How to Foster the Next Generation of Transportation Professionals

By Brian Scharles

The success of the transportation industry depends on a consistent pipeline of fresh talent and perspectives.

Unfortunately, the transportation industry is approaching a demographic cliff as the transportation technology expands, Baby Boomers retire and the pool of young professionals interested in the industry dwindles. It does not help that rapid technological advances increasingly require professionals with a variety of connected technology and data-driven skill sets, creating a skills gap that narrows the pool further.

Of course, unfilled transportation positions will mean struggling technology implementations and less efficient transportation. There are some practical steps we can take right now to ensure our organization attracts and fosters top talent for years to come.

Engage with Youth in STEM Extracurriculars

The myriad of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)-related teams and clubs available to students, starting in middle school or even earlier, present a valuable opportunity. Students in these organizations have a demonstrated interest in technology, but they are often unaware of careers in transportation. ITE has acknowledge the challenged with the 2020 Innov8 Event. Please get involved in 2020 Innov8 Event: National STEM Day.

By coaching a team, being a speaker or presenter at tournaments, becoming a sponsor or even creating your own club, you engage kids and teens already developing the skillsets in high demand in the transportation industry.

For example, for nearly twenty years I have been involved in the FIRST® LEGO® program, which aims to inspire kids and teens through fun, hands-on STEM learning with real-world applications. My son and daughter both credit becoming engineers to their involvement in the program.
Create Internships and Apprenticeships
There are never enough hands-on, practical internships and apprenticeships to go around, but there should be. This type of workplace learning, sometimes part of employer-educator partnerships and sometimes not, minimizes the skills gap and brings new energy and insights to workplaces. It also pulls young people into an industry they may never have previously considered and shows them what it has to offer.

A great place to start is with a few internships and apprenticeships offered during winter and summer college breaks, then adjust and expand from there.

Get Involved in Career Fairs and Career Days
Many agencies and organizations sporadically involve themselves in Career Fairs and Career Days at high schools and colleges, but those efforts could be taken to the next level by:

- Focusing on what a transportation career can truly do for the student, not simply what the student can do for the industry
- Showcasing the diverse range of careers offered in the industry, covering virtually every skillset and aptitude
- Highlighting the crucial role students who are part of communities underserved by and underrepresented in the industry can play in building a better, more equitable future

Partner with Local Universities for Help
Another way to engage with students in higher education is by giving them the opportunity to provide input on transportation-related projects. In January there will be a call for Volunteers for the very popular STEM Forward Future City Competition.

For long-term viability and growth, transportation organizations – from private businesses to every level of government – must continuously invest in the young talent pipeline, especially given the rising demand for young professionals with high technology, data-driven skill sets.

ITE Members:
Share a summary/photo of your recent K-12 outreach experiences (your story may be featured in a future ITE Spotlite or ITE Journal).
For more information check out the ITE.ORG website and click on ITE STEM.
President’s Message

By Kelly Trac

It has certainly been an interesting year! Even with all the changes, our Wisconsin Section has done a great job of adjusting and still trying to provide great services to our members. This all could not be possible without the help of several of our members. I wanted to start by saying thank you to our Executive Board as well as all of the other committees that work hard to put together all the wonderful events and awards that we offer to our members. I also wanted to thank our generous sponsors for this year: raSmith, HNTB, TAPCO, Summit Crest, SRF, and KL Engineering.

In September, we held our annual joint breakfast meeting with WTS. Our featured presentation was provided by Sara Beachy of Axley Brynelson, LLP. She discussed the Legal Aspects of Transportation Access and Management Policies. Recently, we held another joint virtual meeting with SimCap. John Campbell, TADI and Erin Schwark, WisDOT provided us a great presentation on the New WisDOT Work Zone Capacity Tool & New Work Zone Technology.

I hope you will all take some time to join us for future ITE meetings. We have the following upcoming events:

- December 2020 – ITE Wisconsin Annual Meeting
- January 2021 – Public Service Appreciation Meeting

Also, be sure to watch your inbox for information regarding the 2020 Wisconsin Section Board Elections, including candidate information and ballot instructions.

Thank you again for your support of the Wisconsin Section, especially during these unique times. If you would like to get more involved with our Wisconsin Section, please ask me or any one of the Board members. We are always looking for new volunteers for our many section committees.

Hope everyone is staying safe and healthy. Thanks for your continued support of ITE!

Kelly Trac
ITE Wisconsin Section President
2021 ITE Wisconsin Section Elections!

ITE Members,

Below is the list of candidates running for the 2021 ITE Wisconsin Section Board.

