

WEFMAX Day # 1, **May 25, 2023**

9:00 – 9:45 am Improving MAs Through Leadership and Innovation
Jeremy Brashears & Jeff Berlin

Q&A

Mentorship...I have been in the industry for 35 years I've been mentored to get up to where I'm today and they proved to me that mentorship is probably the most effective way to go.

Both Jeff and I had the honor of being chosen by WEF a year and a half to two years ago to go through their inaugural training. One of the questions that I asked our coach was, how did you decide on us, why did you pick us; the answer was.... they said we looked for representative people. I was told I was the representative of the old white men. It's the first time I've ever carried that torch. Training has different values for wherever you sit, wherever you are in your life, and your perspective. It's important for you to be able to understand how you are seeing, as well as how you approach others, it's a little bit different for every single person. It brings great value for you to be able to empathize with seeing things from different perspectives.

I still have mentors and I'm a supervisor before becoming the chair of the committee in Arizona. You must learn to delegate, and you have to learn to rely on others. My mentors enabled me to be able to focus on my staff, empowering them and being there for them because it's really all about people.

Developing self-confidence: I was asked to get in front of people and talk but I wasn't comfortable with that, but I knew I had to do it. Where this really came in was when I was hired to be a Senior Environmental Engineer and I wasn't very good at it. So, what would happen is the younger folks would come asking questions and I would answer, then I'll close my door and look up the answer to make sure I was right. After a while, I realized it was OK to say I don't know, but I will find the answer.

[Times] where you have to manage your managers because there are a lot of smart people that work for them. Everyone has that skill in us, and you just must let it work.

[Edge] [*Explain Demonstrate Guide Enable*]: I had to learn a lesson. I had to admit in front of a 12-year-old that I don't remember how to do certain things and we looked it up together and figured it out. I'm going to do that in my professional career. I want someone after me to be able to do the same thing and to rely on and not make unethical decisions. Let me show them, #1: my weakness and my humanity, and #2, the fact that I have I go back to first principles and go back to standards.

People learn in different ways and as a leader you need to know how people learn, some are visual, some are tactile and some just can't learn to tie their shoes until you show them two or three different ways and demonstrate it for them. Then guide them through multiple times and then make sure that you enable them. Say you did it, now go and do it and by the way, you can always come back, and we can do it again. Giving the opportunity to learn.

What does your MA do best in leadership development?

What we want to do is to encourage our emerging leaders to take on leadership roles because I'm going to be retiring so we need someone to take over.

WPLA: The leadership class that we just started right before COVID hit in Kentucky; for years we've had something called Leadership PE, which again is open to all Engineers. I went through it myself, ten years ago. The Clean Water Professionals in AWWA [Kentucky] decided to mimic that again, much like I think a lot of us do here. It's just for water professionals. There are six different sessions, over six or eight months in different parts of the states in an effort to get the water community together and get some of the younger folks to help create leaders from organizations.

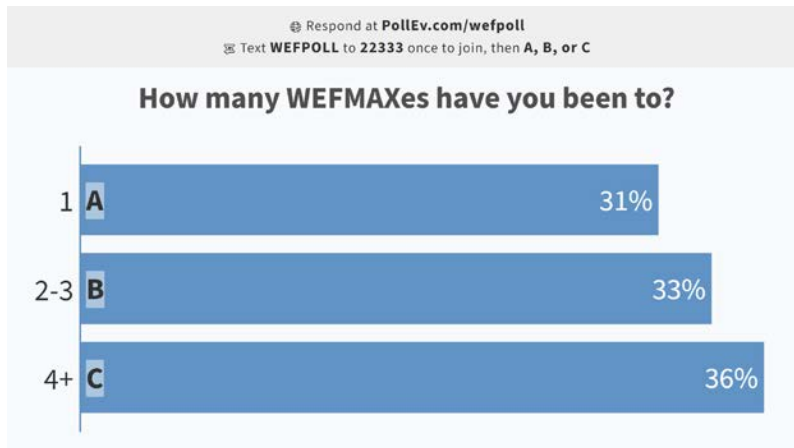
What could WEF do to improve leadership Development?

Perception: Few have gone all the way through our state-level leadership and then we like to have the former presidents delegate afterward. People say, I just don't have time right now, I don't have the energy for it. A former president Rhonda, who's still very involved; she was relatively early in her career or at least with me when she took on these big responsibility roles and I remember saying that, to do that and to not be a senior level manager (where you can delegate) it takes a lot of support from the employer. If it doesn't provide value to them, what do they get out of that? Of course, there's this huge value to being a leader in WEF.

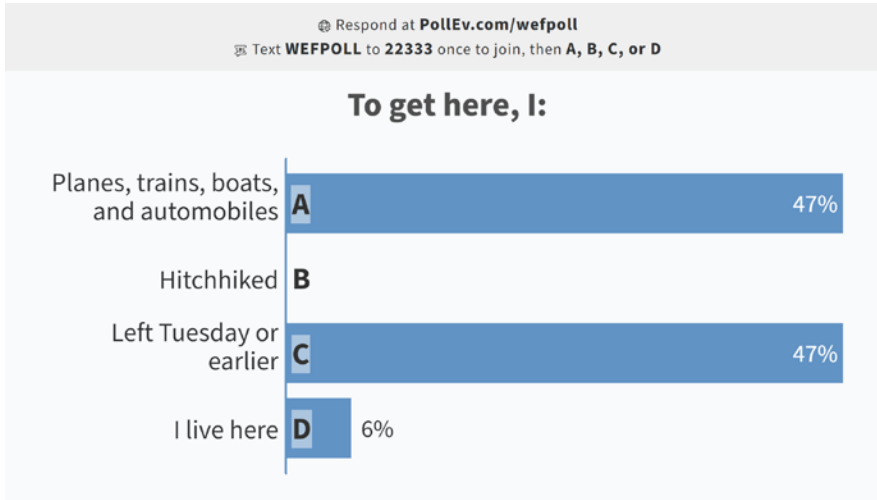
MA training: From a Florida standpoint, that's the pathway we're struggling with right now. We select our leadership historically by going with the last three past presidents picking for the next board. This is not necessarily the most diverse way to do it. It's one of those things that we've learned and identified. One of the things I was instructed to do here, is learn from y'all. What is your pathway; what is the mechanism that you use; how do you figure out how to go forward to select your board; get people into it and bring in the new leadership? The next part of this is how we get them engaged and involved. It is something we're struggling with right now.

POLL

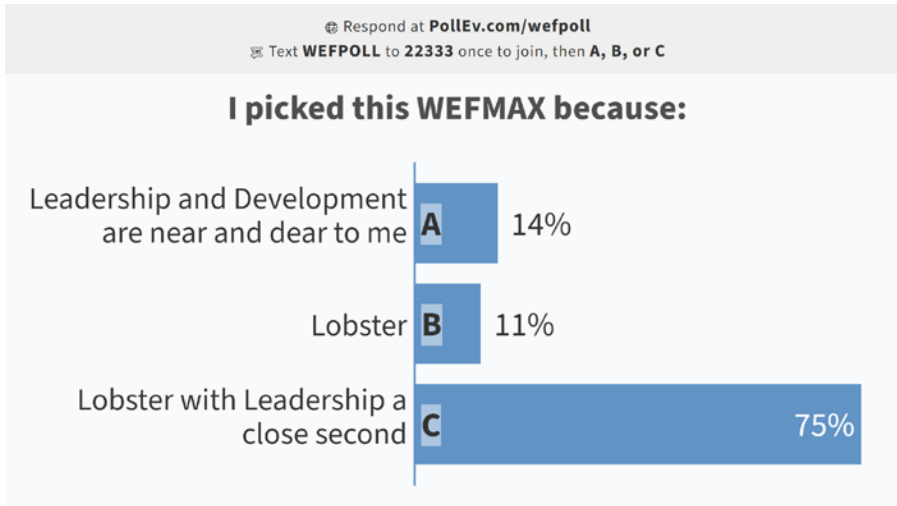
Q. 1



Q. 2



Q. 3



Q. 4



Q. 5.

Respond at PollEv.com/wefpoll
Text WEF POLL to 22333 once to join, then text your message

What leadership development in your career had the most effect and value for you?

