

MINNESOTA BUILDERS EXCHANGE

# BLUEPRINT

WINTER 2024

## 2023-2024 MBEX/ TBG Construction Scholarship Awardees

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## Unconventional Ways to Get and Give Mental Health Support and Save a Life

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## Understanding Minnesota's New Secure Choice Retirement Program

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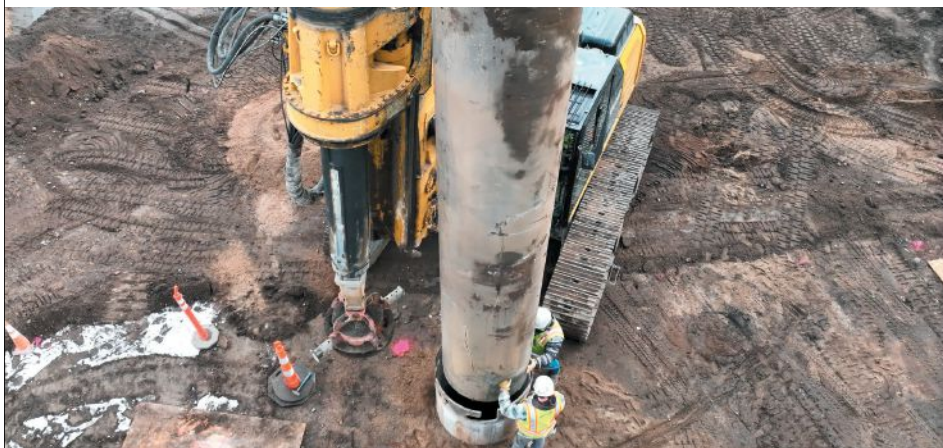
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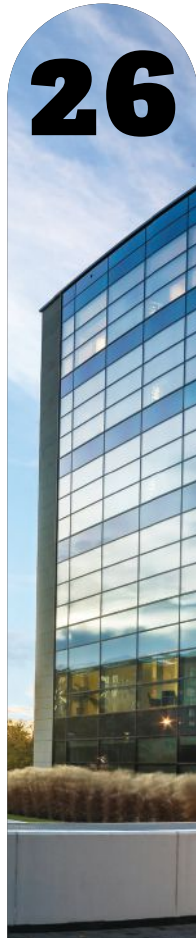
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MINNESOTA BUILDERS EXCHANGE

## BLUEPRINT

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**2023 MBEX PRESIDENT**  
Greg Grazzini

# THE GREAT HONOR OF SERVING THIS INDUSTRY

With 2023 officially behind us, I am privileged to turn the top leadership role over to Mike Carlson of Max Gray Construction. Mike is passionate about the Exchange and our industry, and he will do an excellent job bringing the Exchange to this decade's midpoint. It really has been an honor to serve our membership. And in some ways, I had no choice.

I am the sixth person from Grazzini to take on the role of MBEX Board President, a legacy that includes my father. Being engaged in our industry and bringing in our leadership is just what you do in our family. But whether you have a 100-year-old company, or your business is shiny and brand new, my advice to you is the same: Step up and become engaged. I think you'll find that you get far more out of your service to the Exchange (and other industry associations) than you give.

You will create new relationships that enhance your business. You will strengthen existing relationships that keep trust in place. Your leadership skills will grow. You'll gain the benefit of knowing you're making a difference

— not just at your own company, but for the industry more broadly. MBEX is helping to shape the future of our industry, and it's pretty darn exciting to be a part of.

That's my simple message for members as we round out the first quarter of 2024. Get active. Get engaged. Come to events. Create new connections and strengthen longstanding ones.

Based on new data regarding increasing loneliness, the U.S. surgeon general has called attention to the critical importance of social connection for individual and community well-being. Guess what MBEX provides — that all important social connection for our construction community.

Though I'm stepping down from my role as president, I'm not backing away from staying engaged and active within MBEX and our industry. I hope you'll do the same.

