

2026 ELECTION CANDIDATE BIOS (2027-28 Board Members)

Board Member

Adib Altallal

Utilities Engineer, City of Tukwila

I am honored to seek election to the APWA Washington Board of Directors. Public works has given me the opportunity to help communities solve practical problems and provide reliable services, and APWA has been central to my growth as an engineer, public servant, and leader.

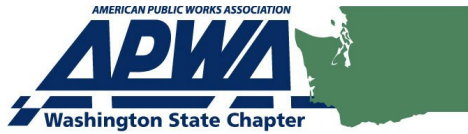
For nearly seven years, I have served as the Utilities Engineer for the City of Tukwila, managing capital projects and supporting operations, asset management, planning, and regional coordination. Before joining Tukwila, I worked nearly five years as a consulting civil engineer designing water, sewer, stormwater, ADA, and other municipal infrastructure. This experience on both the owner and consultant sides has taught me to listen to field crews, understand practical constraints, and build partnerships that turn plans into community benefit.

My involvement with APWA has grown alongside my career. I completed the 2025 APWA Emerging Leaders Academy and remain active with the Washington Chapter's Emerging Professionals Committee and Management and Public Administration Committee. Since August 2025, I have served on APWA's national PWX Program Committee, reviewing and helping select abstracts for the Public Works Expo. I have also supported chapter events, including helping with the annual awards ceremony. These experiences have shown me how much APWA's education, recognition, and professional connections matter at every stage of a public works career.

My service extends beyond APWA. I represent the City of Tukwila on regional water and wastewater committees, previously co-chaired MWPAAC's Asset Management Subcommittee, and completed AWWA's Transformative Water Leadership Academy. I serve on Auburn's Planning Commission and Parks & Recreation Board, as well as Seattle Public Schools' BEX/BTA Capital Programs Oversight Committee. I have also recently completed a Master of Public Administration to deepen my understanding of budgeting, governance, and policy. Together, these roles help me bring a broader view of infrastructure, public service, and community engagement to APWA.

If elected, I would focus on strengthening pathways into APWA and making participation easier and more valuable for emerging professionals, frontline staff, students, and members outside the largest agencies. I would support affordable access to conferences and training, more local and cross-committee events, mentorship and leadership opportunities, and stronger connections between the chapter and APWA National. I would also work to ensure chapter programs reflect the full range of public works disciplines and the communities we serve. When I am not working, studying, or volunteering, I am usually playing or watching soccer. It is a constant reminder that strong teams are built by creating opportunities for every person to contribute. I would be honored to bring that same approach to the APWA Washington Board. Thank you for considering my candidacy.





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Board Member

Dustin DeKoekkoek, PE

Seattle Office Director, Toole Design



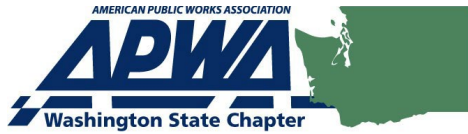
I am honored to be nominated to serve on the Board of Directors for the Washington State Chapter of APWA, and I would be privileged to serve our members in this role.

I have been an active member of the Chapter for more than a decade, serving on multiple committees over that time. I started out on the Management & Public Administration Committee and currently serve as Co-Chair of the Transportation Committee, where I have the opportunity to work alongside dedicated public works professionals from agencies and firms across the state. That work has given me a deep appreciation for the Chapter's role in connecting practitioners, sharing knowledge, and advocating for the infrastructure our communities depend on. I especially enjoy our twice-annual chapter conferences, connecting with colleagues, partners, and clients outside of day-to-day project delivery. I have made many friendships I cherish at these conferences and look forward to every one.

I have spent my entire 20-year career working in Washington state in support of public agencies, with projects in communities large and small. I began my career in land development, then spent many years focused on utilities, before finding my professional home in multimodal transportation planning and design. As Seattle Office Director at Toole Design Group, I lead a team delivering complete streets, active transportation, and Vision Zero projects for public agencies throughout the Pacific Northwest. What I value most in that role is helping my staff align their work with their passions and seeing the difference their projects make in communities.