“ Servant ”

“ Failure ”

“ Executive Coaching ”

“ Mentoring ”

Word scroll showed: Mentoring, servant, failure, the value of communicating, Voluntold, networking with peers, poor leadership, empowerment, empowering YPs, pathways, executive coaching, scout leader, mentorship, support, DEI training, being passed over for promotion, management of workers, listening, YP Committee Chair, leadership cohort, developing self-confidence, effective coaching, networking with peers, teaching others, leadership PE

Q. 6

Respond at PollEv.com/wefpoll
Text WEF POLL to 22333 once to join, then text your message

What does your MA do best in leadership development?



The word cloud for Q. 6 features the following terms: opportunities, inclusion, levels, network, leaders, nominating, program, key, support, involvement, wpla, wefmax, provide education, yps, empower, enable, leadership, emerging, identifying yps, innovation, retreat, mentorship, voluntlling school, nominate-volentelling, empower-local academy, and encourage.

Q. 7

Respond at PollEv.com/wefpoll
 Text WEF POLL to 22333 once to join, then text your message

What could WEF do to improve leadership development?

“ Perception ”

“ Training program ”

“ Fill the pipeline of leaders ”

“ Training ”

Word Scroll Showed: Perception, Training program, fill the pipeline of leaders, training, educate about opportunities, send Stephen Sanders to talk to our emerging leaders, MA training, encourage HOD participation earlier in your career, work with MAs individually, On line series on leadership skills, focused training, sponsor greatness in the environmental field, pathway, value proposition, provide course materials and syllabus for training course, more WEFMAX like events, more WEFMAX at different times, training assistance, identify future leaders, sessions at WEFTEC, perception, training program, fill the pipeline of leaders

Q. 8

Respond at PollEv.com/wefpoll
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What does innovation mean for our MAs and WEF?



solutions
 opportunities using
 technology new

10:00 – 11:30 am MA Leadership and Innovation – Moderated Panel
Earl Sheppard – South Carolina (WEASC)

I have 30 years in my job and guess what, I can retire right now. People are just holding on because they love this business. I've been doing this for a long time, so I got my certification back in the 90s in water, wastewater, physical, chemical, and whatever. I

don't know what the disconnect is. Honestly, I think that a lot of people don't take the time to sit down read, comprehend, and ask questions. I literally studied so much until I literally bombed on my test a few times, but I woke up one morning and the information just came together. I mean literally it just came together. You may not pass the test right away, but that doesn't mean that you don't have the information you are just not ready because your brain is so full. It must make adjustments to what you have going in and it has to place things in the right order for it to come together. I had that happen to me and I went and took a test a few days later and I've been testing the machine ever since. What we must do is we have to teach these young people that are coming in (behind us older people) whomever they are. Retention in the workplace, are people leaving, that's a good question. Do the appropriate things for the right people. Hire the right person, and promote the right people, for the right situation. Recruitment, step up the game as too many people leaving – losing 50 people out of 150 per year. Need to recruit 3 x's that amount or in dire straits. Recruit 2 -3 people for every 1 loss. I know people that have been in the business for 52 years because they aren't sure anyone can take the helm and you need to love this business. There is only one environment.

Environmental Stewardship: This environment is all we have. We must protect and invest in protecting this environment. Our kids and grandkids will never know what we do for a living because they will be just trying to survive. We need to fix the screw-ups from the past. We are the stewards, fixing what was done before. Make sure we clean up and don't leave a lot of legacy waste behind. There is nowhere else to go. Do the best we can and protect humankind.

Fair Compensation: Young people will walk in the door, and they'll say that they should financially make what others working there, with experience make. They don't have the knowledge, the understanding of what we've gone through, the pains that we've gone through, and it's taken us years, and modern technology. You still have to have that core energy to do what we do here. We understand failure, we understand what it's like to not have the internet or some computer system running the system for us to read; we know how to go back and troubleshoot and run things manually. Don't let the internet go down as they (young people) will fall apart. I tell people all the time that guess what, power and internet go out and we always have water and sewer. The water and sewer always work, so compensation comes with the ability to know what to do when the times get tough. It's not about friendship because your friendships and your backwoods handshake will come back and haunt you if you don't do it right.

RMWEA Innovative Water Technology Committee – Joe Tamburini (RMWEA)

I'm here to talk about the Innovative Water Technology Committee, it's the innovation side of this conference. This is one of the more energetic committees that we have had, and their task is to essentially look at innovation. Innovation in water is new. Technologies or ways of enhancing the existing technologies and making them better, more sustainable so they hit both of those things. The IWTC membership is essentially 10 to 12 rotating people that are on the steering committee that helps to guide what we are going to be investigating, and what events are going to look like. They also do quite a bit of publication, so we have a bimonthly magazine, and they are author articles. In that magazine, there is quite a bit of innovation or sustainability and promotion of it. One

of the cool things that we're doing at our recent conferences is doing a Shark Tank section within the conference and this year's Shark Tank is going to give out \$5000 to different operators or groups that can present their idea. They do all kinds of different events during COVID. They were doing a webinar on a different topic every two months and six or seven times a year. In-person seminars; one or two since COVID. We're going to pick a specific broad topic to be looking at and then they go out and they find speakers that are going to be able to talk to different portions of that theme. You can look at all kinds of different innovative things to do with carbon reduction. They do a lot of site tours. They do stay really engaged and I think that's one of the reasons why this committee is one of our higher-performing committees; they're not tasked with making money. A lot of the committee's time has been spent brainstorming different topics. Whom are we going to get to speak that's knowledgeable on different topics and then all of the other typical stuff you do event planning and making sure everything runs efficiently? Some of the examples that they've done are complex things like supercritical water oxidation talks about different algae biofilm reduction, and technology system stuff. Also, a lot of innovations to existing things and so like you say nutrients and byproducts and harvesting phosphorus and those kinds of wastewater-related things. One of the more interesting ones is the DOF webinar on how do you operate with low bio and what are the benefits of it and what does it do? I asked the committee what's next, what are the things that they're seeing, and what you guys want to investigate next. These companies that want to get their product out there, how can we do that, and let them know that we exist, how can we be more out front? Have them know how to come to us as the experts because we can get their technology out to multiple different wastewater plants instead of them just trying to target the biggest one. They only have one audience if they come to us. You know where we have broader reach so that was one of the things and they were appreciative of the Wefmax Innovation showcase as well.

Women in Leadership – Julie Stokes (ACWWA)

Being female, I was a minority when I started working. My first job was with the New Brunswick Department of Transportation. I was late to water. I was the girl on the job site with 40 guys and so they just called me the girl, just go see the girl she could tell you. I had a crew; I was a surveyor and inspector, and I was new. I was overwhelmed, I was in a man's field for sure.

