



MA SHARING SESSION

Nebraska WEA
Illinois WEA
AZ Water
Ohio WEA
Michigan WEA



Enhancing Engagement and Collaboration In NWEA: Successes, Challenges, and Strategies for the Future

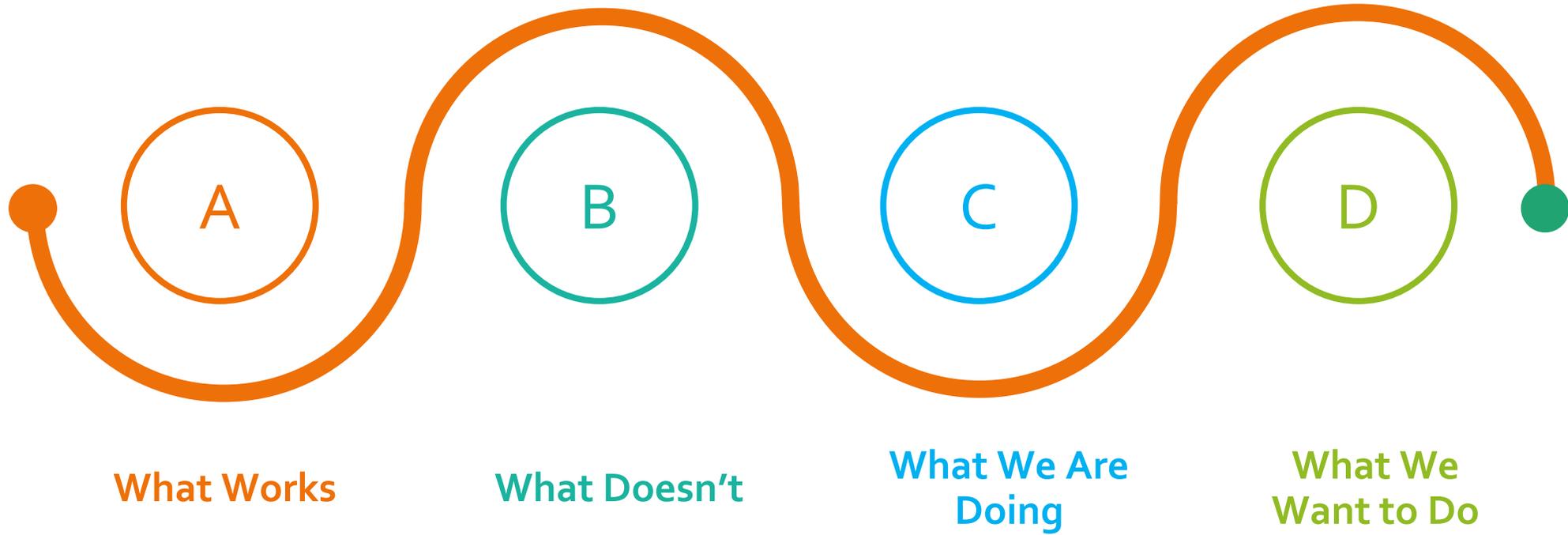
April 11, 2024

Brittni Stephens-Yates | Public Communication and Outreach Committee Chair
Lucas Billesbach | Incoming WEF Delegate Board Member