**Greg Grazzini**  
Grazzini Brothers & Co.  
2023 MBEX Board President



# MINNESOTA BUILDERS EXCHANGE

## 2024 EVENTS CALENDAR

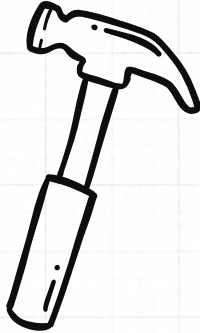
MAY

### Construction Safety Week

May 6-10 | Various times

### MBEX Plan Room Demo (online)

Thursday, May 16 | 9:00-10:00 a.m.



JUNE

### Bluebeam 1: Baseline Basics

Tuesday, June 4 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Bluebeam 2: Basic Materials, Takeoffs & Estimates

Wednesday, June 5 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Member Appreciation BBQ

Wednesday, June 5 | 11:30 a.m.

Minnesota Builders Exchange (Minneapolis)

### Bluebeam 3: Advanced Materials, Takeoffs & Estimates

Thursday, June 6 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Twin Cities Golf Tournament

Tuesday, June 18 | 11:00 a.m.

Location TBD

### MBEX Plan Room Demo (online)

Thursday, June 20 | 9:00-10:00 a.m.

### MBEX Women's POWER:

#### Women, Money and Happiness

Wednesday, June 26 | 7:30-9:00 a.m.

The Coven (St. Paul)

JULY

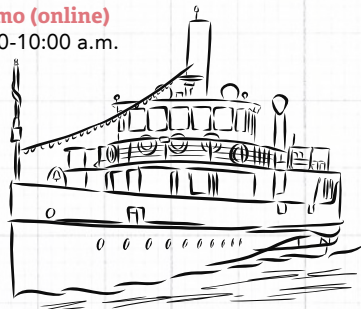
### Sundew Harbor Cruise on Lake Superior

Wednesday, July 17 | 5:30 p.m.

Boarding at Pier B Resort (Duluth)

### MBEX Plan Room Demo (online)

Thursday, July 18 | 9:00-10:00 a.m.



AUGUST

### Sporting Clays Scholarship Fundraiser

Thursday, August 8 | Starting at 11:00 a.m.

Game Unlimited (Hudson, Wisconsin)

### MBEX Plan Room Demo (online)

Thursday, August 15 | 9:00 a.m.

### MBEX Women's POWER:

#### Balance Versus Blend — How to Have Blend (Not Balance) in Your Life

Monday, August 19 | 2 p.m.

Prosperwell Financial (Minnetonka)

### Golf North

Wednesday, August 21 | 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Ridgeway Country Club (Duluth)

### Intro to Upcoming Bluebeam Courses

Tuesday, August 27 | 10:30 a.m.

SEPTEMBER

### Bluebeam 1: Baseline Basics

Tuesday, September 10 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Bluebeam 2: Basic Materials, Takeoffs & Estimates

Wednesday, September 11 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Sporting Clays North

Wednesday, September 11 | 3:00 p.m.

Old Vermillion Trail (Duluth)

### Bluebeam 3: Advanced Materials, Takeoffs & Estimates

Thursday, September 12 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Bluebeam 4: Document Management Best Practices

Friday, September 14 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Bluebeam 5: Collecting Field Data

Tuesday, September 17 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Bluebeam 6: Administrative Professionals

Wednesday, September 18 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### MBEX Plan Room Demo (online)

Thursday, September 19 | 9:00 a.m.

### Bluebeam 7: Civil Workflows

Thursday, September 19 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

\*LAST UPDATED 3/14/2024

\*\*DATES AND TIMES SUBJECT TO CHANGE





**2024 MBEX PRESIDENT**  
Mike Carlson

# BUILDING CONNECTIONS

As Board President in 2024, I'm looking forward to a strong year for the Exchange as we continue striving to meet our mission of helping members grow their businesses through the sharing of plans, creation of powerful connections and providing great information.

While I couldn't attend the Annual Meeting & Luncheon in early January, I did share a few remarks via video about what an honor it is to be selected by one's peers for a leadership role with MBEX.