My boss's spouse passed away suddenly at 36 years old and would not be in that day for work. I panicked and I said, we had nothing to do today so we went to the crew, and we went to help someone else on another section of the highway. I went home that night, and I went OK my boss is not coming back anytime soon. I said, I got to figure out what I'm going to do, what's my next step?

I proceeded with my next week and then the week after we had a site meeting where I had the Project Engineer, the District Engineer, and the District Engineer (female), show up on-site and they said we were going to start the construction of a bridge. I didn't learn bridges in school. The Project Engineer said Julie's not ready for that, I was no, I'm not ready for that. She looked at me and said, "Well she's going to sink her swim".

I went home that night going wow that's huge! She showed that she had trusted me, she said you've got this, right? I went home and I made up my plan and I'm like OK I'm going to do this because she thinks I can do this.

I'm sharing this story because she was one of the biggest leaders in my career. What she taught me that day is that if you trust in someone and you show them, they can do it they will do it right.

2 funny stories. I have a fear of heights and I did not want to show the male industry that I had a fear of heights. So, bridges are high. One day we were building the pier and I was like I'm going to have to go up there was like I can't do this but I have to because we were pouring the bearing blocks. I was like, I have to go up there, so I got on the pier cap and my legs froze and they were like, Julie, what are you doing? I said I couldn't move. They were asking why, to which I replied that I'm afraid of heights. So, just to reiterate that sometimes we must get out of our comfort zone in order to grow. If we take our young people and we show them how to get out of their comfort zone they will grow and they will become our future leaders.

At my first conference, I was like my boss probably regretted bringing me to this conference because I was like a little puppy that followed him around everywhere.

Where he went, I was there. I don't know anybody here and most of it was a very male industry, so I was there going, I know nobody at all.

I had just started in the water industry, so my boss looked at me and he said, do you see that; they're all male. It was like yeah; so, he looked at me and he said one day Julie, I want you up there. You want me up there? I never forgot that, so when we got back from the conference, he signed me up for the Education Committee, which I knew nothing about. Then boom, I was in Clara's world. I've not left her world.

It started with just that one little comment. He's retired now but a few years ago I got on the Board of Directors, and I sent him an e-mail. I said you probably will not remember what you told me that day, but I said here's the impact that you had, and I said I'm on the BOD today. He didn't remember but that's a mentor for me.

Those are two events in my life that made me grow and today I believe I'm a good leader because of those things. Because I got out of my comfort zone. There was a great quote that I wanted to share with everybody, "Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself, when you become a leader, success is about growing others." That's so true.

Leadership Retreat and Committee SOPs – Ellen Frketic (Chesapeake WEA)

The Water Reuse Committee (in Delaware) is a joint committee with our annual conference in late August or early September. It is always held the week before Labor Day and that's when our committee changes our officers and the board. I was president-elect when we started a Leadership Retreat. It was a full-day event that had the board members, the chairs, and the vice chairs; we had everybody there to talk about how we needed to do things, how to run a meeting, how to run a seminar, how to plan for these things and we've held one ever since. Although, we did have to pivot in 2020.

What we do is we go over (I'm also chair of the budget and Finance Committee, because I have a really hard time saying no to people) we would I would go over finance and why is finance important for an MA. We have an Executive Administrator we must pay, and we have to think about how we're going to do these things. I created a budget worksheet because I am an Engineer and I like Excel spreadsheets with formulas. We also have done some interesting things; we have branding guidelines that Cheryl Paulin developed; she was our previous administrator. Even just little things you know, not just colors that we use, but checklists for webinars, seminars, and event planning;

information on how to put an article in our publication. That's always a big thing to try to get committees to remember to do that when they hold an event. Get pictures, and get somebody to do this, so the committees are broken down into four categories and they report to different people. Some report to our trustees, some report to the president, vice president, and so forth. Each one must do things a little bit differently, so we decided what we needed to do and to try to encourage more people to become committee chairs. We are developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) so that when a new committee chair comes on, it's OK, this is what you're expected to do you're going to be running a seminar or two seminars a year. You're going to get members this way, it's just that we thought it was important to do this. We are still working on the SOPs. We've had some people in committee positions for a long time and it's, oh we know what to do, don't worry. We've got administrative, we've got associative liaison and partnerships and our association conference that we hold every year is with the Chesapeake Section of AWWA.

We also have a Wastewater Operators Association which I keep trying to bring into our fold. We don't have a whole lot of operators in Chesapeake because they belong to the Wastewater Operators Association, it's only \$25 a year for their membership. We've been toying with the idea of an MA-only membership. That's something that goes back and forth. Just as an example of our SOP format, we've got everything in there: how to select the chairs and vice chairs, how long you need to serve, because in some of the big committees, like collections, the chair serves for a year. The vice chair moves up next year. Others like budget, (I've been budgeting Finance Committee chair for a gazillion years, and I sucked). Laura, as my vice chair last year just because I'm getting close to retirement age, and I want to make sure that somebody can continue when I'm gone. If I go. It's really hard to leave.

I brought the branding guidelines with me if anybody is interested in seeing them. I would be happy to answer any questions when we have a break.

YP Leadership and Mentoring – Tim Ware (FWEA)

I am currently serving as a Director at a large FWEA. We have a decent YP Committee within the board. It's one of our standing committees and it really works to get the right people. There is a newsletter that comes out quarterly. They have sponsors. The committee has its own set of sponsors. The Florida Conference is next week, lol if anyone is in the area, come down. They're very active and engaged and we try to get members of the YP Committee engaged in our different committees throughout the organization. Grabbing them when they are young and keeping them. It's important to get them into the business, tell them, we want you here and that's really one of the things that we try to push. We have student chapters for all of these different schools, and we work really closely with our different chapters within FWEA to keep them engaged. We have a person that's a liaison to specifically work for the schools. We get students to come to the events to have engagement. You really must have that line of communication to keep them engaged and make sure they participate. I'm very fortunate that the current president happens to live in Florida, so she's engaged locally as well. She has helped pull some of these student chapters in to broaden that engagement. It's really been nice to see because now we're bringing the kids in early and they're coming to watch. So, keeping the student chapters engaged for us is a very big deal I'm fighting with. We lost a lot of engagements in COVID, and we are trying to get them back.

Mines is the first voice you're going to hear, as this is near and dear to my heart. I'm passionate about it, I love it. You start by telling the kids you're here because we want you here.

In 2006 Florida started a student design program. It started the student design in Florida, but we have been participating sending teams since its inception. We show up every year. We have 11 first-place finishes in the different categories, 7 seconds, four 3rd place, and five 4th places. We showed up, we've done well, and we've got a great group of kids that we pull from. We've got teachers that are engaged like crazy. Professor Dr. Sharini starts the semester before the senior semester to find the client. To find a client they'll go to Pasco County, Hillsborough County, the city of Tampa, they find an actual client that has an actual problem and that's what the kids do their project on and that's when they come to present so student design for us. If you want to get kids engaged, teach them about the water business, and give them a real problem. I had fun last year, I got to judge on the wastewater side. As a judge you got to ask the questions, you got to make them think. You start him up by saying, hey I'm not giving you a grade, I'm not giving you a paycheck, you don't lose anything, but you must understand the rigors of the business.

We've got student designs, we've got a workshop, and we try hard to make sure that they are engaged and that they're welcome. We do resume seminars with them, we talk about business. We know what business is, we've all done it for a long time. They are coming out of college and wonder what's the difference between a consultant working in the Municipality and working for a Regulatory agency. Working as a manufacturer rep, working for the manufacturer, what are the different facets of business? Internship program – connecting businesses working with colleges for internship and mentoring programs. For me, I keep it up and don't stop working with kids and getting them engaged, and it's a big deal!