- **Past President**: Kelly Trac
- **President**: Jeff Held
- **Vice President**: Jess Billmeyer
- **Treasurer**: Andre Ost
- **Secretary**: Brian Scharles

**Member Director - Ballot Selection**: Eric Frailing, Andy Utic, Kevin Wehner

Electronic ballots will be distributed to all members in November to vote for the Member Director. The nominating committee consisted of: John Bruggeman (Chair), Allan Pacada and Justin Schueler. Please let Andre Ost, current ITE Wisconsin Section Secretary, know if you have any questions.

See below for bios for Eric, Andy and Kevin. Thank you for running for the ITE Wisconsin Section board!
Eric Frailing, P.E., PTOE

Eric has over 13 years of experience in the traffic engineering field and is currently a Senior Project Engineer at MSA Professional Services in Madison. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Madison with a bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering and a Technical Communications Certificate. Eric is a registered PE in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Minnesota, as well as a registered PTOE. In his career, Eric has worked on a wide range of projects including roundabout and traffic signal design, oversized vehicle analysis, microsimulation, and corridor studies in several states and Canada. He has also been involved with numerous traffic impact studies, intersection control evaluations, and public involvement campaigns, including the I-39 and I-41 corridor projects.

Eric has been involved with ITE since 2002, starting as a student member while in college. Since then, he has served on several ITE conference committees including the 2009 and 2013 Midwestern District conferences, he has presented at local and national ITE conferences, and currently helps plan events for the Wisconsin SimCap Users Group. In 2018, he was selected as the Young Professional of the Year for the Wisconsin Section. Outside of ITE, Eric serves as vice chair of MSA’s Traffic & Roundabout Community of Practice and has led the MSA Madison office Adopt-a-Highway cleanup group since its inception in 2013. He also assists with public events and advisory committees for the Sun Prairie Fire Department. Eric looks forward to expanding his service to the section as the next member of the board.
Andy Utic, P.E.

Andy has six years of experience as a traffic engineer at raSmith. He holds a bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and is a registered Professional Engineer in Wisconsin. While working at raSmith’s Brookfield office, Andy has experience with diverse projects and specializes in traffic signal design, traffic modeling, and optimization of coordinated signals. Andy has helped complete design plans for over 60 signals over the past five years. His modeling experience includes Vissim microsimulation of freeway corridors as long as 18 miles in Southeast Wisconsin, as well as visualization and simulation of signalized corridors.

Andy has been active in ITE since he was hired in 2015, regularly attending section meetings and social events. He was awarded the Ken Voigt Award in 2018 and has served on the selection committee since then. He also participates in a variety of other volunteer activities including Adopt a Highway and STEM Expo at MSOE. Outside of work he enjoys traveling, skiing, playing on recreational sports teams, and exploring local craft breweries (some of these activities more than others “in these unprecedented times”). Andy is excited for the opportunity to get more involved with the ITE Wisconsin Section and would be honored to become a board member.
Kevin Wehner, P.E., PTOE

Kevin grew up in Orlando, FL before moving to Manitowoc, WI in high school. He attended the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee to attain his civil engineering degree. Subsequently, Kevin has accumulated seven years of experience focused primarily on traffic operations analysis and traffic signal design. He is a registered professional engineer in Wisconsin and holds a Professional Traffic Operations Engineer certificate. Kevin has spent the majority of his career at KL Engineering in Madison, WI where he has worked on a variety of major projects including the I-39/90 Central Segment Reconstruction and the Verona Road Reconstruction project (specifically design of the temporary signal systems). Additionally, he has completed numerous traffic signal designs, Intersection Control Evaluations (ICE), and Traffic Impact Studies for state and local projects; however, Kevin’s favorite challenges involve complex traffic signal phasing and timing.

Kevin served as the chair of the Vendors and Sponsors Committee for the Midwest ITE Annual Conference held in Madison in June 2017. Outside of work, Kevin enjoys sailing, hunting, and spending time with family. Kevin feels strongly that ITE Wisconsin is a valuable organization and resource to Wisconsin engineers, and he is excited about the opportunity to serve ITE on the Wisconsin Section board.
Recent Meetings

Joint Wisconsin ITE & SimCap Virtual Meeting

On October 21st, ITE Wisconsin Section and the Wisconsin SimCap Users Group hosted a joint virtual meeting on the topic, “Work Zone Capacity & Technology”.

The guest speaker was John Campbell, TADI & Erin Schwark, WisDOT, they discussed the new Work Zone technology and added Adaptors to existing/old arrow boards to make them smart boards.