With that, I want to reinforce one of MBEX's key goals — the creation of powerful industry connections. Our electronic plan room is certainly of tremendous value. I don't think there's a more comprehensive or easy-to-use platform in the marketplace today. But what makes MBEX even more unique are the industry connections it creates.

When I can get together with my colleagues, shake hands, clink a beer and talk about the project, the way we work together is enhanced. Even with the plethora of technology at our fingertips for communication, commercial construction remains a business

in which relationships really matter. There is no better place to create those connections and build those relationships than at MBEX events.

If I could make one request as the organization's leader, it's this: Make the effort to come to at least a few of our events, be it in the Twin Cities, Duluth or one of our regional meetings. I know for some of our members, the Online Plan Room is key. Perhaps that's all you need. But I've found that building, maintaining and strengthening relationships through the Exchange provides significant benefits.

Thank you for being a member and supporting our 136-year-old institution. Congratulations on being a vital part of an industry building communities in Minnesota and beyond. And finally, thank you for entrusting me with this leadership opportunity.

Best wishes for an outstanding 2024, and let's be sure to connect!

**Mike Carlson**  
Max Gray Construction  
2024 MBEX Board President



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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
David Siegel

# 900 PROJECTS AHEAD OF LAST YEAR

Here at the Minnesota Builders Exchange, we focus our efforts on three main areas of service to the industry. Foremost is operating the most comprehensive, accurate and affordable digital plan room for the region, bringing you human-verified construction leads. Second, we help the members of our industry build powerful connections through our well-attended events. And finally, we deepen the pool of knowledge for our industry through education and communications, such as with the MBEX *Blueprint* magazine.

This is issue No. 2 of that magazine, and the fact that there is a second tells you that we had enough success with our inaugural issue to continue. We received strong positive feedback from our readers and advertisers regarding our first issue, and we foresee a long and productive run bringing our members helpful, informative and interesting editions in the future. Thank you for that.

While the Exchange has been a steady driving force for commercial construction for 136 years, it might come as a surprise to realize that MBEX is the largest commercial construction association in Minnesota. A proven track record and strong membership do certainly tell a story, and today's contractor is interested in what value MBEX brings now.

Let me share a few of those benefits: Our digital plan room posted 900 more projects in 2023 than the previous year. In fact, we're ahead of where we were in 2021, 2020 and 2019. What's most exciting about that is providing more opportunities for our members to grow their businesses. Even as we continue

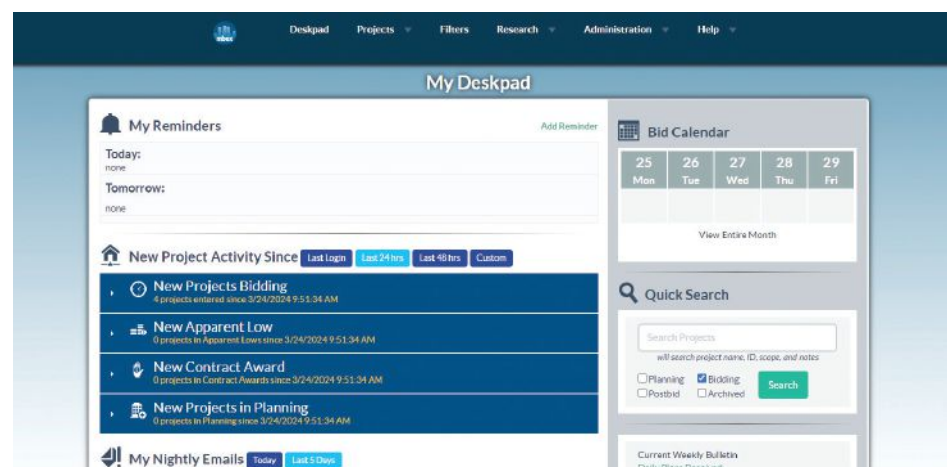
to strengthen the core of our work, we're innovating for the future.