Q&A Panel

- Does DC water really stink? No DC does not ask about Baltimore City.
- I've got a simple one, a program that was started to promote DEI. It targets minority-driven colleges, historically black colleges, and universities. Howard University is one of the big ones and the idea is to get folks that normally aren't in the water businesses. They don't really talk about water & wastewater treatment and so it's getting them to come in and see what we do, how we do it, how we increase that diversity within our organization. Florida has a very high Hispanic population we have a very high African American population and it's getting those kids engaged. USF is kind of unique and a lot of exchange students come to USF. I've hired multiple folks within my office.
- To address workforce development-type issues. I don't know how creative we've been, but we have a three-year Operator in Training program in Maryland. At Maryland Environmental Service we just revamped all our levels, not just the OIT Program but beyond that to try to see. It says if you have had this many years and you've taken these additional classes or courses you can move up to the next level and you'll get this much of a raise. We're hoping that's going to help us keep people. What has happened here at MES is that we'll get people through the program and then because we are an independent state agency, we pay a little better than the state pays. (Not as well as some of the big utilities) so we'll lose people to DC Water

or WSSC Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. The other thing that we're looking at right now is a regional pay scale for those folks that live in the areas between Baltimore and Washington DC. We hope we can be competitive and hopefully keep people but the one thing that I've heard about also is that the young people coming in today love technology; so, if you can get it, you've got a great status system, they still need to learn the basics. If you know you've got things like that, then that can also help attract them, if you kind of play that up.

We also have hit every job fair that we can find. We've gone to different schools just trying to keep our vacancy rate as low as possible and to try to bring in new blood. Our vacancy rate as of last week was below 4%.

Young people from the ages of 18 to 24, must interview, they spend time working with the public in Public Works and they can talk about business and whatever they want to talk about. When they get done with the program we go to the point where they find them suits to wear for interviews. We provide transportation if we must, and they get interviewed. It's a good program.

Even if we try to cater to the younger crowd you have got to be careful because the young crowd looks for dollars. You've got to be careful how you give information out. If you're in your 40s or 50s or older you are probably looking at more benefits than money because now, you're at the age where your body is breaking down. Again, you have got to be careful with the young crew and we learned this because with McDonald's, Chick-fil-A, and Burger King wage increase that's hard to compete with. I really appreciate the work as far as getting involved with schools at a younger age because now we can start talking to them.

The other thing I'll add to that is we also must establish an identity in our community because otherwise we're going in and we're trying to sell it, but we don't have an identity within our community.

The other question I had was for Ellen. I wonder if you could talk a little bit more about the challenges of having somebody (an operator) that's not part of your community. Does that affect your programming, how does that all work? I know you said you're trying to get them in but I'm just curious about the dynamics of that.

One of the things I did (back to being *voluntold*), was I had a very (almost dead) plant. The O&M Committee within CWEA and I talked to the Deputy Director of Water & Wastewater Operations. I said, I need you to do this, and he said, OK. He was excited, so we were trying to get that up and running to get people more excited about it. The guys are excited. The folks that were on the committee are already talking about going to do a webinar (I think this year) and then next year look into doing a seminar because they're all new at this.

At the annual conference with the Wastewater Operator Association, we do train there, so people can come and get their Operator's training. We even hold the exam at the end of the week.

We also sponsor the work part of the short course. Maryland's short course for water & wastewater operators. When it's a week at a location, we help with the training, and we have people that are CWA members that provide some of the training. At the end of that week, the people can sit for their licenses.

It's hard because we have a lot of challenges, and it gets frustrating at times because we have a lot of people at CWEA that have been part of the organization for a long time. I know at one point years ago when we were doing strategic planning

and they were talking about stakeholders and none of them wanted to include operators; I said come on guys, this is part of our organization mandate. It was an ugly meeting because I kept fighting. I think it's gotten a little better.

Let me speak on this for a second because Florida has a similar situation. We've got the FWEA and then FWPCOA, which is the Florida Water pollution control and Operators Association. We have actively talked about getting Operators more involved and we recognize that we want them there, but with WPCCO it's a lot cheaper. Florida does have a separate membership just for FWA; so, we talk about the latter as it's significantly less.

It really is how we get them more engaged because they're doing their thing and it continues to be a struggle. We're not sure how to get them more engaged. One thing we do is if we're having a luncheon or anything like that and we're paying \$30 bucks: it'll be \$10 for Operators or \$15 if you're from a Municipality. They try to do the discounted rates anytime we're doing a seminar. We get quite a few of them that show up at the different seminars because we offer that discounted rate. It is one way to get them there; even if they're not a member we still try to keep them engaged.

Julie, do you find that there are women that are applying for jobs in the career that you're in? Or do you find there are more men, or how do you bridge that topic?

We have 30 employees in the Water and Wastewater Department where I work. There are a few on the side who are not part of the 30, there's only one other female that is a worker apart from me. But lately, in the last year, I've seen on the public works side about five females come over. Which is huge! It is good to see that they are coming into that side of the workforce. One thing that I do teach the guys is don't treat them any differently. They don't want to be treated differently. I know that you do not want to give that jackhammer to her but give the jackhammer to her! If that's her job, then let her do her job; you do yours. It is not ingrained in their culture and their behavior, so they have to kind of adapt. We face challenges, but I found one of the biggest benefits is once I earn their respect, I have that respect!

I've had to work harder, I think sometimes to earn their respect but once I have it, I have it. I don't know if it's gender or my personality. My new coworker was like, what are you doing?

My question is, it's awesome to see the improvements in gender diversity on your board. Those pictures side by side were very telling. I think I see that on our board as well. Are there any lessons [in the recent history] of increasing gender diversity in our leadership that we could apply to increase racial and ethnic diversity?

Whatever diversity you're trying to get is about communicating what it is we do rather than the perception of what it is we do. It's not the task, it's the goal. The one thing I've seen is that a lot of that gender diversity is on the engineering side. It is not so much on the operator and collection system operator side. Having run the Sewer Maintenance Department for Buffalo Sewer Authority, being the one woman that was not the clerk in the department of 40. It's been improving because the messaging has changed from arguing about digging that hole, to water in the environment and this is an environmental job.

Earl hires the best for the job, whoever can get the job done. Each one of us, if we didn't do our jobs... would be in the ...Black Plague...we save more lives every day! You're here, you're on my team. We are not thought of until there is no sewer or water. By creating an environment that's inclusive, you're going to get the retention and then the other thing too is, you can't be it if you don't see it and so we need to highlight underrepresented groups and underrepresented areas so they can see it.

I don't know what the original question was about diversity on the board and it kind of worked in the workforce but just what Steven was saying, having that diversity seen so that you attract more people who want to be.

Our president switches between male and female for the most part every year and we have a very large board that looks like we are extremely diverse. We have somebody who represents the Operators Network, we have someone who represents Manufacturers. We have their specific positions that when that person is up, we're replacing that position with someone else who's going to represent Operators and have their interests at heart.

We try to cover a lot of bases within the board, we have a big board, so we have the flexibility to do that. That's just something to think about as far as how we can create a diverse board.