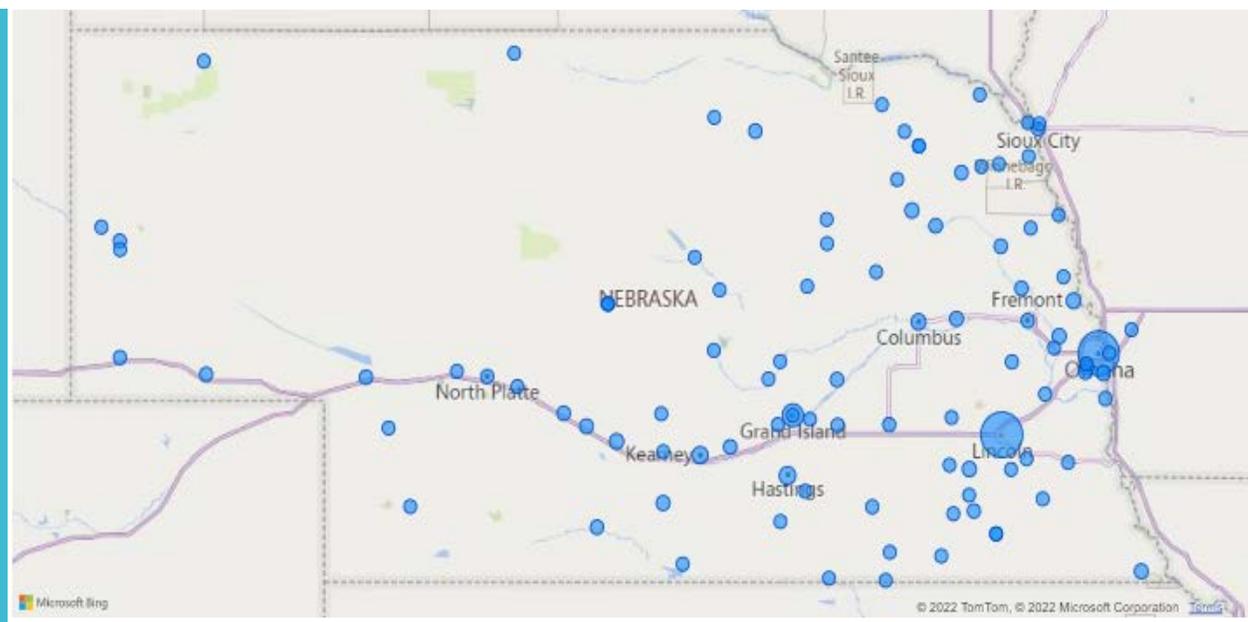


Overview

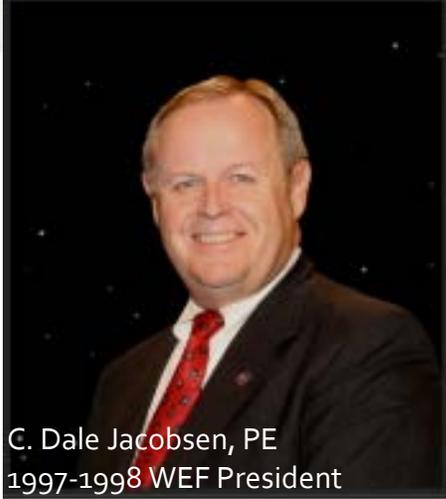




What Works: NWEA Overview



Dr. Mohamed Daham, Ph.D., PE
2006-2007 WEF President

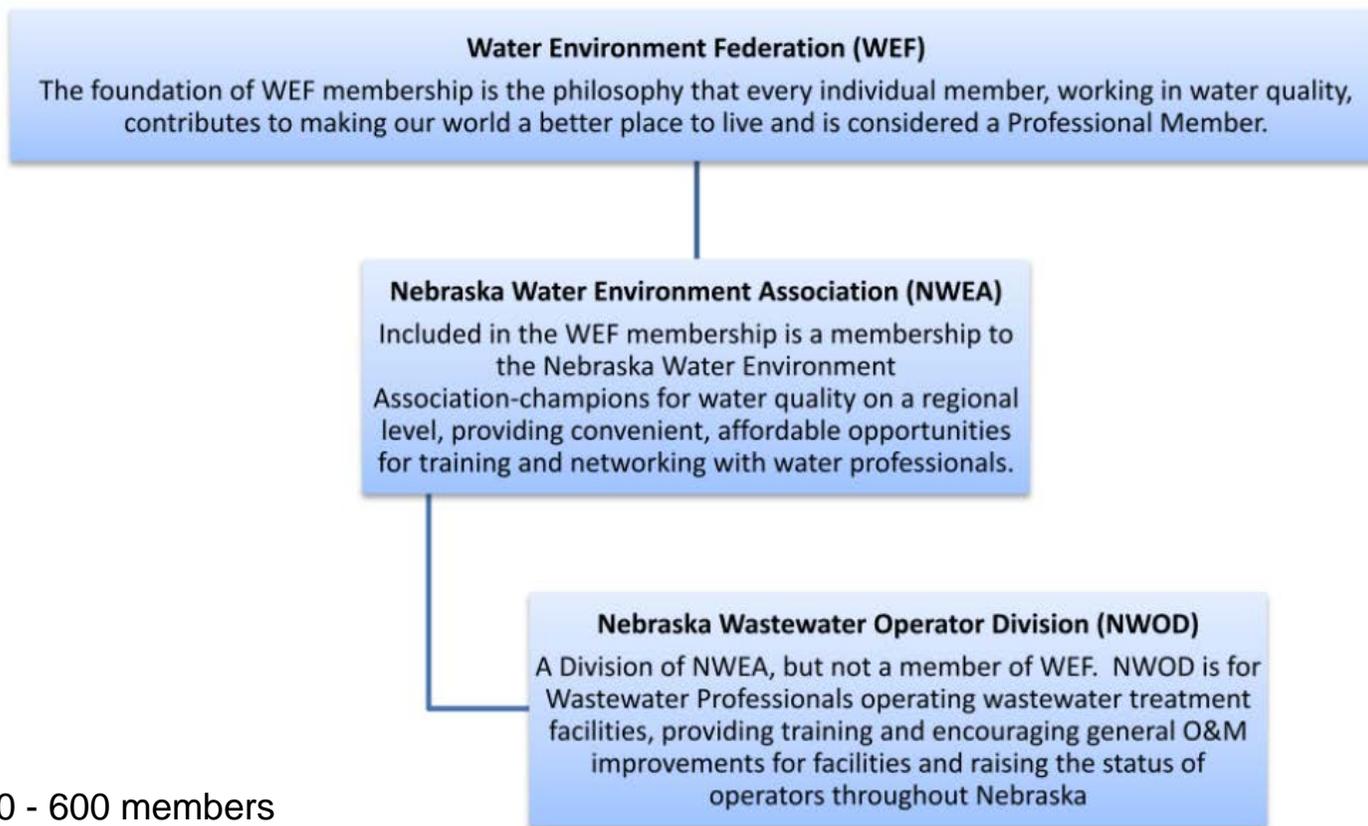


C. Dale Jacobsen, PE
1997-1998 WEF President

Nebraska Water Environment Association (NWEA)

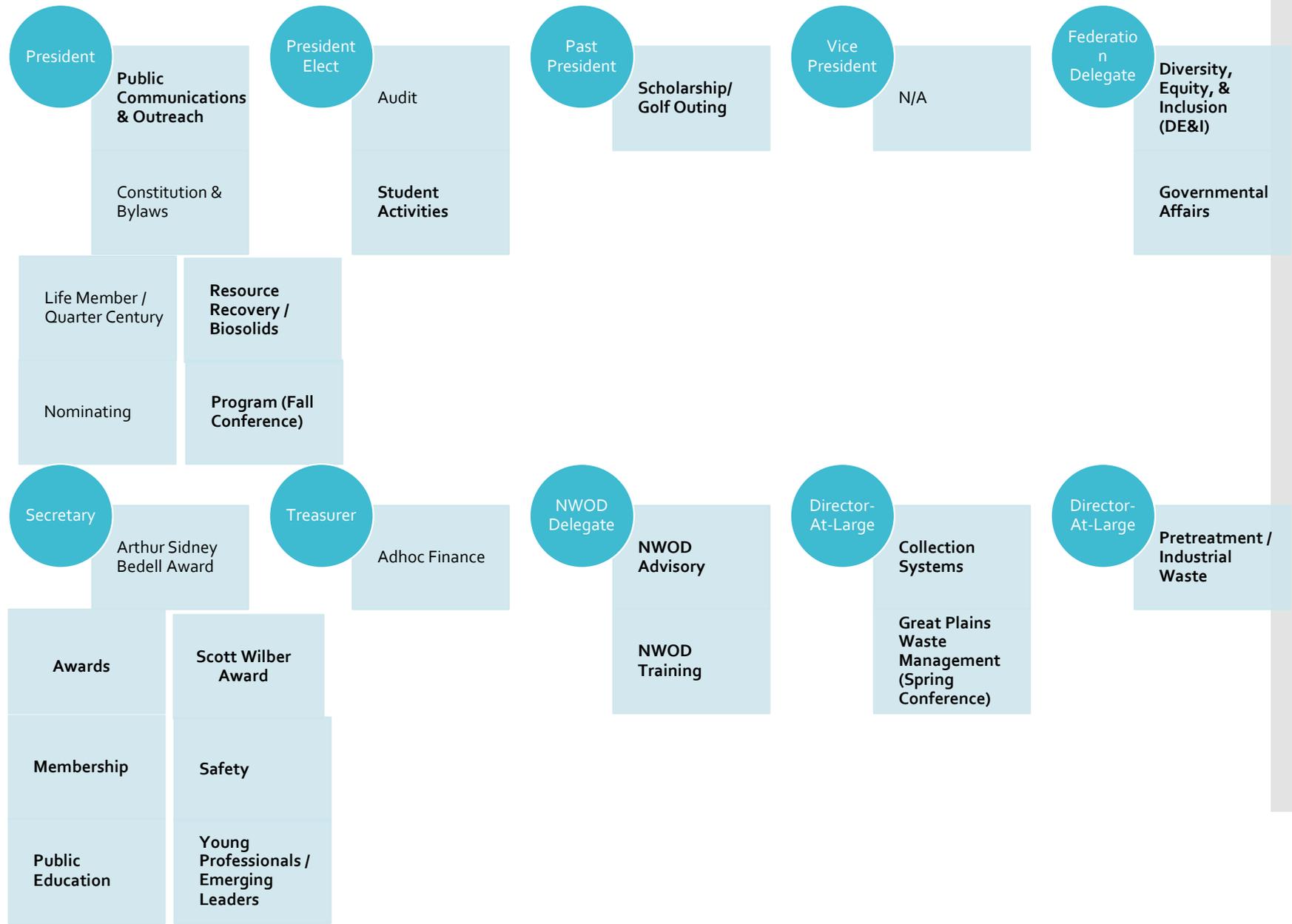
- International Members: Columbia
- Other States: California, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Tennessee, Georgia, Illinois, Ohio, Rhode Island

What Works: Organizational Structure



- 400 - 600 members
- Nebraska Wastewater Operators Division (NWOD)
- 25 committees

What Works: Board and Committee Leadership



What Works:



- Newsletter – The Effluent Line
- Web-page (www.nebwea.org)
- Scholarship Endowment Fund
- Yearly Held Conferences
 - Great Plains – Spring (Omaha)
 - Joint (NWEA/APWA/AWWA) – Fall (Kearney)
 - Heartland Operators – Summer (Kearney)
 - Operator's Snowball – Winter (Kearney)
- Awards & Scholarships
 - Safety Recognition
 - Scott Wilbur Award
 - Golden Manhole Society
 - 5S Society
 - Arthur Sidney Bedell Award
 - Burke Award
 - William D Hatfield Award
 - Laboratory Award
 - Life Membership
 - Bruce Bates Service Award
 - Quarter Century Operators Club



What Works: 2021 Annual Retreat



- Objectives
 - Provide understanding of historical communications approach
 - Investigate and define “where do we want to go from here”
 - Gain perspective from WEF best practices and other MAs
- Deliverables
 - SWOT Analysis
 - Member Experience Analysis
 - Strategic Action Plan
- Findings
 - Delegate tasks with limited volunteer resources
 - Focus on valuable communication
 - **Know Your Audience / Membership**
 - Utilize Existing Tools

