



## *Presidential Award for Chapter Excellence Submittal*

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

The Minnesota Chapter of the American Public Works Association is a highly involved and active Chapter. However, in 2020, our Chapter experienced a slight decrease in total membership going from 1,039 at the end of 2019 to 1,033 at the end of 2020. We attribute this small decrease to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and social unrest occurring in the Twin Cities area last year. While our Chapter saw a slight membership decrease, we're fortunate it wasn't more. The Minnesota Chapter will continue its efforts to offer numerous membership benefits in 2021 and 2022 including in-person networking and educational opportunities as COVID-19 restrictions are reduced.

Each year the Chapter continues to see more member volunteerism and outreach in educating the public about the value of public works. This is expected to continue in full force once restrictions are lifted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 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 provides 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 2020, membership for the chapter was 1,033 members. This represents a small decrease 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 virtual Lunch and Learn event in April 2020 with a panel of professionals who talked to students about what life looks like after graduation and how their companies and agencies have been adapting to COVID-19.

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 continues to promote an on-campus presence at several Minnesota University and College campuses. During December of 2020, the committee hosted a virtual trivia event called “Your Basement Pub Trivia”.

The Chapter typically organizes participation in STEM day events at the Minnesota State Fair, these events however, and the Fair itself, were cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic.



*Civil Engineering Day presented by the Science Museum of Minnesota*

For the third year in a row, the Chapter co-sponsored Civil Engineering Day at the Science Museum of Minnesota on February 29, 2020. Visitors had the opportunity to meet with civil engineers and tinker with activities that address every day challenges faced by civil engineers.

The 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 was able to host a technical tour in March of 2020 before pandemic restrictions were put in place throughout the state. This event included a tour of the City of Edina’s Water Treatment Plant, where 15 people attended.

The Minnesota Chapter of APWA has incorporated both a community outreach and an environmental service event into our membership recruitment efforts. Chapter members join 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. This event is typically held at least twice per year, but both events had to be cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

In the fall of 2020, several Chapter 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 trash which removed hundreds of pounds of waste from our roads and waters. This was the fifth cleanup event since the highway was adopted in 2016.



*APWA-MN Chapter in 2020 participating in the Adopt-A-Highway event*



*APWA-MN Chapter Members participating in the fall 2020 golf outing*

The Chapter’s annual Summer Golf Classic was held on September 9, 2020, and continues to be one of our most popular events. This event is typically held in July but was delayed until September due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The Chapter offered numerous one-hour online training events in 2020 to provide education and professional development opportunities to Chapter members during the pandemic restrictions of 2020.

On typical years, 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.



*2016 PWX Board Reception Committee*

- ❑ 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.
- ❑ 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 despite the impacts of COVID-19 on our ability to gather in person. In addition, attendees for all events and educational offerings are actively encouraged to complete evaluations 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. This feedback has been especially important as we determine member needs during such a challenging time.

Event	2020 Attendance
Fall Conference Session 1	199
Fall Conference Session 2	89
Fall Conference Session 3	96
Fall Conference Session 4	113
Spring Conference	Canceled due to COVID-19

### 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 Conference Planning Committee was in the middle of planning the 74<sup>th</sup> Annual APWA Minnesota Chapter Spring Conference when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. The Committee debated pivoting to a virtual format, but with so little time left before the conference dates they decided to cancel the conference and put all their efforts toward planning a meaningful fall conference.



*Chapter Website*

- ❑ **Annual Fall Conference and General Membership Business Meeting** – An effective membership outreach activity for over 30 years, the annual Chapter Fall Conference is typically offered in-person in the metropolitan Minneapolis/St. Paul area. After canceling the 2020 Spring Conference, the Conference Planning Committee put together a series of virtual sessions for the 2020 Fall Conference with one session per week over a four-week period. The presentations were recorded and posted on the chapter website so members who were not able to attend the live event are able to access the content at a more convenient time.

