

# American Public Works Association— Minnesota Chapter

*2021 Virtual Spring Conference  
May 6-7, 2021*

Facilitated by:  
Crescendo Consulting  
Solutions, LLC



# Welcome from Conference Co-Chairs



Nick Egger

What a time we're living in! As we write this letter, our state has been under a peacetime emergency and the nation a national emergency for just over a year now due to the coronavirus. The year 2020 will go down as one of the most challenging of our lives, and we continue to live in very dynamic and complex times. This has necessitated the shift of many planned in-person public gatherings and conferences, including our upcoming Spring Conference, to virtual formats. Although we can't all come together in person, our chapter is committed to bring you a great slate of educational content to continue in the best traditions and mission of APWA-MN.



Matt Saam

We're excited to have National APWA President Mary Joyce Ivers, our own Region VI Director, Joe Johnson, and the Chief Executive Officer of APWA, Scott Grayson join us for the Spring Conference this year. They'll help kick off the conference on Thursday morning and lead into our main speaker, John Kriesel. John is a Minnesotan with a diverse background from seeing active duty in Iraq, to being a former State Legislator, to now spending time as a local celebrity on KFAN radio. John will entertain us while providing inspiration for conquering our own adversity as he tells us his story and how he's "Still Standing."

Next, the 2021 Virtual Spring Conference program dives right into becoming more informed and effective at embracing diversity and inclusion in the workplace. On Thursday afternoon, the APWA-MN Chapter is proud to continue our Spring Conference tradition of giving back by performing service work in our communities. This year there are a number of options available, so everyone can find something geographically convenient that is of interest. Thursday evening, all are invited to an informal chapter social and networking event at French Regional Park in Plymouth.

On Friday morning we'll hear a different take on the current topic of generational differences and attracting/retaining future talent. Given the competitive job market in our industry, these topics are very timely. Our speaker, Steve Bench, is himself a millennial who will show us a different perspective on these common ideas. To conclude the conference, you won't want to miss an opportunity to learn more about how we all can become more potent in advocating for public works and infrastructure interests with elected officials. Our closing session will feature an exclusive discussion with Minnesota Senator Ann Johnson Stewart as she shares valuable insights on the inner workings of state legislation. We'll also hear updates on the MN2050 and Raise Our Grade initiatives.

Grab a comfortable seat, pour a cup of coffee, and display your most creative virtual meeting background as you join us for the 2021 APWA-MN Virtual Spring Conference!

Matt Saam, PE & Nick Egger, PE  
Conference Co-Chairs

# General Information

## Registration Link

Register online at <http://www.apwa-mn.org/events-education/spring-conference/2021>. Note that separate registrations are required for the service projects and social event.

## Virtual Access

The conference will be held virtually using [Zoom](#). The Zoom platform is free and does not require downloading any software.

## Fees

- ◆ APWA-MN members: \$130
- ◆ Non-members: \$150

Fees include all education sessions and materials.

## Registration Deadline

The deadline to register is May 3, 2021.

## Cancellation / Refund Policy

A refund of the registration fee, less \$15, will be issued for cancellations made by April 30, 2021. Cancellations received after this date are not eligible for a refund. Registrants who cannot attend may send a substitute.

## Professional Development Hours (PDHs)

Virtual conference attendees will receive 7.0 PDHs for the full conference. [Learn more about Minnesota continuing education requirements for Professional Engineers.](#)

## Conference Contact

Mary Detloff, CAE  
Crescendo Consulting Solutions  
[mary@crescendoconsultingsolutions.com](mailto:mary@crescendoconsultingsolutions.com)  
612.597.7899

## Registration Contact

Pat Schutrop  
APWA-MN Chapter Assistant  
[admin@apwa-mn.org](mailto:admin@apwa-mn.org)  
888.407.2650

# Schedule At a Glance

## Thursday, May 6

8:00 am	Welcome from APWA-MN President APWA National Update
8:30 am	Still Standing (John Kriesel): 1.0 PDH
9:45 am	Retaining Employees by Building an Inclusive Work Environment (Sonja Simpson, Michael Birchard, Patience Ferguson): 2.0 PDHs
11:40 am	APWA-MN Chapter Business Updates & Future Events
1:00 pm	Community Service Projects
4:00 pm	Chapter Social and Networking Event

## Friday, May 7

8:00 am	Attracting Tomorrow's Talent with Today's Leaders (Steve Bench): 2.0 PDHs
10:15 am	MnDOT Update (Mike Ginnaty, Mary Schmidt): 1.0 PDH
11:15 am	Make Your Vote Count (Sen. Ann Johnson Stewart, Kristin Asher, Greg Stonehouse): 1.0 PDH
12:05 pm	Closing Remarks
12:15pm	Adjourn

# Thursday, May 6

8:00—8:30 am

## Welcome and APWA Update

**Welcome by APWA-MN Chapter President**  
*Beth Engum, PE, CBS Squared Inc.*

### APWA National Update

*Mary Joyce Ivers, APWA President*  
*Joe Johnson, APWA Region VI Director*  
*Scott Grayson, APWA Chief Executive Officer*

APWA-MN President Beth Engum and APWA President Mary Joyce Ivers will welcome attendees to the APWA-MN Spring Conference. We'll hear from President Ivers and APWA CEO Scott Grayson, who will provide a national update on APWA's response to the pandemic, what the upcoming PWX will look like, and APWA progress on work toward its strategic goals. APWA Region VI Director Joe Johnson will also provide a regional APWA update to our chapter membership.