What Doesn't Work: SWOT Analysis



Strengths

- High Level Board Involvement
- Good Fiscal Management

Weaknesses

- Improve Valuable Content
- Measurement Local Impact
- Not proactive in Recruitment Efforts
- Efficient Use of Communication Platforms

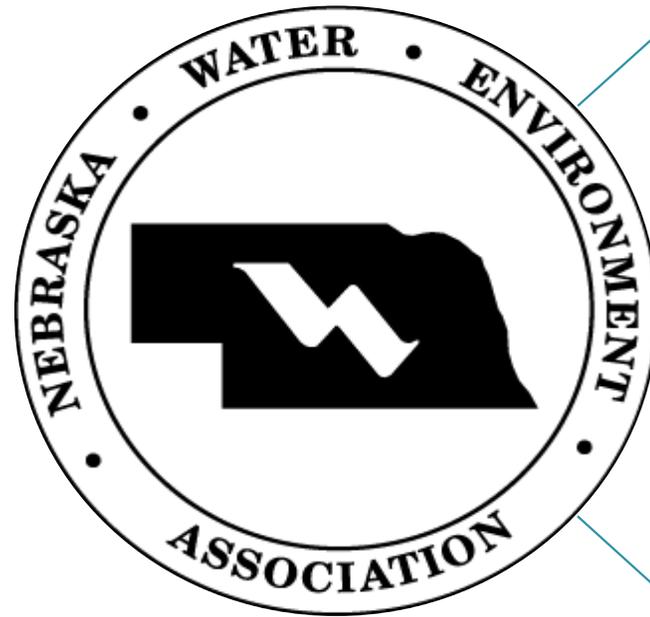
Opportunities

- Increase Awareness of Resources
- Expansion of Existing Programs to educate/engage/outreach
- Improve use of Communication Platforms

Threats

- Time Available to Volunteer
- Sponsorship

What Doesn't Work: Know Your Audience



Generational

- Student
- Young Professional
- Mid-Career Professional
- Senior Member
- Retired / Lifetime Member

Engagement Level

- Eligible Non-Member
- Passive Member
- Active Member
- NWOD Member
- Committee Chair
- Section Leadership
- National Leadership
- 5S Group
- Public
- Elected Officials (Local, State, National)

Career Type

- Academic
- Operator
- Engineer
- Public, Private, Industrial, Policy
- Technicians
- Regulator
- Vendor / Exhibitor
- Contractor
- Student Engineering Chapters
- Utility Partnership Program - Systems (Small, Medium, Large)

What We Are Doing: Unlock the Power of WE

STEPS TO ENGAGEMENT

GOAL
Assist WEF Member Associations to help prospects and members move up the ladder.



unlock the power of we



The **Water Environment Federation (WEF)**... we are the water quality people.

As a **global water sector leader**, our mission is to **connect water professionals; enrich the expertise of water professionals; increase the awareness of the impact and value of water; and provide a platform for water sector innovation.**

get connected, engaged and make the most of WEF membership!

advance your career

Tap into the leading career network for the water community, WEF's Job Bank, where dozens of new jobs are posted each month.

sharpen your professional skills

Stay informed about the latest innovations, trends, and proven solutions through WEF's publications and educational programs, including: WEFTEC®, WEF Specialty Conferences, and free WEF webcasts (earn CEUs and PDHs). WEF members receive exclusive discounts on our educational programs and products.

network and build relationships

Within WEF and local Member Associations (MAs), members work to help each other develop and grow professionally, while building valuable relationships with industry partners and prospects. Joint WEF/local MA membership ensures your access to professional resources at global and regional levels.

impact the future

WEF's committees are a driving force behind the organization's work. Committee participation is a great opportunity to get involved, make a difference in the organization and contribute to our work within the sector.

increase awareness and recognition in your industry

Each year, WEF recognizes individuals making outstanding contributions to the water environment profession with awards, fellowships and other distinguished honors. WEF members also gain access to speaking and publishing opportunities.



For more information about WEF membership benefits, please visit us at www.wef.org or call 1.800.666.0206 (1.571.830.1545 globally).

What We Are Doing: Ideal Membership Experience Take Aways



Audience	Advance your career	Sharpen your professional skills	Network and build relationships	Impact the future	Increase awareness and recognition
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internship Exposure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in a resume review session Participated in an interview Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended 1 NWEA event (i.e. conferences, socials, activity) Participated in Mentorship Program Had 2 conversations with private/public sector opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get an internship/job in Nebraska Connected class learning to world needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented at a conference Recognized at a conference Invited to apply for a scholarship
Young professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Got exposed to job openings Was invited to a mentoring relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended 1 NWEA event (i.e. conferences, socials, activity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended two or more in-person (non-YP) association events Attended at least one YP association event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invited one other YP/student to an activity Volunteered for a task on a committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Been invited to an NWEA role that forms a pipeline to leadership
Mid-career member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with a mentor Worked with a mentee Heard about two attractive job opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share upcoming opportunities with new technologies/processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended two or more in-person association events Participated actively in at least one committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invited one other non-member to an activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage others to participate on a committee
Senior member	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share upcoming opportunities with new technologies/processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentored someone younger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help foster succession within organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominated ("voluntold") a committee and/or board member
Retired/lifetime member	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentored someone younger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded an experience for an oral or written history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invited to self-nominate or nominate a colleague for recognition

What We Are Doing: Ideal Membership Experience Take Aways



- Members / Volunteers
 - Raise Your Hand
 - Attend Membership Drives
 - Participate in a Mentorship Program
 - Volunteer for a Committee
- Annual Conferences
 - Great Plains – Spring (Omaha)
 - Joint (NWEA/APWA/AWWA) – Fall (Kearney)
 - Heartland Operators – Summer (Kearney)
 - Operator's Snowball – Winter (Kearney)
- Tools
 - Effluent Line (4x year publication)
 - Website Reconfiguration
 - Facebook / LinkedIn
 - Phone Calls
 - Lunch and Learns (WHOVA)
 - Membership Lists (Conference / Event Lists)
 - Other



What We Want To Do: NWOD to NWEA Transition & Growth



	2014	2024
NWOD	389	126
NWEA	634	341



Problem statement:

- Transition and growth of operator membership has been slow or declining.

Goal for Retreat:

- Develop tangible objectives that are achievable to both transition previous NWOD members as well as grow overall operator membership in NWEA.

Goal for Year:

- Increase professional operator members from 126 to 250 by 2025 fall conference.



Overview



"The best conversations happen not when we try to talk well, but when we try to listen well."

