



Woodard
& Curran



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2024

Your Future Leaders Are Here: How to Engage and Develop Young Professionals

NEWEA 2024

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Engineer

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The Brain Drain



- Retirement
- Workforce Shortages
- Increased Funding
- Aging Infrastructure

Approximately one-third of drinking water and wastewater operators in the U.S. will be eligible to retire by 2030.

What's the path forward?

- Investing in our Young Professionals (YPs) for a strong, skilled workforce to take on the brain drain.

YP Program



**Professional
Network**



Trainings

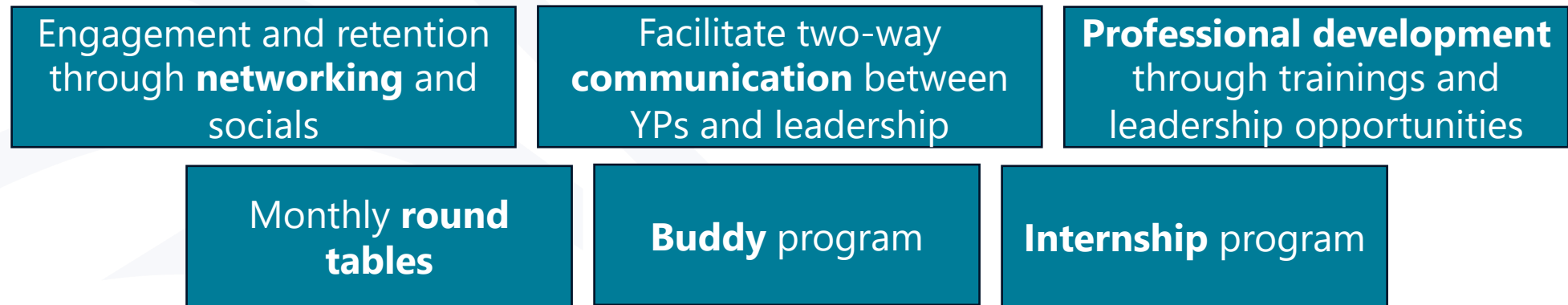


**Creating
Community**

Case Study: W&C Young Professionals Committee

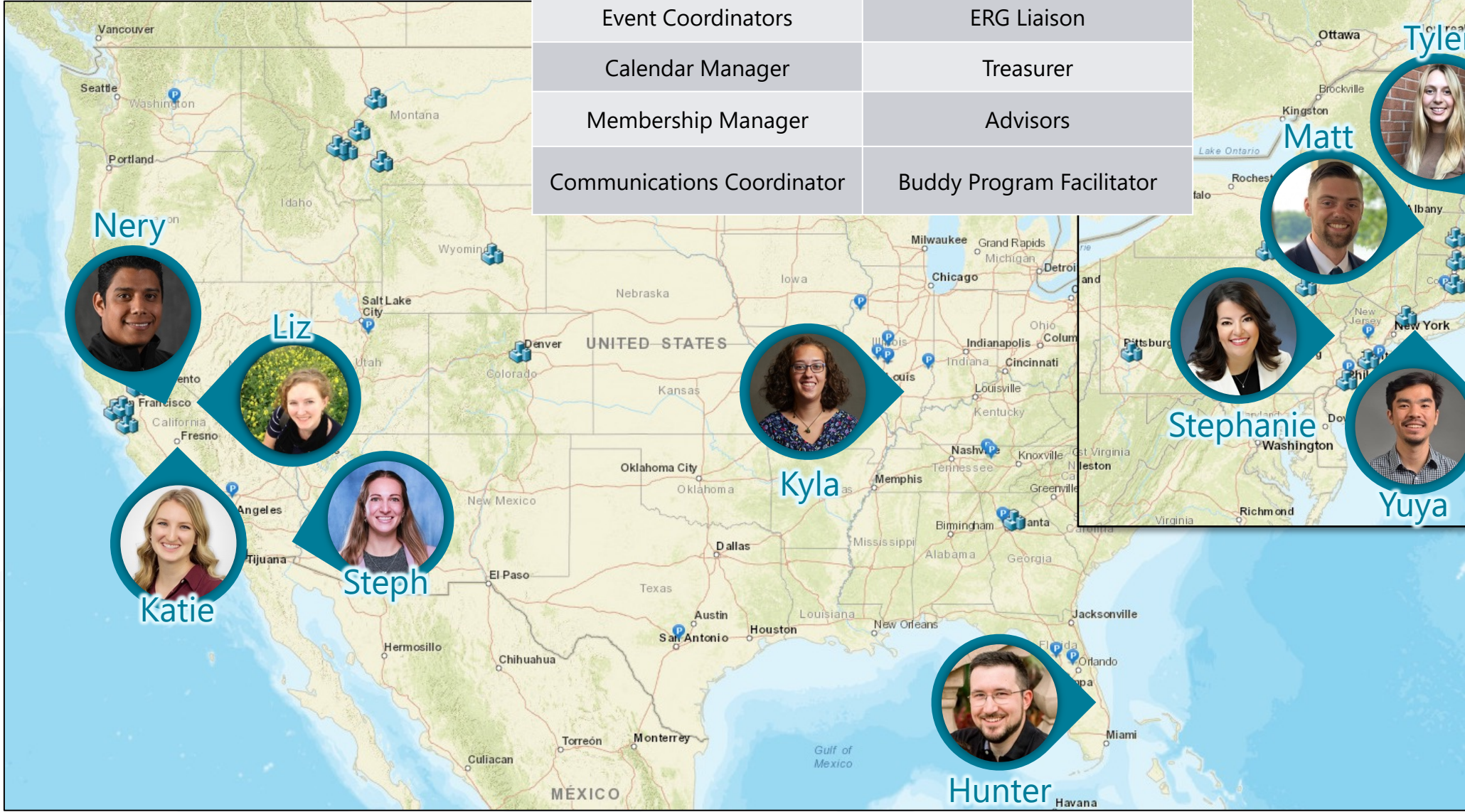
Young Professionals Committee

- **Objective:** Create a space for young professionals to connect and learn from each other's shared or distinct experiences in their early careers.
- YP group initiatives:



YP Coordinators

Coordinator Positions	
Chair	Social/Virtual Coordinator
Event Coordinators	ERG Liaison
