



## IV. Service to the Community

As an organization, it is the Chapter's goal to raise public awareness of the public works profession and the value that public works services add to the public's everyday quality of life. The Chapter strives to create a sustainable and diverse work force through STEM outreach initiatives and by supporting relevant educational programs at the K-12 and college levels. The Chapter's success in advancing these objectives is rooted in the individual efforts and leadership of its members – through participation in Chapter committees, leadership within member's individual organizations, and individual volunteerism in support of Chapter activities.

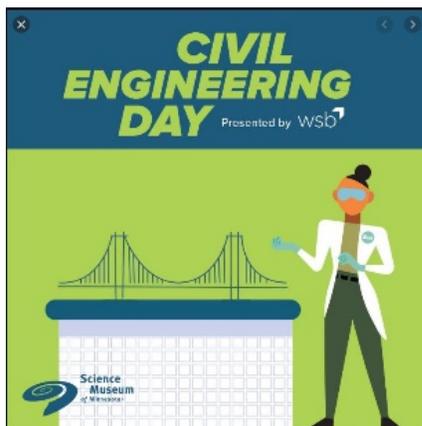
### A. Educational Outreach Programs

The Minnesota Chapter of APWA is very involved in service to our communities. Many Chapter members give back time and resources with public liaison opportunities, instruction and teaching and participation at many levels of local government.

The Chapter continues its partnership with Success Beyond the Classroom (SBC) organization. SBC is a nonprofit organization, bringing innovative programs, inspiring events, and challenging academic competitions to students in the Twin Cities area. SBC gives students the opportunity to hone their passions and to see that learning in school leads to success outside classroom walls, into the future, for themselves, and for the world around them.

Chapter members mentor middle school students through the Future City Competition, attend STEM Expo (Minneapolis Public Schools), attend high school career fairs, and present to elementary, middle and high school students throughout the year about careers in Public Works.

In January 2019, public works professionals volunteered to judge the Minnesota Future City Competition (FCC). FCC is an engineering education program for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders in which students design and build "cities of the future," first virtually with SimCity software, and then physically by creating a tabletop scale model. Students also research and write an essay on an engineering challenge.



On March 30, 2019, the Chapter was a supporting sponsor of the Science Museum of Minnesota's Civil Engineering Day. At the event, Chapter volunteers staffed the Chapter's activity booth and presented "Can you Stop Stormwater Pollution?" The Science Museum reported the Civil Engineering Day event is one of the most attended events at the museum with over 5,200 visitors that day alone.

For more than six years, opening day at the Minnesota State Fair has also meant STEM Day at the state fair. STEM, short for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, is arguably the most talked about education and workforce development topic today, as it should be. In search of an opportunity for public outreach at the granddaddy of all state fairs for the past few years, the

Minnesota chapter's Public Awareness Committee thought they may have found the perfect fit. APWA and STEM. From all accounts, they did just that.

Participation as a vendor/exhibitor at STEM Day is limited and requires a successful application. Due to the chapter's membership consisting of STEM professions and including members from across the entire state, the selection committee agreed that APWA should join the team. For the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row the Public Awareness Committee organized APWA-MN's participation in STEM Day at the State Fair. The kids, parents and volunteers had a great time as bridges and roadways were constructed from blocks and foam boards. Attendance at this one-day event set at Carousel Park within the fairgrounds, continues to grow in popularity, and provides the perfect audience for the Chapter's outreach effort at the fair.



*STEM Day at the MN State Fair*

Minnesota Chapter's Public Awareness Committee develops communication and education to help influence legislative issues that impact all APWA member agencies. This committee provides a strong presence at the Minnesota State Capital promoting, educating, and influencing lawmakers. One of the most recent topics addressed is the benefits of a Local Street Utility. The group has worked hard with the City Engineers Association of Minnesota and the League of Minnesota Cities to advocate for a Street/Transportation Utility during the last several sessions of the Minnesota State Legislature.

To increase the interest in the public works profession and encourage young people to seek opportunities in public works, the MN-Chapter annually awards several academic scholarships to financially assist students in civil engineering, public administration and /or other related academic and civil engineering technology programs.

## **B. Community Service Programs**

Many chapter members contribute hundreds of volunteer hours in service to the community. The Minnesota Chapter incorporates a proactive community service approach into our membership recruitment efforts. Chapter members joined together in 2019 to volunteer at the Feed My Starving Children organization. Volunteers assembled meals, packaged and prepared for shipping to provide poverty-stricken children in third world countries with needed nutrition and meals.



*Chapter Members Volunteering at Feed My Starving Children*

The Chapter also continued its "Adopt-A-Highway" program with its commitment to cleaning a segment of MN State Highway 100 through bi-annual trash collection along a 2-mile stretch of highway.

Chapter members donated to the Success Beyond the Classroom organization which supports programs promoting future engineering/public works careers.

The Minnesota Chapter has a thriving Environmental Committee that is participating in numerous ways to help promote energy conservation, green fleets, and environmental causes throughout the Midwest, and within professional settings that are represented by APWA and the Minnesota Chapter.

The Minnesota Chapter is proud to have developed a local “Environmental Stewardship Award.” This is an annual award that is aimed to recognize public works agencies for their “passion” and stewardship in caring for and maintaining our environment. Each year, judging the numerous nominations proves to be very difficult, and clearly shows that public works agencies in Minnesota are committed to being good stewards of our environment.

### **2019 Chapter Environmental Service Project – Fritz Loven Park**

For the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row, the Environment and Sustainability Committee organized and held the Chapter’s annual environmental service project. The 2019 service project was held in collaboration with the City of Lake Shore and its Park & Recreation Board. The service project took place on May 9 and included preparation work for a future City trail connection to the regional Paul Bunyan Trail. Chapter members worked within Fritz Loven Park helping to clear, grub, and perform other needed trail preparation tasks.