Brittni Stephens bstephens@olsson.com

[Nebraska Water Environment Association - Home Page \(nebwea.org\)](http://nebwea.org)



IWEA – IAWPCO Collaboration



Illinois Water Environment Association

WEFMAX 2024 – Alexandria, VA

Lynn Kohlhaas and Lou Storino

IWPC 2024

— TOGETHER FOR CLEAN WATER —



Agenda

History

Challenge – Location

Challenge – Equal Participation

Opportunity – InFLOW

Opportunity – Operators Challenge

Opportunity – Operators Exam Review Classes

Memorandum of Understanding

Key takeaways

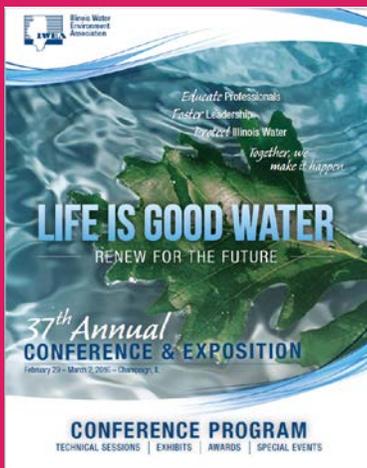
History of IWEA Conference

Historically Held
Own Conference

Joint Conference with
Illinois Section AWWA
WATERCON

Joint Conference with
IAWPCO
IWPC

Online
Joint Conference
IWPC

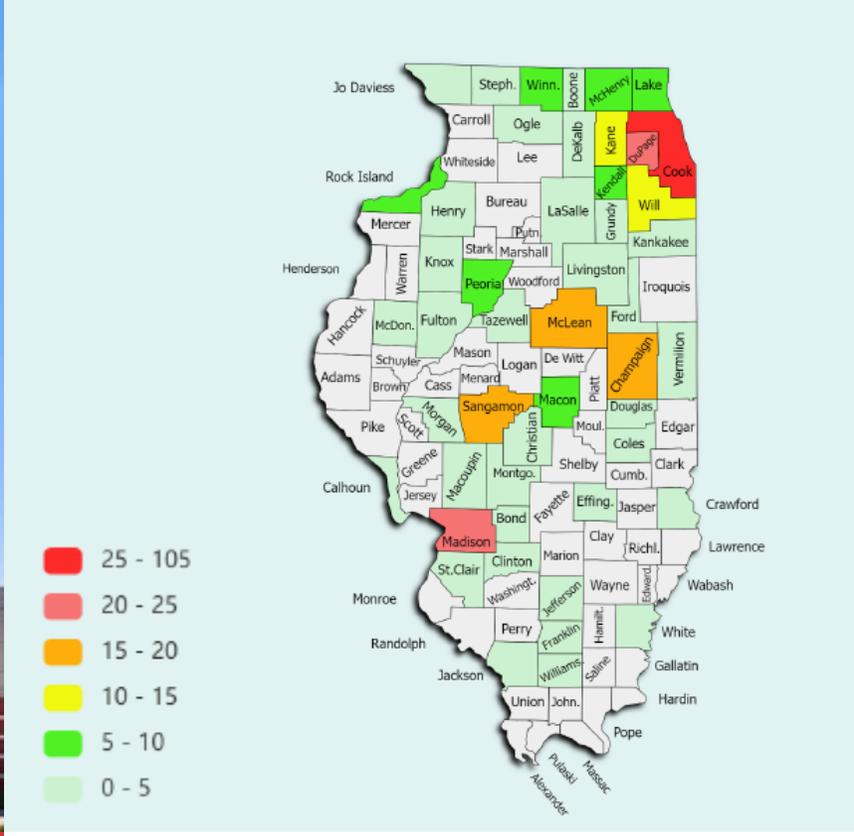


Own Conference

Conference
Cancelled
COVID Pandemic

Whova App

Challenge - Location



Challenge – Equal Participation



Conference Planning



Volunteers



Program



Opportunity – InFLOW

IAWPCO – SIU Environmental Resources Training Center Students
IWEA – College Students



Opportunity – Operators Challenge

Started on our own but enhanced
through IAWPCO participation



Opportunity – Operator Exam Review Classes

IAWPCO
initiative
supported
by IWEA

IEPA OPERATOR EXAM REVIEW COURSES

Whether you are registered for an upcoming exam or would just like a refresher, IWPC offers two separate review courses.

Class 3/4 Exam Review Wed 9-11am

Class 1/ 2 Exam Review Wed 12:45-2:30pm

Full-Conference or One-Day Registration at IWPC will allow an Operator to attend the Review courses.

Wednesday, March 20

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Operator Exam Review Class 3 & 4

📍 Cole/Shertz

Review course for information covered in the IEPA Operator Exam for classes 3 & 4.

Optional IEPA Exam is being held at the Embassy Suites on Thursday, March 21. You must register with IEPA to take the exam. Contact:

Kathy Andring

[Read More](#)

12:45 pm – 2:30 pm

OPERATOR

📍 Cole/Shertz

Review course for information covered in the IEPA Operator Exam for classes 1 & 2.

Optional IEPA Exam is being held at the Embassy Suites on Thursday, March 21. You must register with IEPA to take the exam. Contact:

Kathy Andring

[Read More](#)

HOW TO TAKE A WASTEWATER EXAM FOLLOWING THE IWPC CONFERENCE:

Thursday, March 21, 2024

9am-12pm

Lydia A, Embassy Suites Conference Center.

No IWPC registration necessary-only IEPA

Class 1, 2, 3, 4 & K

- 1. Submit an Examination Request Form** to Illinois EPA. The form can be found by clicking on the following link:
[IEPA Examination Request Form](#)
- 2. Check your Mail.** IEPA will respond to the Exam Request by sending a Letter of Admittance (LOA) to the Operator via US Mail. This mailing will include a list of exam locations and contact information for each location.

Schedule the exam. Using the list provided by IEPA, schedule the appropriate test site to schedule. If you are unable to schedule, reach out to IEPA by email:
Kathy Andring <andring@Illinois.gov>

andring@Illinois.gov

Don't forget your Letter of Admittance, identification, calculator and pencil!

Memorandum of Understanding
 Planning, Conduct and Financials for Joint Conferences
 Illinois Water Environment Association
 Illinois Association of Water Pollution Control Operators

By way of this Memorandum of Understanding, the Illinois Water Environment Association (IWEA) and the Illinois Association of Water Pollution Control Operators (IAWPCO) agree to hold a Joint Annual Conference and Exhibition in Springfield, Illinois in April of 2017. To that end, the following procedures and arrangements will apply to this joint endeavor.

Conference

The Joint Conference will be held under a title not previously associated with either organization. The event title will be agreed upon by both organizations. In the event of Joint Conference dissolution neither organization will hold an event by the Joint Conference title. IWEA and IAWPCO shall endeavor to present the conference at all times as a fully joint effort. Both organizations shall collaborate on marketing materials and the creation of a new joint conference web page, separate from each organization's current webpage, as the portal to conference information.

Joint Leadership Executive Committee

Leadership will fall under the auspices of a Joint Executive Committee comprised of representation from both IAWPCO and IWEA. This committee will be responsible for the coordination of the program, local arrangements, exhibits, and financial oversight for the Joint Conference.

This committee will be comprised of 3 representatives from the IAWPCO and 3 representatives from IWEA. Association staff from each organization will assist and advise this committee, but representation shall be from the volunteer leadership. This Joint Committee shall have the full support of their respective Boards of Directors to make decisions as needed for the Joint Conference.

Joint Conference Committee

Volunteers from each organization will serve on the Joint Conference Committee. This committee will consist of select members from both organizations including representatives from programs, operations, student and Young Professionals (YP) committees and others as deemed necessary. This committee shall meet on a mutually agreed upon schedule. The Joint Conference Committee will meet monthly starting in August of the year prior to the conference, bi-weekly in January and February and then weekly from March 1 through the start of the conference via conference call or in person if deemed necessary.

Joint Manufacturers Advisory Committee (MAC Committee)

Volunteers from each organization will serve on the MAC Committee. The MAC Committee is responsible for all facets of the exhibit hall and the events surrounding the exhibit hall.