One day at the board meeting; we all looked around and we went wow we organically became diverse we didn't plan it. Diversity and inclusion are such a hot topic today and my municipality tries to implement it not organically. Like you said you hire the person because they are the best fit for the job, it might be a male that is the best fit in that interview process. What we saw in the last few years was that the wrong person was hired for the wrong reasons and then it didn't work right so we want to be diverse and inclusive, but we can't lose the fact that we want to hire the right person still. We've had quite a few [bad hires] because they weren't the best fit, so be careful with that. We had legislation that was passed about our agency a couple of years ago. When we hold interviews HR approves the interview panel, we just make sure that we're always scoring. We have the questions approved ahead of time because we are a state agency but with the questions approved everybody has the same questions. The person with the highest score is going to get the job no matter whether male or female, white, black, whatever - but we do have it kind of fun to have the diverse panel doing the interviews because people see things differently.

You identify people that you're bringing into leadership positions; one thing that I've heard from pretty much everybody here is that we are “yes” people when we get asked to participate, we raise our hands. There are oftentimes good reasons why people say no and they kind of draw boundaries around how they participate in our organization and it's not necessarily more is better, so I'm wondering if there's a theme here in how we identify whom we bring into our leadership. I am just curious how people do that.

There are also other ways that we're starting to identify people who may just think a little bit differently but bring something new to the board. We do a follow-up to make sure that we're all going in the right direction. If you want to go right and I need you to come back over to the left and vice versa, kind of showing you the direction that I need to get you in. What it does is guide what we need to do with people.

Tim stated... if you have people showing up, it's the committee that has to go and ask those people to help and if you get an opportunity...ask. Ask them to get involved.

In the House of Delegates is a Delegate at Large from Florida, named Christina. She represents working moms who are a large group. She represents the House of Delegates and in that way, she's got a good opportunity to get involved in putting the right person in the right place to connect them, having the willingness and ability to get involved with the opportunity that fits their needs. Christina is running the virtual Wefmax, which will happen this summer because she as a working mom can't travel to an in-person conference. That's a way that we can fit her availability and preference for involvement into an opportunity that fits. In the same way, Julie was talking about hiring the right person for the right role; that's kind of what we're doing with our nominating people for the right rules.

My question, that's more on the workforce side and it touches a little bit on the parts in Texas. We have a Workforce Committee, we have an Apprenticeship Program that we're working on building up, and we have an a Utility Membership that's available. I'm happy to talk in more detail about any of that if anyone has questions. I'm specifically very interested in this High School program in South Carolina and then what we talked about with Florida having these local divisions or sections liaisons with the student chapters. Texas is a big state, we have some very active areas geographically, and we have areas that don't serve as well. There are some student chapters that we have at the university level where because there's a faculty member on-site [who's a champion] it is self-perpetuating without a lot of our influence. Then they're places where we go and we say, hey we really want y'all at the annual conference for inflow or whatever. We can get people there but it's a lot of staff work to just maintain every step of the way. There's just too much going on and even more so at the high school level. I've heard there have been places where that's been tried [at least in Texas] to develop a training or pathway towards job training. Then for whatever reason either the staff person moves on or there's a disconnect with the local utility and it just fizzles. I'm very curious, I want to know more if it's replicable if not, what the challenges are, and then also what y'all do in Florida to get these self-actuating university chapters.

In my role as a Director at Large, I'm responsible for what we call the Big Bend Chapter. We're broken into chapters; Big Bend Chapter is from Tallahassee over to Pensacola. If you ever make that drive, it's a hell of a drive. I'm responsible for working with the local chapter to talk about what they're doing. FSU has a professor that has agreed to liaison and be that connection. There is that level of connection and because we've been doing it for so long, now over 20 years; having students' participation is key.

I've asked to have \$15,000 put in the budget and our board members approve our budgets. They question what this is, but it's very hard to scratch that off the list when we told you we're trying to recruit.

Julie stated that thee bring in 700 students from grades 3-5 and teach them. Send the message home and teach. It introduces the kids to the W&WW world. AND NO Wipes.....

I was taking some notes and I wanted to close the loop on a couple of things. In Georgia, we created a committee called H2O Opportunity and as an entire industry, we came together to address the workforce. When we notice that the construction industry in Georgia was putting on huge recruiting events every year. Kids got to come, the police were there, the fire was there, a bunch of construction industrial organizations and there was no water. We got our industry to come together to create a world so there would be

a world of fire, a world of concrete, so we created a world of water. Water goes through the entire water cycle, and we just worked together so consultants, vendors, and utilities all work together. We decided it was a collective problem and we are facing the same issue. Through that committee, we decided we're going to work together on this workforce situation instead of competing against each other [because we row].

My committee's job is to deal with Recruitment and Outreach, so ask the question specifically about whether were there any best practices that were drawn from getting gender parity and gender diversity in your organization and in general because of what we've seen over the last couple years and our industry; is that we have made tremendous strides in increasing gender participation as well as leadership diversity.

This question is very specific, did we learn anything from that process that we can now use to achieve a level of diversity that goes beyond just gender?

This is a really important point I need to make, when you're in the majority it's very easy to not recognize the need for diversity in our area because the people that are not in your group are invisible to you. For instance, I'm an Engineer and it's very easy within our industry to make things engineer specific. We're engineers in the room and invisible until somebody says no, I see you. We need to be intentional to ensure we are not ignoring this group that is not in the majority. #1. When it comes to race or gender, when you're in the majority [unless you're intentional to recognize somebody's missing and they exist] you don't do anything about it. #2. Many times, we think diversity happens organically when the truth is, that's not true. There is a saying that says if you do the same thing over and over and expect different results you never get what you want. What we've done is, no we may not have been intentional to promote certain people, but we've been intentional to remove barriers. Removing barriers is an intentional act. It may not be as bold-faced as we need. The removal of bias and processes is intentional, so we think it's organic. We did things to ensure that people from groups that we previously ignored or people who were invisible to us, had the same opportunity. To get in these positions of leadership and to get to participate like those in the majority that has always been and the only reason why it looks organic was because it's building to culture you know. Once it's built into our culture it feels natural, so we feel like we didn't do anything. It just didn't happen. We're not seeing where we were 20 years ago or 30 years ago; so it feels organic because it feels natural.

Closed Panel....11:32 am

1:00 – 2:15 PM WEF Leadership and Innovation – Moderated Panel
Stephen Sanders (WEF Trustee)
Donnell Duncan (Speaker of the House)
WEF Leadership Path – (Bill Davis)
Leadership Development for YPs - (Ama Richardson)
Leadership in WEF – (Janet Cann)

Q&A

We're being leaders, don't be self-serving and helping other people. March the right way and that's pretty much my statement.

What drives me crazy the most is when someone says they're self-made, whatever; everyone needs help. So sometimes when we get in a certain position, as we do, we must turn around and offer a hand back to someone else, that's your duty. You didn't get there by yourself, that's your duty.

I absolutely love your focus on setting yourself and your team up to accept failure and learning from failure another leadership technique or leadership applicability or point that goes along with that is especially in nonprofit churches these long running organizations allow something to die.

I guess I'll spur some conversation, we heard that a lot of us experienced professionals were seeing things differently about getting more young professionals, and emerging professionals involved and active. ***I'm wondering given your experience with that SYPC community, what are your thoughts on how we as the mentor side of the relationship can serve young professionals?*** Response...Diverse panels with room so the leaders can come to you 1 by 1 and make it easier. She was talking about all the doors that closed in her face to people who didn't believe in her and it's because of mentors like all of you in the room, where she had the support of the network to keep going to be where she is. She was encouraging the folks in the room to aspire to the levels that they seek.