Service extends beyond my day job. I have served on the boards of several nonprofits focused on the disability community, safe biking infrastructure, and community building, and I have participated in civic boards and commissions in my community of Mountlake Terrace. I advocate for public infrastructure that works well for everyone, and more recently I have been volunteering in support of our immigrant community.

If elected to the Board, I will focus on continuing to make APWA a welcoming place for all those in public works where each of us can belong, while advancing education, professional development, and networking opportunities. Thank you for your consideration.



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Board Member

Tricia Juhnke

Public Works Director, City of Shoreline

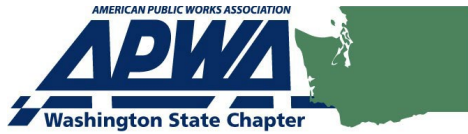
I've dedicated more than 30 years to a career in public works because I genuinely believe in the impact our profession has on people's everyday lives. From the roads we travel, to utilities we depend on, public works quietly shapes safer, stronger, and more vibrant communities.

Since becoming an APWA member in 2008, I've gained far more than technical knowledge. APWA has connected me with trusted colleagues, friends and a network of professionals who are always willing to share ideas and support one another. The relationships I've built through APWA have enriched my career and challenged me to become a better leader.

I earned a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Washington, but some of the most valuable lessons in my career have come through the relationships and experiences I've found in APWA.

I am seeking a position on the Washington Chapter Board because I'd like the opportunity to give back to an organization that has given me so much. I believe our greatest responsibility isn't just building infrastructure—it's building a strong public works profession. I'd be honored to serve on the Washington Chapter Board to help foster connections, develop future leaders, and ensure APWA continues to be an indispensable resource for public works professionals across our state. I want to help ensure APWA remains a place where we connect, learn and inspire one another.





2026 ELECTION CANDIDATE BIOS (2027-28 Board Members)

Board Member

Sonia Palma

Operations Manager, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

Thank you for considering my candidacy for the Board of Directors of the Washington State Chapter of APWA. I have been an APWA member since 2016 and recently joined the Access and Opportunity Committee. Over the years, I've attended APWA Conferences and have had the pleasure of meeting and learning from many dedicated APWA members. Through APWA educational sessions, I've gained insight into public works challenges across both public and private sectors, expanded my professional network, and explored new technologies and equipment that can help improve SDOT's performance.

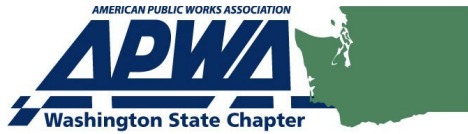


I'm originally from Buenos Aires and grew up between Argentina and New York before making Seattle my home in 2003. I currently serve as Vice President of the Seattle Management Association and co-lead the SDOT Latinx Caucus—roles that allow me to uplift community, support colleagues, and help strengthen equity-focused leadership across the City of Seattle.

I have worked in the public sector for more than 17 years. Today, I am an Operations Manager at the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), where I oversee the daily operations of our Customer Care and 24/7 Radio Dispatch centers, the SDOT Response Team, and Fleets and Radio Communications. I also lead SDOT's efforts to decarbonize our fleet, a responsibility I'm proud to advance.

My career at SDOT has been defined by collaborative leadership, operational excellence, and a deep commitment to community centered service. My experience spans program management, strategic planning, and emergency preparedness and response. I am confident that these skills will allow me to serve effectively as a Board Member, and I am particularly interested in creating more opportunities for frontline staff to engage in APWA's mission.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



2026 ELECTION CANDIDATE BIOS (2027-28 Board Members)

Board Member

Travis Rakestraw

Stormwater Maintenance Lead, City of Walla Walla

I am honored to be a candidate for the Washington State APWA Board of Directors. Public Works has been my career and passion for nearly two decades, and I would be privileged to serve an organization that has contributed so much to my professional growth.

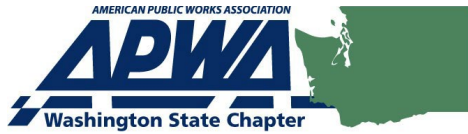
My public works career began in 2006 as a seasonal employee for the City of Walla Walla, where I developed a strong appreciation for the essential services that public works professionals provide every day. In 2011, I accepted a full-time position as a Streets Maintenance Worker and gained hands-on experience maintaining critical infrastructure and serving my community. In 2019, I was promoted to my current role as Stormwater Maintenance Lead, where I oversee stormwater maintenance operations, coordinate regulatory compliance efforts, and work collaboratively to protect public infrastructure and environmental resources.