MOU

- Conference Description
- Goals
- Expectations
- Financials
- Joint Leadership Committee
- Joint Conference Committee
- Joint Manufacturers Advisory Committee
- Volunteers
- Technical Program
- Registration
- Administration

Key Takeaways

1

Communication is Key

2

Set Joint Goals and Expectations

3

Diverse Ideas Expand Outreach and Meet Goals

4

Ensure MOU Written to Build Trust and Confidence, but also Manage Risk and Provide Accountability

5

Follow-up on Progress to Ensure Accountability

6

Maintain Strong Relationships





Thank you

Lynn Kohlhaas – KohlhaasL@mwrdd.org

Lou Storino – StorinoL@mwrdd.org

www.iweasite.org





Professionals Dedicated To Arizona's Water



*Statements of fact and opinion expressed are those of the author(s)/presenter(s).
AZ Water, AZAWWA, and AZWEA assume no responsibility for the content, nor do
they represent official policy of the Association.*



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Member Recognition

Pathway to Collaborative Engagement



Professionals Dedicated To Arizona's Water

American Water Works Association
ArizonaSection

Water Environment
Federation
The water quality people

Recognition Tools

Engaging Volunteers through Encouragement

- 5S
- Featured Members:
 - Quarterly Newsletter
 - Social Media Platforms
 - Website
- “You Make a Difference”
 - Challenge Coins
 - Website
- Conference
- Letters to Supervisor





AZ Water Councils and Committees

AZ Water Organization



Councils and Committees



- Conservation
- Customer Service
- K-12
- Leadership
- Tap Into Quality
- Utility Forum
- Water Resources



- Annual Conference
- Awards
- Communication
- Luncheon Programs – Phoenix and Tucson
- Member Services
- Operators Network
- Scholarship
- Water For People
- Young Professionals



- Conservation
- Energy Management & Sustainability
- Pretreatment
- Research
- Stormwater



- Infrastructure
- Biosolids & Residuals
- Construction & Safety
- Security/AZWARN
- Wastewater Collection
- Wastewater Treatment
- Water Distribution
- Water Treatment



Council Chair Authority

- Layer of Leadership
- Easier Administration
- Better Collaboration
- Knowledge Sharing
- Consistent Succession Planning
- Committee Budgeting
- Resource Sharing
- Supporting Initiatives

Making Councils Effective

- Annual Committee Report
- Committee Sunsetting Protocol
- Recommendations to the Board
 - Featured Members
 - AZ Water Leadership
 - New Initiatives



Professionals Dedicated To Arizona's Water

How can we improve?



WEFMAX - Alexandria
April 10-12, 2024

History and Success of a Joint One Water Conference





History of Ohio's One Water

2014 – First One Water Conference held with OAWWA in Columbus, Ohio

2018 – Second One Water Conference held with OAWWA in Columbus, Ohio

2019 – OWEA and OAWWA entered into a six year MOU to continue the One Water Conference

2021 – Kick off of the six year Conference Plan that will rotate the One Water Conference through the four OWEA sections



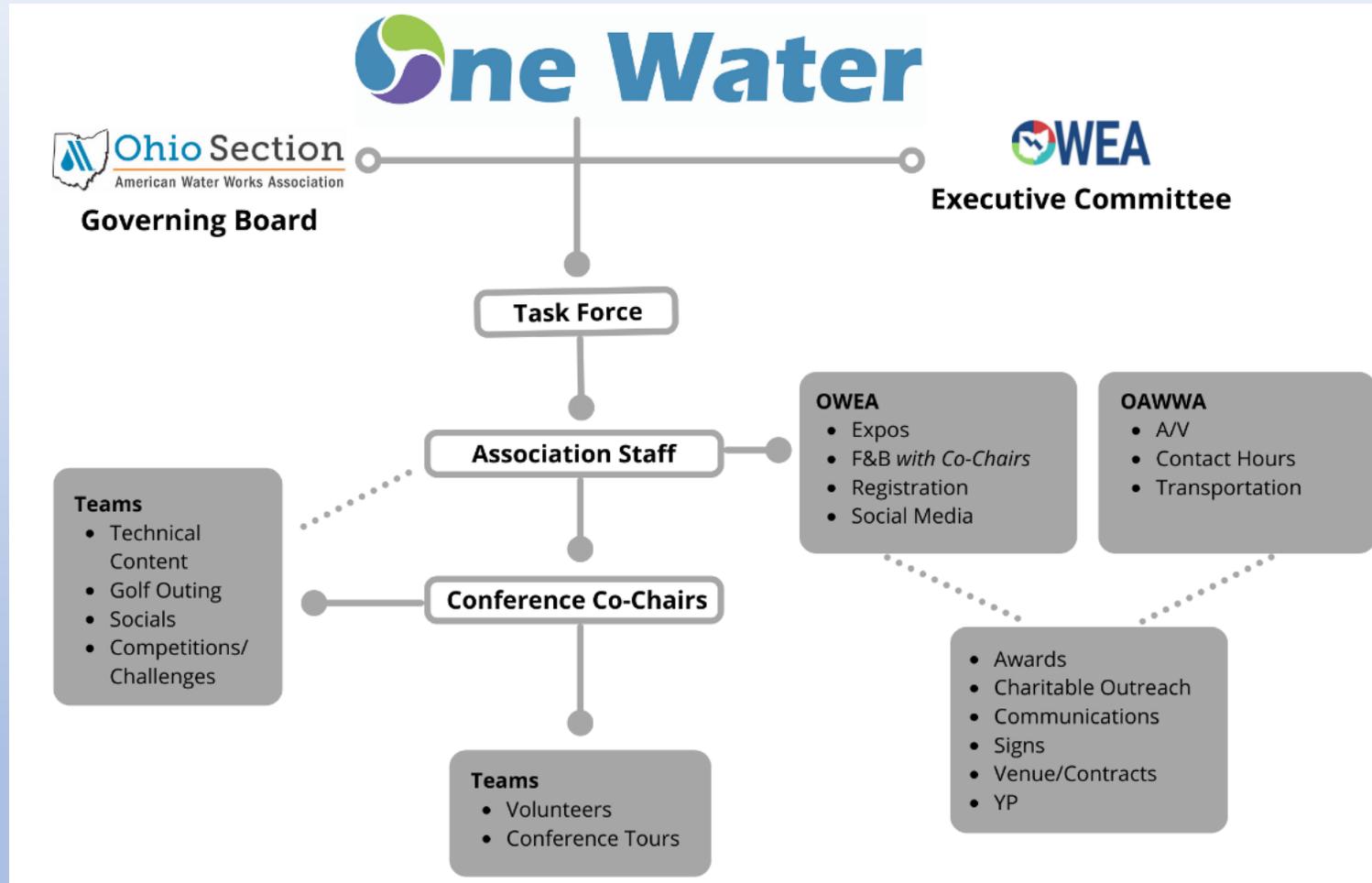


Structure of One Water

- Both organizations have agreed to having a One Water Task Force which has representatives from both OAWWA and OWEA.
- These taskforce members don't rotate like board members and provide continuity.
- They provide recommendations to the respective boards.
- This joint taskforce has been key in working through challenges and the growth of One Water.



One Water Structure





One Water Division of Duties

OWEA

- Fiscal agent
- Website/Registration
- Food and Beverage

OAWWA

- Abstracts and Contact Hours
- AV
- Majority of One Water on Demand





One Water History of Attendance

- 2014 – 1,585
- 2018 – 1,542
- 2021 – 991
- 2022 – 1,342
- 2023 – 1,875
- 2024 – TBD, but booths are 90% sold out for our August 5-8 event!





Successes and Challenges

Successes

- Higher combined attendance than each organization had on their own.
- Dual licensed operators can get CHs easily.
- Dual vendors can see all clients at a reduced cost.
- Specialized programming for engineers.
- Sense of all being on one team.
- Each organization still maintains their own identity, specifically through awards.
- Each organization nets more profit than we did on our own.
- We have more buying power and have solved the issue of being too big for a hotel but not quite big enough for a convention center.