The 2020 Fall Conference program offered diverse sessions to attract a variety of participants. Josh Root, Senior Legal Counsel and Data Practices Compliance Officer for MnDOT, kicked off the series with a presentation titled Engineering Ethics: Your Professional Responsibility. He discussed the institutional and personal steps to identify good ethical behaviors and highlighted case studies that demonstrate room for improvement. Additional sessions included “Understanding Minnesota's Changing Climate: Observations, Trends and Projections,” “COVID-19 Innovations and Impacts,” and “Racial Equity: Sharing Stories.”

Traditionally the Fall General Membership Business Meeting has been included as part of the Fall Conference, but with the new virtual series format in 2020 the Business Meeting was held as a separate event. The meeting was held over Zoom with chapter members and Executive Committee members in attendance and the agenda followed a similar format to previous years. The meeting also included our 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 2020 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 2020-2021 school year was successful and far-reaching. All classes were held virtually, rather than in-person, due to COVID-19. Through the years of this successful program, we have added an additional location each year, either in outstate Minnesota or in a neighboring state, to extend our out-reach and develop connections with area professionals. This year we expanded to include two locations in a nearby state, one location in the broader US and locations at WWC Engineering, a consulting firm.

Location	Number of Students
Bloomington, MN	21
Cedar Rapids, IA	3
Ames, IA	5
Easton, MA	3
<u>WWC Engineering</u> Laramie, Casper and Sheridan, WY	5
Helena, MT	1

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 both locally and across the US.

- **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 12 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 thirteen 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 18 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. 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.

This past year the event was planned to be held at the Otter Tail County Highway Facility but had to be canceled due to COVID-19. A series of four virtual meetings is planned for 2021 and we expect to return to a more traditional event in 2022.

- ❑ **Annual Membership Golf Outings** –The annual Chapter summer golf outing is a member outreach function providing networking opportunities for members 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. Our 2020 event was postponed due to COVID-19 until the fall and 172 golfers hit the course to reconnect.



- ❑ **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. With a virtual fall conference, there was not an opportunity to host an in-person new member breakfast in 2020.

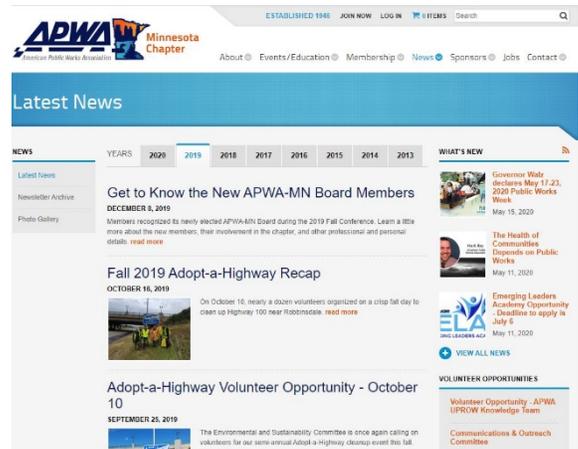
- ❑ **Leadership Academy** – Following the national initiative brought forward during 2004, Minnesota Chapter members participated in national APWA meetings where many Chapters brought the best of their training efforts to the table to develop a “prototype” for a Leadership Academy format. The Minnesota 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. 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. There were 12 students in the 2020-2021 Leadership Academy graduating class.
- ❑ **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. This program was not offered for the 2020-2021 school year.

### 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 has traditionally partnered with our neighboring states to include one site per year in our Underground Utilities Construction Inspectors School program. This has been such a great success that this year we expanded to include additional sites across the county.

## 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. 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 in spring 2019. 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 2020, Kristin Asher, Chapter President in 2018, received the **Hugo G. Erickson Award for Chapter Service**. Kristin served as a Chapter Director from 2011 to 2012, Chapter President in 2018, Chapter Alternate Delegate 2019 to the present, and was instrumental in the Raise Our Grade initiative.