Calendar Manager	Treasurer
Membership Manager	Advisors
Communications Coordinator	Buddy Program Facilitator



Nery

Liz

Katie

Steph

Kyla

Hunter

Stephanie

Yuya

Matt

Tyler

Christian

Kendra

Amy

Hannah



→ "Being a leader in the Young Professional Committee has helped me build foundational skills through leadership, teamwork, program management, organization, and public speaking. It's great to be a part of a collaborative team that helps make a positive impact. The committee has influenced my involvement with professional organizations outside of W&C, and given me the tools and confidence to network and participate." -Katie Howes

Shared Resources



Onboarding
Checklist



Conference Attendee
Guidelines



Professional
Licensure
Information



Buddy Playbook



Professional
Organization Master
List

Roundtable Discussions

Professional Network



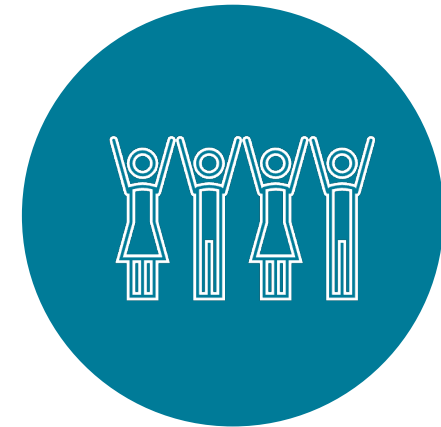
- Difficult Questions with Alyson, Andy and Sheri
- Q&A with Chaly Jo – W&C's New CSO
- "Hive Mind" with Alyson Watson – Communication & Workflow
- New Year, New Network!
- Relationship Management
- Soft Skills & Internal Networking