Successes and Challenges

Challenges

- Staff must be comfortable working together and work well together – we are lucky, we do!
- Missing of previous individuality.
- Higher registration fee in some cases.
- Not as many frontline operators attending.
- We have more buying power and have solved the issue of being too big for a hotel but not quite big enough for a convention center.
- As we grow, there could be challenges for locations. We currently are pretty much maxing our 2024 location.
- As we grow, our legal exposure increases and we have had to make some modifications concerning liability.



m i c h i g a n

water environment association

 **mwea**
the water quality people[®]

BREAK

2:15 – 2:45 pm



connecting ideas | inspiring leaders

Celebrating 50 Years in 2024

DRIVING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Virginia WEA
WEF**

ENGAGING AND DEVELOPING
THE NEXT GENERATION OF
WATER WORKERS THROUGH
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
AND MEANINGFUL
INTERNSHIPS

Dorissa Pitts-Paige
Dr. Christina Perez
Mackenzie Rickard





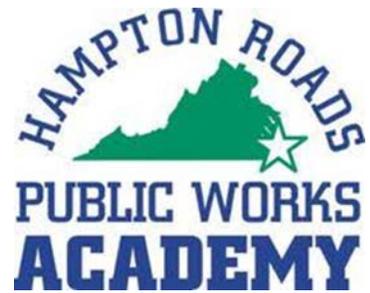
Hampton Roads Public Works Academy (HRPWA)

Youth Summer Intensive (YSI)

Introducing Future Leaders to Opportunities in Water (InFLOW)

Statewide Apprenticeship Program

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES



Promoting cooperative public works and utilities workforce development for Hampton Roads high school students and professionals



HAMPTON ROADS PUBLIC WORKS ACADEMY PARTNERSHIP



Regional coalition promoting public works and public utility cooperative training in Southeastern Virginia



Coordinates lower-cost training for current public works/utility employees



Educates area high school students to develop pre-trained public works/utility employees

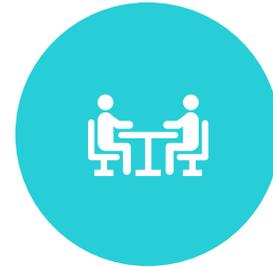


Provides networking opportunities to member organizations

HAMPTON ROADS PUBLIC WORKS ACADEMY (HRPWA)



Two-year, hands-on program geared toward high school students participating in Vocational and Technical Center Programs



Selection process begins with an application, teacher recommendations, followed by interviews with HRPWA member organizations



Cadets take 32 courses in major areas of work within Public Works and Utilities



Complete a paid summer internship with a member organization



HRPWA REQUIRED PAID SUMMER
INTERNSHIP

Interviewed and selected by a panel consisting of member organization employees

Interns experience all aspects of employment

On-line applications

Pre-employment screening

Onboarding

Safety Training

Hands on job training



HRSD'S HRPWA INTERNSHIP SUCCESS



Over 97% have successfully completed internships



Twelve have returned for a second summer



Five have been hired part-time



Fifteen have been hired full-time



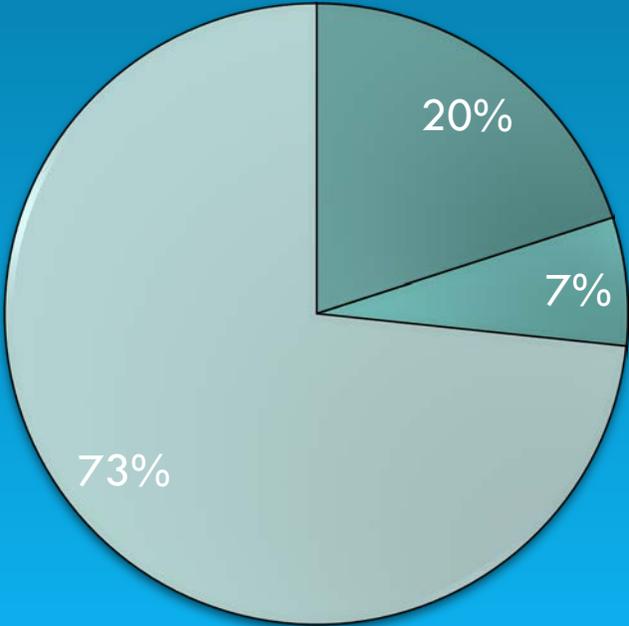
Eight have been promoted



Five have utilized continuing education benefits

HRPWA Interns Hired As HRSD Employees

- Full-Time Hires
- Part-Time Hires
- Summer Interns



HRSD'S HRPWA INTERNSHIP SUCCESS

Plant Operator
Apprentice

Maintenance
Operator
Apprentice

Lab Assistant

Engineering
Assistant

Customer Care
Center
Representative

Maintenance
Assistant

Interceptor
Assistant

Interceptor
Technician
Apprentice

Heavy
Equipment
Operator

Cybersecurity
Analyst Support
Analyst

Interceptor
Specialist

Electrical &
Instrumentation
Specialist

Human
Resources
Coordinator

Chief
Maintenance
Management



2019 NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

HRPWA INTERNS HIRED BY HRSD

"I recently celebrated my 10-year anniversary. It is definitely an accomplishment to be able to grow up and move up. It has truly been a blessing. Without this career, a lot would not be possible! I cannot thank HRSD enough for seeing so much in me that I did not or could not see in myself!"



Anita Hardy, HRSD Plant Operator, Army Base Treatment Plant
HRPWA Cadet 2009- The College and Career Academy at Pruden, PC Technology



Patrick Porto, HRSD Maintenance Operator, Atlantic Treatment Plant
HRPWA Cadet 2016- Virginia Beach Career and Technical Center, HVAC WEFTEC Operations Challenge, Team HRSD (Patrick Porto pictured 2nd from the right)

"Because of the internship, I have had many opportunities. I have a stable, well paying, lifetime career with benefits, promotional opportunity, retirement, and endless learning. I cannot thank HRSD and HRPWA enough for the opportunity of a lifetime that has truly changed my life."

HAMPTON ROADS PUBLIC WORKS ACADEMY PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP

There is no substitute for experience. Internships providing hands-on learning, give students the opportunity to explore the world of work, align interests and skills determine fit, find mentors and make meaningful connections. Employers benefit because they can "test drive" new talent, develop mentoring capacity and build community relationships. Since 2007, HRSD has successfully partnered with Hampton Roads Public Works Academy (HRPWA) as a member organization to provide paid summer internships for high school students enrolled in HRPWA's Cadet Program.

Over the past eleven years, HRSD has provided 75 summer internships at various workcenters including Automotive, Facilities Support, Treatment Plants, Interceptor Systems, Information Technology, Safety and Human Resources (HR). Interns experience all aspects of employment including online applications, panel interviews, pre-employment screening, onboarding, safety and on-the-job training and supervisor evaluations.



Trent Fisher, Raekwon Batten, Patrick Porto, Joseph Williamson, Isaac Zamora-Smith, Anita Hardy, Keegan Ankofski, Latasha Bell, Alek Hensberger, Bruce Odom, Trevor Olton, Michael Johnson, AJ Brewer



Anastasia Richardson and Leira Sechong

Investing in interns is a proactive way to address gaps in the water workforce and to leverage opportunities to ensure HRSD's future success in alignment with our vision: "future generations will inherit clean waterways and be able to keep them clean."



Ellison Smith, HRSD Human Resources Intern
HRPWA Cadet & Scholarship Recipient 2018- Virginia Beach Career and Technical Center, Dental Assisting, Currently a Freshman at ODU majoring in Cyto Technology

"I completed an internship in HRSD's HR office which has absolutely made a difference in my life. It allowed me to connect with adults in a professional setting which is invaluable. I have grown as a person, not only figuring out my interests but also my strengths and weaknesses."



Youth Summer Intensive (YSI) Program



AWARENESS



HRSD YOUTH SUMMER INTENSIVE

SUMMER INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY

HRSD's Youth Summer Intensive (YSI) program is a 9-week training program that allows students of Hampton Roads to explore the many available careers in the environmental field of water resource management.