I was at that with WEFMAX, last year in South Carolina. The focus was on Emerging Professionals, and we had quite a few emerging professionals present there. There have been scholarships awarded and some of the MA's had provided the funding to get there. I think that's something that we should probably all take into consideration and budget. Our MAs identifies who these emerging professionals are and make sure we send them to a Wefmax. This is a good initiation or inauguration into what all leadership can be like and what opportunities. The "idea exchange" is always phenomenal, so I would suggest that we make that concerted and strategic effort to get in one piece present at meetings like this.

Just a quick question that's workforce-related as well as on committees. The emerging leaders I think got it better than we did because we didn't figure out the work-life balance like they've got it figured out. We're probably all here because we've put a lot of time at work and a lot of time into volunteering because we're passionate about what we do. ***Are you finding that it's better to engage them in micro tasks or full-on? Do you know what I mean, because of that work-life balance? Are you missing out on some potentially good emerging leaders that don't want to commit to a lot of time?*** The emerging leaders that I've run into have great passion. The folks I have talked to and the opportunities I've had to visit other MAs.

The incoming president, his first job was to make sure the beer was iced down before the meeting. I was fortunate enough to have a built-in mentor and like so much of what you said this morning I have walked that path.

At my first conference, I went with my mentor, and I was a little puppy following him everywhere. He helped me make those connections, so I see where, if you see someone new looking intimidated or off in the corner thinking I have no one to talk to and nothing to no one wants to hear what I have to say; walk up to them, introduce yourself and begin that dialogue. Then they feel like they have a friend in the industry and maybe

a point of contact. I hear folks say, I don't know how to get engaged; you have to know someone to get on to a committee. I think we as leaders need to be a little more proactive and maybe reach out to folks that we don't know as well because we will overuse the ones that are already engaged.

I love what Janet said, that she forgets a lot of times all the innovative things she's done so I'm going to remind her of something. We were on the nominee committee for the state, and the first time Janet said we really need to define the role and not just tell them what that position does but tell them what kind of commitment we're looking for. On that same level, we did that for every position in the state. We talk a lot about meetings and how many meetings and how many committees and things you'll have and how much of a time investment. The good thing about a lot of these meetings is that they're during the day so you can find time. You can either flip your lunch or you can get the company to cover that. We had a recent meeting in my state, and they talked about giving free memberships to students. I asked the question, we have 300 student-made members; how many of them are coming to any of the meetings, how many have you all called? People need to feel valued and appreciated. Encourage it! It gets people engaged and eliminates some of the insecurity.

I have been interested in applying to the committee but how do you find out the time commitment, where do you go, or do I call you?

You could reach out to but by joining the committee now with this new platform we're using a lot of times, it's posting the opportunities. Kathy & Julia mentioned volunteering and trying to engage folks at a level they're comfortable with. Depending on what balance their life is in at that current time they may be able to immerse themselves. You should reach out to someone on the committee to gauge what you want to do. The opportunities that they post are supposed to include a description of what the task is and an idea of what the time commitment is. One thing that we learned from the Volunteer of the Future Task Force [which was several years ago, but still resonates forward] is volunteers want to be engaged but they want to go into it better informed.

We do struggle in Arizona with getting Operators involved. Operators don't have the flexibility, they must run these plants, and they don't really get the breaks that some of us that work in an office do. So that is one thing that that we struggle with is really trying to engage Operators and we've done things like evening events or weekend events because they can't get out of their jobs to be involved. They want to be with their families, they need to relax. I'm interested if anybody has ideas on how to get Operators involved because all we do is try to get leaders within the municipalities to try to build that flexibility into their schedule so that they can go to meetings or engage.

One thing we do to help with that is for all our meetings and stuff like that we offer PDH's and CEUs so whether you're an Engineer or an Operator, you can get continuing education. That helps quite a bit because then the employer sees value.

I just have a question and am a first-time attendee. I'm neither an Operator nor an Engineer; I'm your local neighborhood supplier and support staff. I truly do believe there's value to being involved; sometimes I find it a little confusing though. ***How do you***

see us as being a part of the organization, and what role do we play? I would like to have some input; I just feel a little bit in the dark.

I want to speak to that question, not from my own personal experience [second generation within water & wastewater] but working on the administrative side of an MA is a little bit different. We had a president of our Texas MA from 2019 to 2020 and he runs a safety security SCADA Automation Firm. He is very plugged into our North Texas section and works with multiple different Utilities. It took a concerted effort to say, hey do you have energy and interest, do you want to grow your business and why don't you come in and get involved?

I think in general the community is very welcoming if you are ready to share and ready to bring people in and you know I say [to brag on Texas] we also have a Manufacturers and Reps Committee [in name only] that doesn't really do a whole lot; so, there's room for growth there. I also wanted to go back to this question about getting Municipal Operators and then employees involved. One thing that we've worked on in Texas and in particular our Central Texas section where we didn't have as much Operator Membership as we thought we should have. We had to tell the Central Texas section you can no longer do every single section meeting as an evening seminar, downtown on Wednesday at 7:00 PM. You must alternate now into a lunchtime meeting every other meeting. The city of Austin was going to host it at their facility, so we have all these Operators showing up. They're there, they get their hours CEU, they get the free lunch and it's easy for the city because they're on site the whole time.

I have more of a comment, just sharing something that I think has been successful in Virginia. We're talking about reaching out and bringing new people in; young people and encouraging them with micro-tasks; however, you want to get that engagement but we're talking about people having to feel the value of it being at a utility.

Previously, my Utility didn't necessarily understand the value of what my participation meant, and I think that what we do when there are volunteers is write letters to supervisors of people who have been volunteering and very well thought out. Write and acknowledge what their staff members and their employees have done and it's not a heavy lift, right? It's a letter. So, I think it's been very well received, and I think that people also appreciate it because they feel seen. I'm curious if anybody else does something different as a way of it's a thank you. Not directly to that person but it also feeds and encourages this participation within their organizations.

That's a really good idea and believe not many of us benefit from that. I do understand how important it is to let people, organizations, and supervisors know how important this person is to the organization. Just having that communication back to the organization that feedback loop really does benefit the individual that volunteers. What I love is that we form letters every time a big conference comes around that you could download, and you can edit for your supervisor, or you can reach out and we can find a way to you know make it. This is not just about the person feeling good about themselves but also that the organization knowing the value this person is bringing to the organization as a volunteer.

2:45- 3:34 PM Brainstorming Solutions World Café Method Discussion – Roving Discussion Recap
Jeff Berlin and Jeremy Brashears

What leadership skills did you learn from WEF/MA involvement?

- Delegation, tugboat effect, learning how to ask for help, how to say, “no”, ELMO, no harm in asking for...., giving back & mentoring, collaboration, hospitality – the welcoming, value of mentoring, the value of positive feedback, strategic planning, budgeting/ planning, public speaking, learning to work with a diverse group, action item lists with assignments, teamwork/ working in a team, servant leadership, how to motivate, how to acknowledge, delegation – clear process, clear expectations, listening, understanding governance & Policies, know your audience and how to deliver the message, where or whom to go to find answers, how to build a network & recognize the value of peoples roles & functions.

How can we explain the value of serving as a volunteer leader?