Trainings



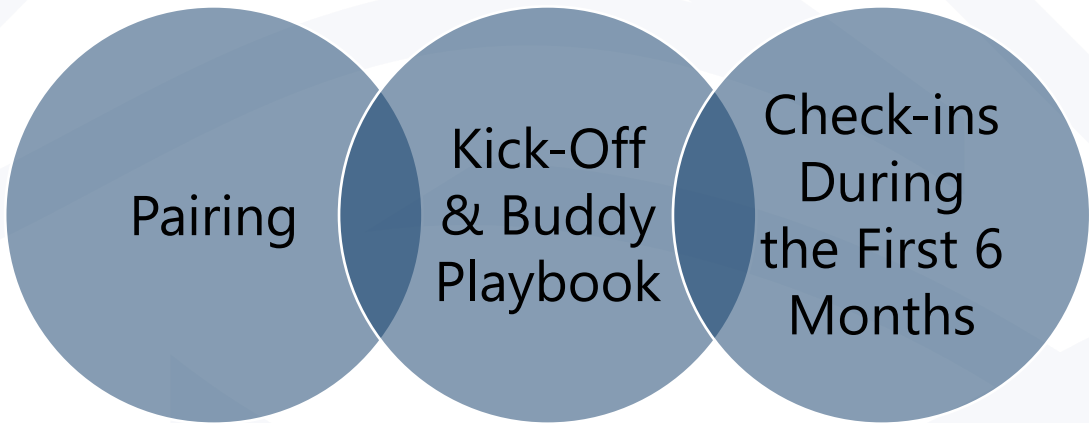
- Microsoft Teams Tips & Tricks
- Microsoft Word Tips & Tricks
- Technical Writing
- Bluebeam Tips & Tricks
- Race, Ethnicity and Culture
- Delivery & Efficiency
- Professional Resume Building

Creating Community



- YP End of Year Trivia
- Identity & Culture
- Get to Know New Hires
- Stress Management and Maintaining a Work Life Balance

YP BUDDY PROGRAM



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

- Programming
 - ▶ Kick-Off Presentation
 - ▶ Lunch & Learn Series
 - ▶ Intern Day

Additional Summer Resources

- ▶ BINGO Boards
- ▶ Stream Technical Resources

Woodard & Curran **INTERNSHIP BINGO BOARD**

B	I	N	G	O
REVIEW A PROPOSAL	ATTEND AN INTERN LUNCH & LEARN SERIES EVENT	DISCUSS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE WITH A REGIONAL MANAGER	ATTEND A PROJECT KICKOFF MEETING	UPDATE A SPECIFICATION
JOIN COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE(S) ON TEAMS	VISIT A SITE	REVIEW A HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN	READ THE W&C 2022 STRATEGIC PLAN	REQUEST FEEDBACK AFTER COMPLETING A TASK
PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO EM ON HOW WE CAN IMPROVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM	ATTEND A COMMITTEE MEETING	ATTEND A HAPPY HOUR/AFTER WORK EVENT	DISCUSS CAREER PATHS WITH AN EMPLOYEE MANAGER	CONNECT WITH EMPLOYEES IN AT LEAST 5 DIFFERENT OFFICES
CONTRIBUTE TO A DESIGN DRAWING	POST TO YAMMER	REVIEW A SUBMITTAL	CONDUCT A PQA REVIEW, AND DISCUSS COMMENTS WITH TM	PRESENT ABOUT YOUR SUMMER AT INTERN DAY
COMPLETE AN ENGINEERING CALCULATION	MEET WITH A PM TO REVIEW PROJECT FINANCIALS	PARTICIPATE IN A YP EVENT	DRAFT A TECHNICAL MEMO OR CONTRIBUTE TO AN ENGINEERING REPORT	DEVELOP A GIS MAP