*Hugo G. Erickson Award Recipient  
Kristin Asher*

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 2020 Minnesota Chapter Awards were presented for the following public works employee classifications:

- Superintendent of the Year
- Director or Manager of the Year
- Public Works Employee 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 2020 included:

**Superintendent of the Year – Linda Mullen, City of Burnsville**

- ❑ Linda has always been a huge proponent of using technology and equipment to provide the best utility systems possible.
- ❑ Linda has developed an effective division of sewer and water operators that embraces technology.
- ❑ She was paramount in delivering and operating one of the most innovative water delivery systems in the entire State of Minnesota.
- ❑ She helps enhance the public perception of public works through their engagement and interaction with residents during challenging projects.
- ❑ She began her Utilities career with the City of Apple Valley as a water meter reader and worked her way to Utilities Superintendent for the City of Burnsville.



***Superintendent of the Year  
Recipient – Linda Mullen***

**Director or Manager of the Year – John Olson, City of Hutchinson**

- ❑ John addresses issues and opportunities head on, implements innovative approaches, and improves efficiencies whenever possible.
- ❑ Embracing evolving products and processes has been one of his trademarks.
- ❑ His personal and professional growth has been continuous throughout their life/career beginning by doing farm work as a kid, military training, and then public service.
- ❑ He started his career in public service as a seasonal Public Works employee and has held various positions including Finance Officer, Management Analyst/Accountant, Public Works Director and now Public Works Manager.



***Manager of the Year  
Recipient – John Olson***

**Public Works Employee the Year – Jary Lee, City of St Paul**

- ❑ Jary exhibits a positive and professional aura in his work and confidently tackles every issue with his staff like a seasoned supervisor.
- ❑ He learned AutoCAD on his own, designed and received authorization for his own federally funded project.
- ❑ He managed the most controversial public works construction project in recent history.
- ❑ He began his career with the City of St. Paul in January 2019 after 11 years with MnDOT.



***Public Works Employee of  
the Year Recipient - Jary Lee***

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 2020, the Chapter awarded the Project of the Year award to the City of Fridley's Civic Center Campus Project.

Highlights:

- ❑ Provided a new, integrated civic core for all City services within a redevelopment area.
- ❑ Included buy-in from multiple stakeholders.
- ❑ Prior to any design work, City staff began a comprehensive existing facilities study and public outreach process.
- ❑ Maintained PW operations during construction.
- ❑ Created safe and connected public gathering space.
- ❑ Included environmental improvements including remediation of existing soil contamination and enhanced stormwater treatment.
- ❑ Addressed poor soil conditions using advanced techniques.



*Project of the Year  
City of Fridley*

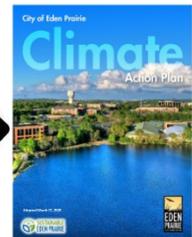
Twelve project nominations were submitted for Project of the Year. The Awards Committee thought it was important to recognize two projects for Honorable Mention Project of the Year. The City of Prior Lake's CSAH 21 Downtown Prior Lake project was presented with this award as well as the City of Red Wing's Levee Park Dock Improvements project.

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 2020, the awards committee recognized the City of Eden Prairie for their Sustainable Eden Prairie Project and its Environmental Stewardship. Wide ranging and continuous effort focused on education and implementation of sustainable practices including:

- ❑ 20-40-15 Ten-year initiative to increase energy efficiency in the City facilities by 20%+ improve City vehicle fuel efficiency by 40% by the year 2015. Achieved 21.8% + 44.4% with 300K+ gallons savings in fuel and reduction of 2,900 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>).
- ❑ Climate Action Plan Adopted by City Council in March 2020, the plan has an overall goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2050.
- ❑ Rooftop Solar and Community Solar Garden Subscription  
Substantial commitment to solar energy with installations at City Center (366kW), City Maintenance Facility (99.9kW), Water Treatment Plant (239.6kW) and Community Center (14.76kW). Reduction of 1.7 million pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>E per year. Subscription to Community Solar Garden for 18,000,000 kWh/year and reduction of 701 million pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>E over the 25-year subscription.



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 2020 National and Local Conferences were both held virtually due to the pandemic.