- Describe your own experience as a volunteer leader and highlight the benefits.
- Sharing the knowledge, you’ve learned.
- Expanding your network in a meaningful way.
- Telling your volunteer water story, there is power in storytelling.
- Transferable skills (across your career).
- Utilizing networking opportunities.
- Creating videos to communicate meaningful messages on engagement & volunteer leadership opportunities, etc.
- Connectivity: meeting people outside of your [like-minded] circles.
- What the MA has meant to me, ‘remarks segment/ opportunity for outgoing chairs / MA presidents, etc.
- Professional Development opportunities and the value of this.
- Networking provides channels for resources and support.
- Career advancement via the competitive edge that one can gain.
- Relationship building.
- Recognition, via awards.
- Benefits to the employer:
 - o One page to explain the value of being involved.
 - o Highlight professional development opportunities.
 - o Promote volunteer leader examples/ anecdotes as “good news stories” that benefit your company’s PR efforts.

- Highlight volunteer service as a win-win-win for all parties: the employer, and the industry.
- Highlight the richer career opportunities that result from a volunteer leadership experience.

What are implementable ways for WEF + MAs to help with workforce development?

- HUB for best practices [staff POC/matchmaking MAs].
- Job boards.
- Virtual job fair, in-person job fair, [toolkits] how to, promo, etc...
- MA discount on WEF books for training [bulk buy].
- Mapping books to expand operator-level exams.
- Continue to expand operator scholarships [market better] and push to all delegates.
- Inflow, push toolkit out better [Workforce Icon tag]. Career tech as well.
- IWLS and WEF give MAs scholarships to distribute.
- Mid-level Engineers are very hard to hire (5-10 yrs. experience).
- A MA leader program [like WLI].
- Create a bigger and better brand for water [Intro into industry pitch] (image, logo. Etc.).
- Education processes/ schools – elementary level [way to start the change]. Show what is great about this sector.
- EPA Brownfield/ post-incarceration grant \$ - train/share opportunities with the MAs.

What should next year's WEFMAX theme be?

- A. - Workforce Development.
 - Value of what we do.
 - Identify: community, workforce, and association.

- B. - New Workforce – how to engage with.
 - Circular Economy
 - WEF.org resources.

- C. - Membership
 - Engagement and retaining
 - Recruitment
 - Recognize engaged members [type of recognition].
 - What does the WEFs Strategic Plan mean to your MA?
 - Lessons learned on budget, funding/ reserves.

What are actionable steps to reduce barriers to more diverse leadership?

- Identify existing barriers and the action.
- Access your current DE&I state [measure success].
- Be aware of who's missing and find out why?
- Be welcoming and proactive to invite all to participate.
- Be proactive to recruit/nominating from a diverse pool.
- Reach out to underrepresented groups [identify them].
- Start and support a DE&I Committee.

- Education, propose ways around barriers, and train.
- Improve communication to reach all.
- Move the events around to reach more people.
- Properly define diversity in the organization.
- Minimize red tape.
- Have a conversation to raise awareness.
- Develop KPI's and accountability.
- Talk to the underrepresented groups and understand what barriers they face from their representatives.
- Create a safe space for difficult conversations around barriers.
- Engage in outside DE&I consultant for a different perspective.
- Get help to find blind spots.
- Create variety in meetings {venue, time, etc..}.
- Identify a priority group and get started, then move on to the next
- Intentionally host events in places with underrepresented groups. Go get them!

“Unsolicited Research” How are we inspiring and funding innovation in our MAs?

- Shark tank.
- Student design competition.
- Innovating showcase – conference/ tradeshow.
- Spotlight – students or Vets vs typical engineers.
- CSJWP – YPs committee chairs – active/social events.
- MS pays for student travel expenses for the winner of the design competition. [Weftec].
- MA, Scholarships for operators, training, and annual meetings.
- Celebrate facilities for innovation / great stories/magazines.
- Recognize creative inventions, flare, and spark.
- Bring in outside people from other industries [NASA].
- Vendor/supplier, sponsor a YP/student widget design.
- Create the environment.
- Partner with someone that wants to do a pilot project. The municipality partners with a local university for the treatment process.
- Utility employer, expand education opportunities and certification, DE &I, tradespeople, cross training.
- Don't forget IT, office staff, etc.
- Need to work around – see what others are doing.
- Support staff to travel to events and bring new ideas.
- Assisting at Wefmax [attending], bringing info book to MA.
- Sharing [K&E].
- Wef [grants].
- 10 K Innovation Scholarship grant through university/ college.
- Non-profit – make sure you spend the money.
- Operators – vocational trade training - Electrician/plumbing
 - o \$\$\$ support - scholarship in memory of past supporters.
- \$1,000 to use as required for post-secondary education with scholarship - provide free membership for AWWA/ Wef.
- Students.

- Regions – state membership for new members.
- Define Innovation.

Growth and Comfort can't coexist. How do we message this to our diverse community to inspire leaders?

- Allow failing, forward.
- Be humble to learn what you don't know.
- Seeing with both eyes.
- Have a presentation on lessons learned/mistakes.
- Create a "safe place" for discussions.
- Spit-balling [whiteboarding] to come up with ideas or solutions - there are no bad ideas.
- Message needs to come from different levels and sources.
- Support system for journey.
- Be open-minded to new perspectives and get involvement from a group.
- Share your own failures and be humble so others learn.
- Clearly communicate the endpoint [goal] so we can follow the vision.
- Celebrate steps along the way and frequently communicate.
- Change in small steps.
- Let people define the support that they need to move up.

Adjourned: 4:06 PM

WEFMAX Day 2,
May 26, 2023

10:15 – 10:45 am WEFMAX ACWWA Host Sharing Session: Fostering Relationships with Emerging Leaders: Benefits to the Organization and the Industry at Large.
Dave Galbraith, Lindsay Anderson (ACWWA) (YP Emerging Leader)

Q&A:

**Dave Galbraith: Acknowledge the Sponsors, and all they have done, and thanked them. **

1. Each of our chapters can award a scholarship at our annual meeting to an Operator. Usually, those Operators were not able to attend that annual meeting. So, Operators have not been part of the Leadership. That's part of the reason why we adopt it for the YP.
2. Our questions asked were about adding to our budget to bring them along to something like this, or maybe that would be a great grant application topic.
3. The thing is, it's more about the YPs. They took it back and then they claimed that they owned that Emerging Leaders title. They didn't give it to them, they adopted it.
4. Young professionals (Arizona) we kind of put professionals into Emerging Leaders everyone that's thinking about this, if you need some guidance there's a fantastic person sitting over here, Ama Richardson; she has expertise in this area. I would encourage you to get in touch with Ama afterward and then she can help provide some guidance or you can always ask Lindsey, she can tell you what we did here.

10:45 – 11:45 AM Strategic Plan Session – Bill Davis (WEASC) and Ellen Frketic (Chesapeake, WEA)

WEF Strategic Plan - Goals

Goal # 1	Goal # 2	Goal # 3
Attract and develop a diverse and passionate workforce	Cultivate a purpose-driven community to sustainably solve water challenges for all	Lead the transformation to the circular water economy
What does your MA do in support of Workforce Development?	What does your MA do to cultivate a purpose-driven community?	What does your MA do to lead a circular water economy effort?
What do you feel WEF does in Support of Workplace Development?	What do you feel WEF does to cultivate a purpose-driven community?	What do you feel WEF does to lead the circular water economy effort.