The Backbone for Development & Engagement



The Backbone for Development & Engagement

Defining the
Bigger Picture



Company &
Organization Support



Investing in
Each Other



Defining the Bigger Picture

- How does your work affect you, your organization, or your community?
 - Sense of purpose, responsibility, and fulfillment.
 - Mission-Driven activities
- Advice to young professionals
 - Ask questions



Company & Organization Support

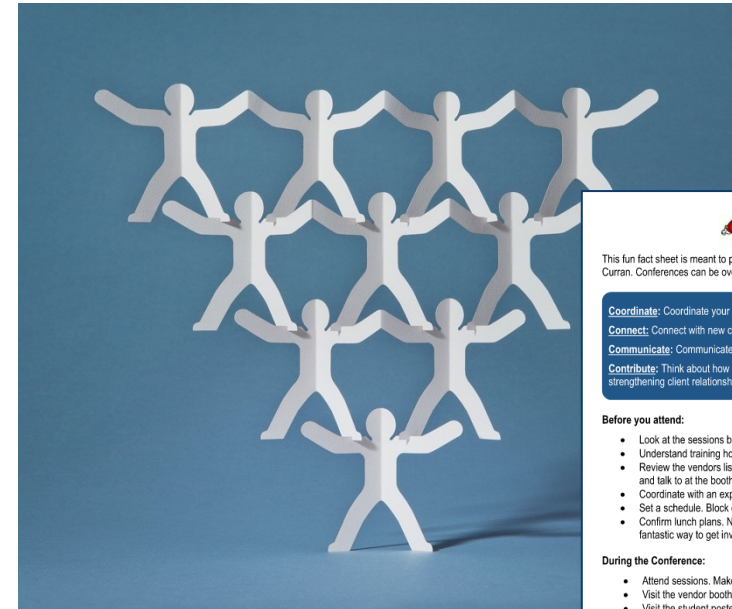
→ Getting Involved

- ▶ Internal Committees
- ▶ External Organizations
- ▶ Social/Technical Events

→ Resources

- ▶ Time and Money
 - » Membership or admission fees
 - » Committee Involvement
 - » Incentive Structures
- ▶ Trainings
- ▶ Standards and Guidelines
 - » "4-C's of Attending a Conference"- WC

→ YPs should be proactive!



YP 4 C's of Attending a Conference

This fun fact sheet is meant to provide guidance for how to attend a conference and get the most value out of it for you and Woodard & Curran. Conferences can be overwhelming but use this guide as a starting point to lead you through a typical event.

Coordinate: Coordinate your schedule, with clients, co-workers, and vendors to see who will be present
Connect: Connect with new contacts to expand your network
Communicate: Communicate with clients, co-workers, vendors, and possible recruits as appropriate
Contribute: Think about how you can contribute and bring value to W&C during the conference (lunch and learns with vendors, strengthening client relationships, recruiting new hires, learn about new technologies, etc.)

Before you attend:

- Look at the sessions being offered ahead of time. Establish which sessions are most relevant to your work and goals.
- Understand training hours set up. Do you need to attend all sessions to get stamped for credit? Are there half stamps?
- Review the vendors list. Check if there are any vendors you've worked with or could work with in the future that you can visit and talk to at the booths.
- Coordinate with an experienced W&C employee. Find a time to attend a session together, meet a client, or talk to a vendor.
- Set a schedule. Block out time to see sessions but also other areas of the conference (vendors, posters, etc).
- Confirm lunch plans. Not all conferences offer lunches, but most have committee meetings during lunch time, which is a fantastic way to get involved in a new committee.

During the Conference:

- Attend sessions. Make note of any interesting topics or technologies. Introduce yourself to the speaker and/or moderator.
- Visit the vendor booths/exhibit hall. Try to visit at least two and consider if there is value in a lunch and learn with the vendor.
- Visit the student posters. Talk to students presenting and consider for potential new hires.
- Connect with others by introducing yourself to at least three new people. Sell Woodard & Curran to vendors, utilities and others.

After the Conference:

- Communicate with the vendors you've met or discussed possible lunch and learns with.
- Reach out to your manager if you think you've identified a potential new hire.
- Share what you've learned through YP events, teams page, or other outlets.