I became actively involved with the Washington State Chapter of APWA in 2022, and I have enjoyed the opportunities to connect with professionals across the state, participate in educational events, and share best practices. In 2025, I joined the APWA O&M Committee, where I have been proud to help support one of the chapter's signature events (Equipment ROADeo) that showcases the skills, professionalism, and dedication of public works employees.

Throughout my career, I have believed that strong leadership is built on service, collaboration, and continuous improvement. If elected to the Board of Directors, I will work to support the Chapter's mission by encouraging member engagement, promoting professional development opportunities, and ensuring the voices of frontline public works professionals are represented. I believe our greatest strength comes from sharing knowledge, mentoring future leaders, and building meaningful relationships across all areas of public works.

Thank you for your consideration. It would be an honor to serve the Washington State Chapter of APWA and contribute to its continued success.





2026 ELECTION CANDIDATE BIOS (2027-28 Board Members)

Board Member

Connor Simonson

Infrastructure Maintenance Manager, City of Newcastle



I am deeply honored to have been nominated for the opportunity to serve on the board of directors.

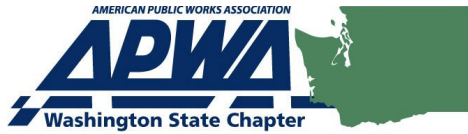
I have proudly served the City of Newcastle for the past nine years and have had the privilege of attending numerous APWA Washington Chapter and National conferences, trainings, and events. The knowledge, relationships, and perspectives I have gained through APWA have been invaluable to both my professional growth and the community I serve. I would welcome the opportunity to give back to an organization that has had such a positive impact on my career.

Starting my career in the field and working my way into my current leadership position has shaped my understanding of what public works truly means. Public works is all around us in many different forms. From complex bridges and tunnels to filling a pothole or straightening a street sign, every task contributes to a larger system that serves the people who rely on our work every day. I believe that, at the end of the day, our impact is visible in every street, park, and public facility we build and maintain. While our work often goes unnoticed, it reflects the care, dedication, and professionalism that we bring to our communities each and every day.

If elected to the APWA Washington Chapter Board, one of my primary goals would be to reduce the barriers that often prevent operations staff from participating in professional development opportunities. Operations employees face obstacles such as limited training budgets, staffing shortages, and travel costs, that make it difficult to attend conferences, or participate in other ways.

I would like to work with the Board to identify new ways to expand access to training, increase participation from operations professionals, and create more opportunities for all to connect, learn, and share their knowledge. By investing in the people who maintain our roads, utilities, parks, and infrastructure every day, we strengthen not only our workforce but also the communities we serve throughout Washington.

I look forward to the opportunity to give back to an organization that has contributed so much to my own career while helping strengthen the future of public works across Washington.



2026 ELECTION CANDIDATE BIOS (2027-28 Board Members)

Board Member

Ryan Tuomisto

Business Development Manager, Associated Earth Sciences, Inc.

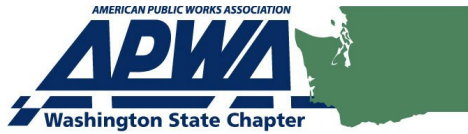
I have been an active member of the Washington Chapter of APWA since 2009. I've had the privilege of being the Co-Chair of the Emerging Professionals Committee, alongside Caroline Barlow with SPU. In 2016, I was honored to receive the APWA WA Emerging Professionals Award. I served as a representative of APWA WA on the Planning Committee for the APWA PWX National Conference in Seattle in 2019 and was a member of the Tech Tour Committee.



I attended Central Washington University and received a degree in Sociology and Business. Professionally, I've been in the A/E industry for over 25 years leading AESI's marketing department building client relationships and overseeing pursuits. Public works is very important to me. My wife works for the City of Kirkland, my mom worked for King County Parks, and my brother works for the City of Monroe.