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*Join the conference  
conversation on Twitter*

*Use the hashtag #apwamn21*



8:30—9:30 am

## Still Standing

**Presenter:** *John Kriesel, Army Veteran, Author, Former MN State Representative*

**Moderator:** *Nina Stanley, PE, SRF Consulting Group*

**PDHs:** 1.0



Everybody faces adversity. It doesn't matter the size or scope of your challenge; it is your attitude that will help you overcome that adversity and make you stronger. Although John Kriesel lost his legs and fellow soldiers in an Iraq explosion, John developed a plan to overcome those challenges and make them into opportunities. When told he might not walk again and would be hospitalized two years, John doubled his physical therapy regimen, working himself to exhaustion. He walked out of Walter Reed Medical Center nine months later. In his darkest moments, John found time to laugh. He discovered that laughter and not taking yourself too seriously are powerful medicine. Be encouraged by John's inspiring story.

9:30—9:45 am | Break

# Thursday, May 6

9:45—11:30 am

## Retaining Employees by Building an Inclusive Work Environment

**Presenters:** *Sonja Simpson*, iONIS Solutions;  
*Michael Birchard*, Inver Hills Community College;  
*Patience Ferguson*, City of Minneapolis

**Moderator:** *Bev Farragher, PE*, City of St. Paul

**PDHs:** 2.0



Sonja Simpson



Michael Birchard



Patience Ferguson

Attracting excellent employees becomes meaningless if you do not retain them. Employees are more inclined to stay in a job when they feel co-workers and management intentionally treat employees as respected members of the workforce, able to bring their full selves to work goals and tasks. Achieving inclusion impacts the bottom line for both employee and employer. Our panelists will discuss where inclusion begins, how to implement strategies toward inclusion, and how to measure results. This session will also include a brief presentation on APWA Diversity & Inclusion Committee initiatives.

11:30—11:40 am | Break

11:40 am—12:10 pm

## APWA-MN Chapter Business Updates and Future Events

12:10 pm

Lunch (on your own)

**Connect online with  
APWA-MN**



[/groups/8576528/](#)



[@apwamn](#)

# Thursday, May 6

1:00 pm—3:00 pm

## Chapter Service Projects

**Moderator and Contact:** *Chris LaBounty*, City of Plymouth

### *Separate registration required to participate*

The annual APWA-MN Chapter service project is back, but with a virtual conference it looks a little different. This year the event will be made up of smaller group, outdoor service projects held at different sites though out the Twin Cities metro and Rochester. These projects are designed to improve our communities and continue the success and tradition of previous chapter service projects in Nisswa.

Please sign up for a service project site on the [APWA-MN website](#) (separate registration is required) and plan on attending Thursday afternoon as a great way to serve the chapter and give back. Pack work clothes and bring your rain gear as we'll be doing projects rain or shine. Make our chapter proud and take part in this fun event!

More details about each site event are provided below. *Space is limited to 20 participants at each site.* Prior to May 6, the site lead will reach out to all registered with additional details.

**Site:** Apple Valley

**Site Lead:** *Matt Saam, PE*

**Project:** Park / Trail Area Cleanup - Clean up to include removal of trash and debris. Volunteers will be provided with safety vests, garbage bags and garbage pickers. Volunteers welcome to bring additional outdoor gear; dress for the elements.

**Site:** Chanhassen

**Site Lead:** *Sara Flagstad*

**Project:** Tree Planting — The City of Chanhassen canceled its public 2021 Arbor Day tree planting due to COVID concerns. APWA-MN is pleased to partner with the city to complete tree planting in Sugarbush Park.

1:00 pm—3:00 pm

## Chapter Service Projects (continued)

**Site:** Brooklyn Center

**Site Lead:** *Beth Engum, PE*

**Project:** Crescent Cove landscaping / yard work

**Site:** Robbinsdale

**Site Lead:** *Environmental & Sustainability Committee*

**Project:** Annual APWA-MN Hwy. 100 trash clean up

**Site:** St. Paul

**Site Lead:** *Matt Huggins, PE*

**Project:** Como Pool site mulching and rain garden cleanup

**Site:** Lake Elmo

**Site Lead:** *Mark Erichson, PE*

**Project:** Park maintenance, including adding ADA safety chips in playgrounds and wood chips under trees

**Site:** Rochester

**Site Lead:** *Chris Petree*

**Project:** Roadside cleanup in NW Rochester as part of the city's Litter Bit Better campaign

4:00 pm—7:00 pm

## Networking and Social Event

### *Separate registration required to participate*

Set aside Thursday evening to reconnect with friends and colleagues for a social and networking event at the Skyview Picnic Area in [French Regional Park in Plymouth](#).