QUICK TIPS

DOs

- Dress professionally
- Meet three new people
- Choose sessions that interest you
- Bring plenty of business cards
- Get out of your comfort zone

DON'Ts

- Rely on staying with your co-workers the whole day
- Choose sessions based on who is going

Conversation Tips

General

- Where do you work? How do you like it?

Clients

- What sessions have you attended?
- Are there any interesting projects on your horizon?

Vendors

- How can your product help me?
- What's a new product you're excited about?

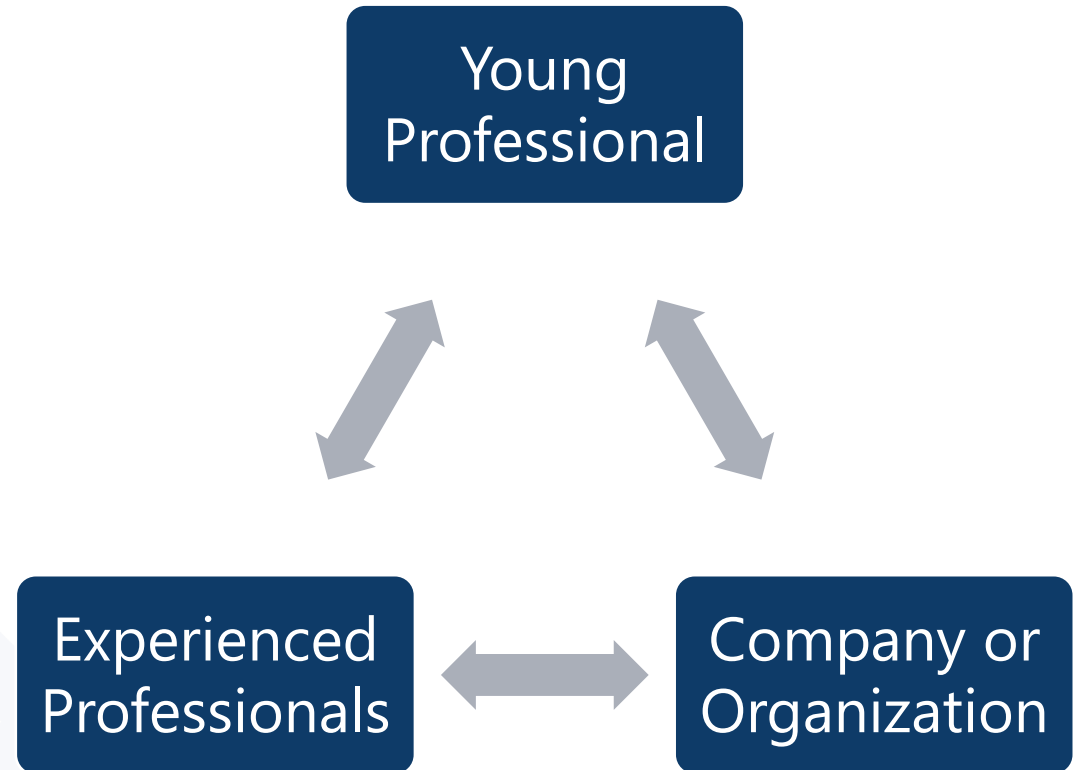
→ "Woodard & Curran's YP Committee is a fantastic forum to introduce early-career employees to external professional development opportunities. Last year, I co-led a "New Year, New Network" roundtable; the objective was to provide YPs with a guide to engaging with professional organizations and associations. In addition to providing people and planning resources, we discussed how to get involved, the benefits to involvement, and gaining company buy-in."

-Stephanie Hubli



Investing in Each Other

- Three-legged Stool
 - Keep each leg balanced to have a strong support
- Developing YPs through training and mentorship.
- Fighting the “Brain Drain”



“

*Train people well enough so they can leave,
treat them well enough so they don't want to.*

Richard Branson



Thank You!

Questions?