Kelly Trac started with the ITE Wisconsin section updates with Important dates and Upcoming events. Our Section has 179 Members with one new Member Justin Mahlberg. Kelly outlined the Budget and upcoming events.

- November 2020 ITE Board Elections
- December 2020 Annual Meeting
- January 2021 Public Service Appreciation Meeting
- TBD - 2021 ITE Traffic Engineering Workshop and Transportation Planning Forum
- Don’t forget to renew your ITE Membership for 2021

Russel Lewis - WISDOT Data Mgmt – discussed Covid 19 Traffic Impacts

Tom Boyke noted WisDOT has been tracking hourly volumes in the SE Region on a weekly basis. As Russel mentioned, most of the drop is in the AM Peak. The midday is nearly back to normal and PM Peak is similar peak, but smaller spread.

Seth Johnson said the numbers seem consistent with what's happening in Illinois. From presentations at another conference this morning, Illinois Tollway is seeing traffic at 80-85% of forecast levels with almost no change in trucks. He thought Illinois DOT and Chicago DOT were showing traffic at 85-90% levels. Congestion levels are still much, much lower.

Fatalities are up from this time 5 years ago. It is not clear yet if speeds are a key indicator, or just part of the equation.
Upcoming Events

November 10-24, 2020  ITE Board Elections
December, 2020  ITE Wisconsin Annual Meeting
January 24 - 28, 2021  TRB Annual Meeting, Washington, DC
January 2021  Public Service Appreciation Meeting

ITE Wisconsin New Members

ITE Wisconsin New Member and New Student Chapter

Justin Mahlberg

Student Chapter @ MSOE

We would like to welcome to the ITE Wisconsin Section a new student chapter with the Milwaukee School of Engineering.

The Milwaukee School of Engineering became an official student chapter of ITE in the spring of 2020. The students of MSOE initiated the new student organization on campus to promote growth in the transportation specialty, which gained much student interest. The executive team of MSOE’s student ITE chapter are as follows: Ashley Manske (President), Logan Halladay (Vice President), Emily Wiederholt (Secretary), Evan Apostoli (Treasurer), Miranda Durbin (Public/University Relations), and Mitzi Dobersek (Faculty Advisor). The MSOE student chapter of ITE currently has 27 student members and is actively recruiting more to join their organization. They are planning to hold biweekly organization meetings to host guest speakers and discuss topics of transportation engineering. The MSOE student chapter of ITE also plans to Adopt-A-Highway and hold fundraisers throughout their first year as an organization.
Upcoming Awards

Harvey Shebesta Award

The Wisconsin Section has created a $2,000 scholarship award to be presented annually to encourage students to consider Transportation Engineering in their studies and career aspirations, and to provide financial support to students who have demonstrated an interest and are likely to work in the transportation field. The award was named for Harvey Shebesta who was one of the founding members and the first President of the Wisconsin Section in 1966 and International President in 1980. Harvey also served on the ITE Technical Council as the first Section Technical Activities Department Head in 1968-69 and on the Board of Directors in 1970-71. Harvey graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1950 with a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering and went to work for the Wisconsin State Highway Commission. In 1969, he was appointed District Engineer for the Milwaukee District. In 1979, he was appointed District Director of WisDOT's southeast district when the Department merged the Milwaukee and Waukesha Districts. He has served as chairman and member on many Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission committees.

Award Guidelines

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the scholarship, you must be either a full-time undergraduate or graduate student in a Wisconsin College or University, with course work and career goal emphasis on Transportation Engineering, and must be nominated by Transportation Engineering faculty of your school. A maximum of two students from any School can be nominated. (No family member or spouse of any Institute of Transportation Engineers - Wisconsin Section member is eligible to apply for or receive this scholarship award.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Candidates will be evaluated on the basis of past academic performance, education plans, career goals, activities and record of leadership. Final evaluation will be made on the basis of a completed application, a statement of educational and career objectives, and a letter of recommendation by a Transportation Engineering faculty member.

More information can be found online at https://itewisconsin.org
# 2020 Section Budget

## Treasurer's Report

**August 1, 2020 to October 15, 2020**

### BEGINNING BALANCE: CHECKING + SAVINGS  
**$24,916.15**

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**ENDING BALANCE: CHECKING + SAVINGS  
$27,090.30**

Prepared By: Jess Billmeyer, Treasurer  
October 21, 2020 ITE WI Section / SimCAP Meeting
Transportation Funny Photos

Do you have some information to share? The ITE Newsletter is an excellent medium for reaching section members. If you would like something published in the upcoming newsletter, please contact the 2020 Wisconsin Section Member Director, Brian Scharles at Brian5@tapconet.com.
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