I am a big believer in giving back to my community. For the past 15 years, I've coached boys and girls rec league soccer and basketball, girls high school basketball, and little league softball. When my kids were in elementary school, I participated in a program called WATCH D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) which provides students with a positive male role model at school, enhanced school safety, and increased community engagement. Giving my time and energy to these programs was extremely rewarding, seeing the kids grow and gain confidence in life and sports.

If elected, I would be excited to give my time and support to help lead a wonderful chapter and organization to enhance professional development and encourage continued growth of our chapter and committees. Thank you for your consideration!



2026 ELECTION CANDIDATE BIOS (2027 Secretary)

Secretary

Mary Heather Ames

Deputy Public Works Director, City of Pasco

I am excited about the opportunity to run for Secretary of the APWA Washington State Chapter. My introduction to public works came during a college internship, and since then I have been passionate about education, inclusion, and excellence in a profession that is essential to communities yet often only visible when challenges arise.

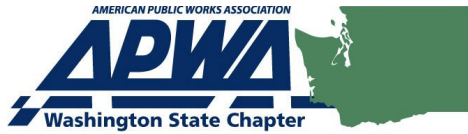
Throughout my career, each employer has given me the chance to learn a wide range of public works functions. I have learned from equipment operators, engineers, maintenance workers, surveyors, planners, and accountants. These experiences have reinforced my appreciation for the breadth and impact of the public works profession.

My involvement with APWA comes from a desire to give back to an organization that has made me feel “at home” and to help others find that same sense of belonging. APWA elevates practitioners, expands learning opportunities, and connects professionals across the state. Over the years, I've enjoyed volunteering at the ROADeo, introducing the pre-conference hikes, and teaching portions of the Northwest Public Works Institute (NWPWI). I particularly value our Chapter's leadership in education and I'm committed to ensuring our members continue to benefit from accessible, high-quality training and classes that serve our diverse workforce.

If elected, I will work to strengthen and refine our educational offerings for all public works professionals. I will also support efforts to broaden chapter engagement, encourage emerging professionals, and maintain transparency and continuity vital to our Chapter's long-term success.

It would be an honor to serve the Chapter as part of the Executive Board. Thank you for your consideration.





2026 ELECTION CANDIDATE BIOS (2027 Secretary)

Secretary

Ramiro Chavez

Director of Environment & Public Works, City of Tacoma

I am honored to seek your support for the position of Secretary of the American Public Works Association Washington Chapter.

For more than 30 years, I have had the privilege of serving communities through public works, engineering, public administration, and infrastructure leadership. I currently serve as the Director of Environment & Public Works for the City of Tacoma, where I oversee a broad portfolio of essential services that enhance quality of life, protect the environment, and support sustainable community growth. Throughout my career, I have also served as Director of Environmental Services and City Engineer for the City of Tacoma, Public Works Director for both the City of Tacoma and Thurston County, County Manager for Thurston County, and Transportation Division Manager for Pierce County. These diverse leadership experiences have strengthened my commitment to collaborative leadership, innovation, and delivering public services that make a lasting difference in our communities.



Throughout my career, APWA has been more than a professional organization—it has been a place to learn, build lasting relationships, exchange ideas, and grow as a public servant. The opportunities, mentorship, and professional development I have gained through APWA and the public works profession have been instrumental in shaping my career. Serving as Secretary is an opportunity to give back to the organization and the profession that have given me so much.

If elected, I will work to strengthen member engagement, support professional development at every career stage, encourage collaboration across agencies and disciplines, and help ensure our Chapter remains a trusted resource for current and future public works professionals.

As a licensed Professional Engineer, Program Management Professional (PMP), and active member of APWA, ASCE, ITE, ICMA, PMI, SWANA, and NACWA, I bring a broad perspective on the challenges and opportunities facing our profession. My leadership philosophy is grounded in collaboration, transparency, innovation, and service.

I would be honored to serve as your Secretary and to help continue APWA Washington Chapter's tradition of excellence while investing in the next generation of public works leaders.

Thank you for your consideration and your support. Together, we can continue advancing the public works profession and making a lasting difference in the communities we serve.