YSI interns will earn \$15 per hour working a 40-hour work week. Interns will be provided with free textbooks, academic supplies, work uniforms, and protective equipment. Interns will walk away with introductory knowledge and skills related to water careers. Interns will also gain confidence through career development and mentoring.

Earn as you
Learn!

INTERNSHIP INCLUDES

- Classroom instruction
- Hands-on training
- Professional development skills
- Career mentoring

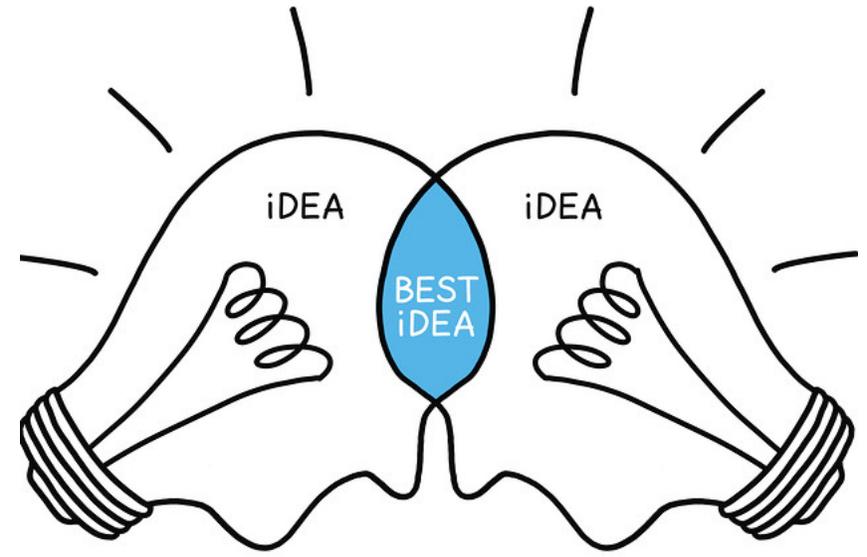
FOR MORE INFORMATION,
VISIT WWW.HRSD.COM.

YSI is a collaborative initiative hosted by the following sponsors:





+



AWARENESS



How do you market water agencies to new candidate pools?

Aim to involve youth populations!

- For every youth participant you involve, they involve four adults.
- Their prospective employment works to resolve youth unemployment and factors into community engagement.
- Awareness starts with the youth population!



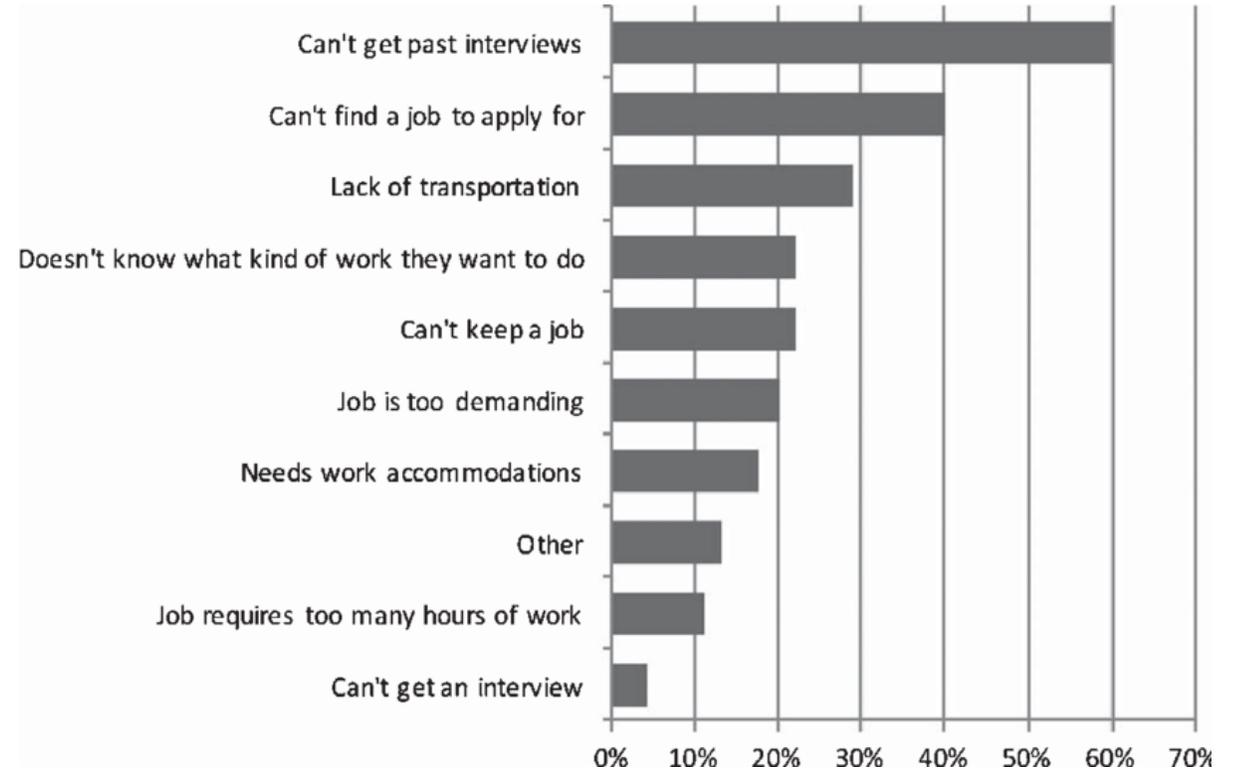
YSI Training Schedule

- 9-week program
- Includes 4 apprenticeship courses
- On-the Job Training in wastewater operations
- Employee development to bridge school-to-work transition
- Real experience in an industrial professional setting



Eliminating barriers to employment for the Water Sector

- Partnership with the local workforce board
- HRSD provided technical expertise
- Workforce board provided recruitment and wrap around services
- Together – overcame most common barriers to employment for youth population





Introducing Future Leaders to Opportunities in Water

For more information, visit: www.wef.org/inflow



Evolution of WEF InFLOW



2018

- **16 African American Scholars**
- Representing **3 Universities**
- *Separate Emerging Water Quality Scholars Program*

2019

- **CareerTech & STEMpath** Tracks at Chicago, IL
- **16 Scholars** from GreenCorps Chicago & **26 Scholars** from 6 different Universities
- Scholars were African American/Black, Hispanic, Native Alaskan, and Native Hawaiian.

2020

- 5-week interactive **virtual program** ending with WEFTEC Connect.
- **8 Scholars** from Limitless Vistas NOLA & **24 Scholars** from 7 Universities
- Application for schools to **apply** to STEMpath.

2021

- **Dual** virtual and in-person program.
- CareerTech will be working with **Green Corp Chicago**.
- **24 Scholars** from 12 Universities will participate for STEMpath.



THE WEF INFLOW PROGRAM
AIMS TO ENHANCE
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
IN THE WATER WORKFORCE

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION (DE&I) COMMITTEE

The VWEA Board of Directors approved the formation of a DE&I Committee in November 2021.

The VWEA DE&I committee will:

- Explore initiatives to promote DE&I within VWEA
- Integrate DE&I into VWEA Committee discussions and membership
- Consider ways to include DE&I in VWEA events

COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

Shawn Heselton
HRSD
Chair

Dorissa Pitts-Paige
HRSD
Vice-Chair

Sarah Lothman
Burns & McDonnell
Board Liaison



VWEA INTRODUCING FUTURE LEADERS TO OPPORTUNITIES IN WATER (INFLOW)

A scholarship program to enhance diversity and inclusion in the water workforce.