Join us for yard games and socializing, and enjoy food from one of the food trucks on-site. There is no cost to attend.

Additional details and registration information will be provided by the APWA-MN Membership Committee at a later date.

# Friday, May 7

8:00—10:00 am

## Attracting Tomorrow's Talent with Today's Leaders

**Presenter:** *Steve Bench*, Generational Consulting

**Moderator:** *Chris Petree*, WSB & Associates

**PDHs:** 2.0



The Millennial Guy, Steve Bench, will offer the perspective of each generation and engage everyone in the discussion by building understanding of who we are, how we were raised, and how we view “work” as a part of our identity.

Adulthood has changed and millennials are not defined by their careers but rather their lifestyles... so how do you manage and motivate people who view their jobs differently than previous generations? This session gives you the answers!

Learn ways to overcome generational differences by building culture that leverages the strengths of each generation. Steve will also discuss ways to build a work culture that is attractive to young professionals through management strategies that engage millennial talent and keep them from leaving.

10:00—10:15 am | Break

10:15—11:05 am

## MnDOT Update

**Presenters:** *Mike Ginnaty, PE*, MnDOT District 3 and *Mary Schmidt*, MnDOT Metro District,

**Moderator:** *April Crockett, PE*, MnDOT Program Delivery Manager

**PDHs:** 1.0



Mike Ginnaty



Mary Schmidt

11:05—11:15 am | Break

***Save the Date***

***APWA-MN 2021 Fall  
Conference***

***November 17-19, 2021***

# Friday, May 7

11:15 am—12:05 pm

## Make Your Vote Count

**Presenters:** *Senator Ann Johnson Stewart, PE (D - 44); Kristin Asher, PE, City of Richfield; Greg Stonehouse, PE, HDR*

**Moderators:** *Mike Marti, PE, SRF Consulting Group; Brad Henry, PE, University of Minnesota*

**PDHs:** 1.0



Ann Johnson Stewart



Kristin Asher



Greg Stonehouse

Minnesotans are fortunate to have a newly elected state senator who is a practicing civil engineer and is passionate about improving our infrastructure. Senator Ann Johnson Stewart will give us an honest, inside look into how state politics works and how we can be more effective in creating change beyond the important step of casting our votes. Additionally, we will hear updates on Raise our Grade and MN2050, two initiatives APWA has been active in leading, and will learn how each of us can be more involved.

12:05—12:15 pm | Closing Remarks

12:15 pm | Adjourn

# Committee Members

*Nick Egger, PE, City of Hastings, Co-Chair*  
*Matt Saam, PE, City of Apple Valley, Co-Chair*

*Anna Bessel, PE, Metropolitan Council*  
*April Crockett, PE, MnDOT Metro District*  
*Mark Erichson, PE, WSB & Associates, Inc.*  
*Beverly Farragher, PE, City of St. Paul*  
*Sara Flagstad, Henning Professional Services*  
*Brad Henry, PE, University of Minnesota*  
*Jon Horn, PE, Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.*  
*Matt Huggins, PE, Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.*

*Chris LaBounty, PE, City of Plymouth*  
*Lucas Lortie, PE, Ramsey County Public Works*  
*Mike Marti, PE, SRF Consulting Group, Inc.*  
*John Mazzitello, PE, Ramsey County Public Works*  
*Cristina Mlejnek, PE, Bolton & Menk, Inc.*  
*Toby Muse, PE, Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc.*  
*Eric Nelson, PE, Alliant Engineering*  
*Chris Petree, WSB & Associates, Inc.*  
*Bridget Rief, PE, Metropolitan Airports Commission*  
*Nina Stanley, PE, SRF Consulting Group, Inc.*  
*Tom Thompson, PE, Stanley Consultants, Inc.*  
*Jessa Trbojevich, PE, Hennepin County Transportation Project Delivery*

*Mary Detloff, CAE, Crescendo Consulting Solutions*



# Thank You to our Generous Sponsors

There have been numerous tests and trials that we have all experienced over the past year. Remarkably, many who boldly faced their own challenges have also stepped up to ensure other's challenges were likewise met. These notable organizations include APWA-MN sponsors who have stood with the chapter this year. Our sponsors have always supported this chapter; that's what they do. But 2020 was not a typical year. At a time when many are being forced to cut expenditures and forgo financial support of non-profit organizations, APWA-MN's sponsorship has held firm and even grown. The decision to continue to support this chapter during this past year was not always an easy one. APWA-MN chapter leaders recognize this and greatly appreciate the support of our sponsors.



APWA-MN Executive Committee  
 Beth Engum, PE  
 President, APWA-MN Chapter

## PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO THANK OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

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