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 – Water Resources, Steve Klein
- PACE Award, APWA-MN Chapter
- Project of the Year, Historical Restoration/Preservation, \$5-\$25M, City of Minneapolis, Historic North Loop Public Realm Reconstruction Project



**City of Minneapolis, Historic North Loop Public Realm Reconstruction Project**



**2020 Chapter PACE Award**

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.

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 through 2020 at 1,033 individuals although most activities were put on hold during the pandemic.

### 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).

#### **2020 Chapter Scholarships**

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

- Chloe Anderson - \$5,000

##### **College Scholarships**

- Sumner Naess - \$2,500
- Gunnar Cowing - \$2,500
- Jared Carda - \$2,500
- Cameron Dahlin - \$2,500

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

- Jordan VanRisseghem - \$2,500
- Adam Huesman - \$2,500
- Matthew Goossen - \$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) 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. With the pandemic in 2020, it became much more difficult for members to meet with legislators to advocate for public infrastructure and funding. In 2020, APWA-MN Member Ann Johnson-Stewart got voted in as a State Senator. She has been advocating for the Raise Our Grade campaign. In February 2020, Senator Johnson-Stewart along with the APWA-MN Chapter, Raise Our Grade, MN Committee, and MN2050, organized and hosted a virtual series "Infrastructure Talks at the Capitol" explaining the basics of how different types of infrastructure work and what is needed to maintain them.



## 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.

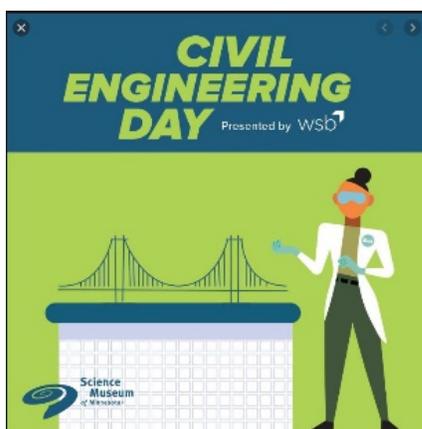
### A. Educational Outreach Programs

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 2020, 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.



*Civil Engineering Day the Science Museum*

On February 29, 2020, 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. 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. In normal years, the Public Awareness Committee would organize APWA-MN's participation in STEM Day at the State Fair. 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.



*Pre COVID-19 STEM Day held at the Minnesota 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 would normally join to volunteer at the Feed My Starving Children organization. Volunteers would assemble meals, packaged, and prepared for shipping to provide poverty-stricken children in third world countries with needed nutrition and meals.



*Chapter Members Volunteering  
Pre COVID-19 at Feed My Starving  
Children*

As referenced previously, the Chapter was able to continue its "Adopt-A-Highway" program with its commitment to cleaning a segment of MN State Highway 100 through 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.

Normally, the Environment and Sustainability Committee would organize the Chapter’s annual environmental service project. COVID-19 prevented the service project from happening during 2020, but the chapter cannot wait to get back out in 2021. The 2019 service project was held in collaboration with the City of Lake Shore and its Park & Recreation Board. The service project 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.



*2019 Service Project*

As the transition to remote learning due to COVID-19 was realized and schools closed unexpectedly, many families who relied on free or reduced meals within the community were suddenly left without these benefits. Public Works and other local agency GIS staff members of local Minnesota jurisdictions created an interactive map displaying locations which continued to offer free student lunches. (<https://smarturl.it/KidsLunch>) The map also allowed for restaurants to add their own information and displayed local bus stops and school locations. The application was an innovative solution to provide necessary nutrition to the children of our communities.

Finally, the Minnesota Chapter would be remiss if it did not acknowledge the civil unrest seen in May & June of 2020. Due to the difficulties felt by its residents, property owners and businesses, Minneapolis and Saint Paul Public Works staff were challenged to help mitigate the chaotic environment in the days following. By proactively working with those affected, the Twin Cities helped support countless property owners in their cleanup and rebuilding efforts. While there is still work to be done, these cities and their Public Works members have provided a great example for how to lead their communities through difficult and trying times.