EVOLUTION OF VWEA INFLOW

2022

VWEA implements WEF's STEMpath InFLOW Scholars Program

5 African-American Scholars

Norfolk State University, NSU

2023

9 Scholars from underrepresented groups, variety of majors

Hampton University, HU

Old Dominion University, ODU

2024

Up to 15 Scholars from underrepresented groups, variety of majors

Northern VA Community College

HU

Virginia State University, VSU

ODU





2022 VWEA InFLOW Scholars Testimonials

“It was a great opportunity and I’m glad I spent it with y’all” -Genevia Williams

“It was fun being with you all this week. WaterJAM was a great experience.”-Aariana Tucker

“I had a nice time and I’m glad I got to meet some new people”-Matthew Lawson

DE&I COMMITTEE LAUNCHES INFLOW PROGRAM TO WATERJAM

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) Committee kicked off VWEA's inaugural InFLOW (Introducing Future Leaders to Opportunities in Water) program at this year's WaterJAM. InFLOW was designed to introduce underrepresented groups to professional careers in the water sector.

The program allowed five Virginia students to attend WaterJAM with the objectives of educating them about career opportunities in the water industry, providing networking opportunities with water professionals, and solidifying their interest in working in the water sector. Student scholars were also paired with a mentor from the graduating Leadership Academy class to provide them with a resource as they move forward in their career journey.

The scholars, Genevia Miles-Williams, Matthew Lawson, Aariana Tucker and Khonstance Taylor of Norfolk State, and Mackenzie Rickard of Old Dominion University, were fully immersed in the WaterJAM experience. Their first day kicked off with an orientation lunch with Dorissa Pitts-Paige, Vice Chair of the



VWEA DE&I Committee where they learned more about WaterJAM, their schedules over the two days of their attendance, and met with their mentors. The group had the opportunity to network with members of both VWEA and VA AWWA during Opening Night's Meet and Greet. On Tuesday, they attended the keynote session and the DE&I panel discussion. During the VWEA Awards luncheon, the group was recognized as InFLOW scholars and learned more about VWEA and its initiatives. Day three included technical sessions, attending presentations for VWEA's Student Design

Competition, and an opportunity to network with water industry leaders at the Young Professionals and Student Reception.

At the conclusion of WaterJAM, the scholars met with DE&I Committee members for a final wrap-up. The participants shared that the inaugural InFLOW program experience exceeded their expectations.

In the coming year, the DE&I Committee plans to continue its engagement with underrepresented groups in the water industry and also to expand the program for WaterJAM 2023.



VWEA INFLOW SCHOLARS PROGRAM

In-person or Virtual Introductions and Orientation

Dinner Meet & Greet

Resume Review & Feedback

WaterJAM Registration, Transportation, Meals & Accommodations Provided

Mentor Pairing-Water Leadership Institute and Young Professionals

Agenda specifically designed to provide students with a well-rounded experience at WaterJAM

Chaperone/Guide

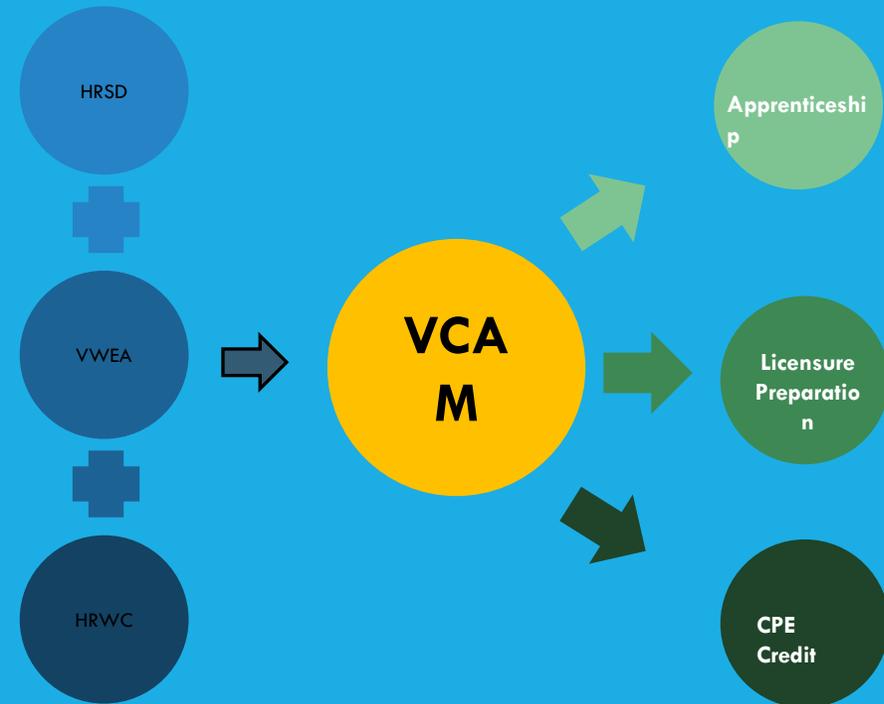
Post Conference Survey for Scholars Feedback

VWEA INFLOW WATERJAM SCHEDULE OVERVIEW



<u>Monday 9/12</u>	<u>Tuesday 9/13</u>	<u>Wednesday 9/14</u>
8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. <i>Optional</i>	7:30 a.m.-9:00 a.m.	7:30 a.m.-9:00 a.m.
Service Project	Orientation Breakfast	Continental Breakfast
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Lunch with Dorissa	9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Keynote Session	8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Suggested Technical Sessions
3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Possible Hotel Check-in	11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Exhibit Hall	12:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m. VA AWWA Luncheon
4:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m. VWEA InFLOW Scholars Orientation	12:00p.m.-1:30 p.m. VWEA Luncheon	1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m. VWEA Student Design Competition Winners' Presentations
6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. Hotel Check-in	1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. DEI Panel Discussion	2:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Suggested Technical Sessions
7:00p.m.-10:00 p.m. Meet & Greet Reception		5:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m. YP & Student Reception
		6:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m. Bon Voyage
		7:00 p.m.-10:00p.m. <i>Optional</i>
		Awards Banquet & Fun Night

Grant Proposal



VIRGINIA COLLABORATIVE APPRENTICESHIP MODEL (VCAM)

Project Narrative

Response to RFA EPA-R-OW-OWM-23-02

Project Title: **Virginia Collaborative Apprenticeship Model**
Project Area: **Project Area 1**

Applicant: **Hampton Roads Sanitation District**

Total Project Cost: **\$1,545,950**

Key Personnel:

Christina Perez, Ed.D.
Learning & Development Manager
Hampton Roads Sanitation District
cperez@hrsd.com; (O) 757-460-4226; (C) 757-274-9080
Project Role: Project Manager

Ryan L. Hendrix
Executive Director
Pepper's Ferry Regional Wastewater Treatment Authority
rhendrix@pfrwta.com; (O) 540-639-3947 x 1000; (C) 540-357-0430
Project Role: Assistant Project Manager

VCAM – TRAINING FOR OPERATORS

Adult-focused work-based learning program

Work-related training

Assistance license preparation

CPE credited training classes

Helpful for new and experienced water workers





**Reduce Costs,
not Training!**

VCAM – LEVERAGING EXPERTISE FOR ALL STAGES

- Leverage expertise to reduce costs
- New Operators
- Operators needing licensure
- Licensed operators needing CPEs

Thank You!





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Celebrating 50 Years in 2024

WEF UPDATE ON WORKFORCE STRATEGY EFFORTS

**John Ikeda, WEF Staff
Chief Mission Officer**



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NEXT STEPS – ACTION PLAN

Dave Galbraith – HOD WEFMAX Chair



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WEFMAX DAY 1 WRAP & ADJOURN

Sarah Lothman – President, VWEA