Goal # 1:

1. Rosaleen: you will have three pictures that just popped up, those are my children this past September. My son to Zekiel and Malachi. I threw them in my car, and I drove one weekend to a Pittsburgh giant treatment facility. Then the next weekend I threw them in the car, and we drove to Cleveland for the NRSO Clean Water Fairs. I had to go and find these things myself because it doesn't promote them and they're outside my MA. I think that it would be good to be able to promote that across MA so that if it is in your region that there's a job fair. Kids love it, they really do want to learn about water, they want to learn about construction, they want to learn all the cool stuff that we do and there's a disconnect there.
2. Workforce Development is probably one of the top three issues in Ohio. Our members are concerned about two things: #1. we got to get people into the industry, which is a topic on its own, and #2. our EPA just cracked down on mandatory staffing requirements. They accelerated and intensified the requirements. Everyone is shorthanded. We have produced a Workforce Development video [I shared that link along with our DIY video] trying to get that process to give tools for people to use. We are doubling down on Operator Water Treatment Fundamentals manuals which some of our members helped write. We're taking all those beautiful slides all those extra quiz questions and we're funneling that into two Operator training courses. Class One. Class Two and Class Three. We've got like 8 to 10 Operators that are getting lots and lots of hours and going through slides. Hundreds and hundreds of slides. We're going to have that ready this fall for a pilot test for one training course. We've got a strategic plan on how to roll this out and that is major for us. Again, that helps people get that person that takes the entry-level job, and you see that clause that says, must obtain license within two years. One year or whatever it is. It helps them get over that path and we all know that the best way to learn is not from an online course but it's from another person that's been in their shoes.
3. Kathy stated, I sent some pictures of our work for the Water Committee that they've taken just recently. We do use some of the resources they have, these fun displays-they go to a lot of career fairs. We have displays in various parts of the state so volunteers can easily access them when they're going to career fairs. We still participate in that and as well the committee also helps connect Utilities to different programs that are out there at our annual meeting this year. We've been doing a workshop on apprenticeship programs, some successful ones. Some utilities come in and learn what other utilities are doing to bring in people to the workforce.

Goal # 2:

Yves stated: You know what it's the first time in my life I'm going to speak in public in English. We need to sign a resolution, first thing. The second one is to establish this committee with that established criteria and then you produce results. You give your results compared to the criteria annually, and then the committee is ranking you and then you get stars. Start with one star if you meet the regulation, that's basic. You can go up to five stars. At the end of the year, we have some kind of big meeting and then we're awarded stars, and the actual municipalities; they're proud. We meet 2-3 times a year so it's an occasion to connect, and exchange information among managers. There are meetings for managers there are meetings for Operators on different subjects. So, it started with drinking water then it went to wastewater, and as you probably know that is

always why they cover all aspects of the environment. Now they have a Biodiversity Excellence Program; they have all kinds of programs, and this is what gives them income; also, with the apps for creating and maintaining membership.

See how the board structure is to ensure connectivity across the organization. I'm not sure our board is structured much differently than others. The way we're set up is in layers. We try hard to make sure that we're touching all the committees all the time. We report out, we have a Director at Large, meetings every other month and we have Board meetings every other month, so you constantly must keep in touch. Find out what they're doing, and you better be reporting out because if you're not doing your job, they'll fire you. You are encouraged to either participate or nominate someone that would be in your place. There is that constant touch, that constant continuity in communication from mid-level if you want to think of it that way. We're really pushed to make sure that one, we're staying on budget, two we're staying on task and we're doing the things we're going to do. We are really trying to keep people engaged across the community. Florida is a large state, I'm sure a lot of folks have been there but if you tried to drive from one end to the other, you're going to be in the car for a very long time. Keeping hands everywhere is very difficult in trying to foster that so it's the way we're structured and the way that we've kind of been trained into it.

For chairs to allow members to work towards and you know sometimes it's great to get people to volunteer but if they don't know what they're volunteering for or what they're expected to do, they're not going to get anywhere.

Goal #3

Dan Myers stated that they try and set up something that's renewable or in a recyclable facility and plan some kind of opportunity to show success in renewable energies. John, over there he's done quite a job in the city of Davenport. We've done a lot of work in composting and reusing biosolids. Right now, we've done a lot of presentations in the state on those things. We try to look for water reuse, whatever may be.

We started a task force, it's only about three years old through the residuals and biosolids committee. We did a presentation at a workshop at Weftec. This year is my first time presiding over a workshop. We are working on a technical book that will be coming out. I'm working on Chapter 4, which is about the deep packaging of food waste. We have a lot of food manufacturing in our area and happen to be one of the only ones in the country that has a deep packaging machine at our public facility for food waste. We're unique in that respect.

Circular Water Economy Summit: This is an event to attract those other groups so it's not necessarily putting it in your MAs. Pushing it to your industrial groups or people you know or coworkers you went to school with who might be interested. It's a little bit different messaging you're not going to see the regular web e-mail cycle on this. We're doing much more of a targeted acquisition with the consultants. You're not going to see a lot of emails popping up about this event for y'all. If you can push it to your folks whom you might work with outside of our normal group that is what we're looking for. Please

feel free to attend; it would be great to have you there, but we are looking to attract those people whom we don't see all the time, so please help us do that.

**11:45 – 12:00 PM Closing: Stephen Sanders (WEF), Jason Phillips
(Atlantic Canada WWA)**

Stephen stated: I want to thank all of the speakers, they were amazing! It was just so amazing; we had a good time. I was thinking about this, and I was like well how can I tie this back into where we started? We said that there's going to be a treasure, how are we going to go about finding it? You guys brought out the big guns. You got the excavating machine and you're talking. You found all these ideas and perspectives and we had all these different groups and all the different facilitated things; it was amazing.

I think about this because I'm like that's a lot of information but the other thing that I think about is man, PEI is not just down the street or around the corner! I heard your stories of how you got here and how you are going home and how long it's going to take. I have a two-day drive to get home.

I think about the investment of your time, your energy, your money, the time away from your family and that's a huge investment. What are you going to do with all of this information? We have got to do something about it. I see everyone taking notes, we must do something about this information, right?

You say, well Steve; that's it's a lot of information. That's my charge to you, to do something with this information. Share it, inspire others and we take some of these ideas and we try them. I like what Janet mentioned earlier, we fail and that's fine, fail forward.

We did something and there's a balance between that because sometimes we can say, well we were here, we did something. Sometimes people fall in love with the process, and they don't look at outcomes at all. What if someone told you that they were learning to swim? Great, you learn to swim. I've been learning to swim for the last 30 years. Well, that's this falling in love with the process. We want to get outcomes from this as well.

The other thing that sometimes happens to us is that we get paralyzed because of the failure thing. I have this quote by Michael Jordan; you might have heard of him. The basketball player, he's all right. He had this quote he said, "I can accept failure, but I cannot accept not trying." I can accept failure, but I cannot accept not trying. We want to try, and we've talked at length about the strategic plan. I love the strategic plan. Make it your own. It's good to have core values, it centers you and helps you make decisions. It gives you directions, so take that back with you.

The other thing that I really liked is we got in here and we shared all these ideas. I'm going to say this, *we have friends and friends we haven't met yet*. I'm doing this with Operators, Engineers, men, women, chickens, or a child; I don't care who you are, we are all a family. We are a water family. We are all a tribe. What I enjoyed is how we shared all these ideas together and the other quote that I have on my wall from John Wooden, UCLA basketball coach; says "It's what you learn after you know it all that counts." That's a reminder for me to stay humble and keep learning every day. Every day I meet someone who's smarter than me [imagine]. Stay humble and keep learning from each other.

Jason stated: I enjoyed this as it was my first WEFMAX. I was scheduled for one, but COVID broke out and just couldn't do it.

Go home, share these ideas, and continue to be a tribe. Continue to learn from each other. What a privilege

Adjourned: 12:00 PM

Scribe: Heather Patriarche