MBEX *Blueprint* is one example. Another is our plans for regional meetings throughout Minnesota to bring the wider industry together in 2024. Yet another innovation is our Self-Care Health Fair, which was hosted alongside the annual Fall Social held at Pinstripes in Edina this past October. Brought to you by our Women's POWER series, we received strong and positive feedback. Look for that activity to repeat in 2024. Yet another innovation is the creation of our monthly *Pre-Plan Pipeline* newsletter featuring private and public projects that are still in their formative stages. Behind the scenes, we continue to invest in people, technology and infrastructure, and we are continually looking for ways to operate efficiently and productively to bring greater value to membership.

Thanks for your support of the MBEX *Blueprint*, and more broadly, MBEX. We are inspired by your success and growth. Know that plans are in the works for the new year that will strengthen the Exchange and position us to continue serving our industry far into the future. Our vision is for a vibrant and inclusive construction industry that collaboratively, safely and sustainably builds Minnesota's communities. We're steadily working toward that every day and we'll get there together with your support and engagement.

Onward,

**David Siegel, CAE, IOM**  
Executive Director





MEMBERSHIP &  
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER  
Ashlee Hartwig

# TOGETHER: HOW WE THRIVE IN OUR CONSTRUCTION COMMUNITY

The construction industry has seen its fair share of ups and downs over the past few years, and 2023 was no exception. A worldwide pandemic, massive supply chain delays, exploding interest rates, the rapid rise of artificial intelligence ... constructors have had some curveballs thrown at them that even the most forward-thinking companies couldn't have predicted.

But you know what? This is an incredibly resilient industry. Just think back on the craziness that was 2020 alone. Look at everything we've persisted through thus far and will continue to do so.

Your businesses have probably felt the shifts in the labor market. Higher wages and better benefit packages have become the name of the game in keeping talented team members on board. Add in fuel and insurance premium price increases as well as other climbing fixed costs, and it's easy to see why there's a very close eye on the budget.

Client demands are on the rise, too. What used to be considered "extra" work is now just part of the job. New government procedures and regulations are placing bigger emphasis on health, safety, environmental and security standards.

Projects are being delayed left and right, and suppliers can't guarantee quotes to match project timelines. Owners are understandably hesitant to pay for products that aren't physically on-site, and the cash flow squeeze is very real.

And let's not even get started on the shortage of skilled laborers. It's choosing between a rock and a hard place — you're either limiting your projects or bringing in folks who might not be as qualified as needed. It's a tough spot to be in, for sure, and the difficulty in finding skilled labor is a common issue we hear about from members when asked what the biggest obstacle facing their business is.

BUT ... hear me out ... there is a silver lining and here it is, friends. The real secret to success in this industry has





always been human connection. The bonds shared with employees, trade installers, suppliers, customers and fellow MBEX members are uber important, especially in times like these. In a world that's gone increasingly digital, we can't forget the value of face-to-face interactions and the camaraderie that keeps us going.

I recently attended the RE Journal Construction Summit and this very idea was the key point multiple panelists wanted attendees to take home with them: Conversations and relationships are crucial. That doesn't necessarily mean hitting "send" on a quick email and calling it a day. Pick up the phone and make the call. Get in the truck and drive to the job site. Take 10 minutes to visit the breakroom and check in on your team.

Invitations to MBEX events are an invaluable piece of one's membership. Networking opportunities are plentiful, as are the chances to build upon existing relationships or begin building new ones.

I challenge each of you to add the following resolution to your professional goals: Attend as many MBEX social and networking events as possible in 2024. We host a social in the spring and fall; there are golf tournaments and clay shoots; and our Women's POWER series is specifically for women across the industry (check out page 29 to see which workshops we're hosting this year). Even if swinging a club or targeting a brightly-colored clay disc isn't your thing (trust me, I completely understand!), come join us for the social beforehand or afterward to grab a drink, to mingle and to connect with your peers. See what's to come throughout the year by visiting [www.mbex.org/events](http://www.mbex.org/events).

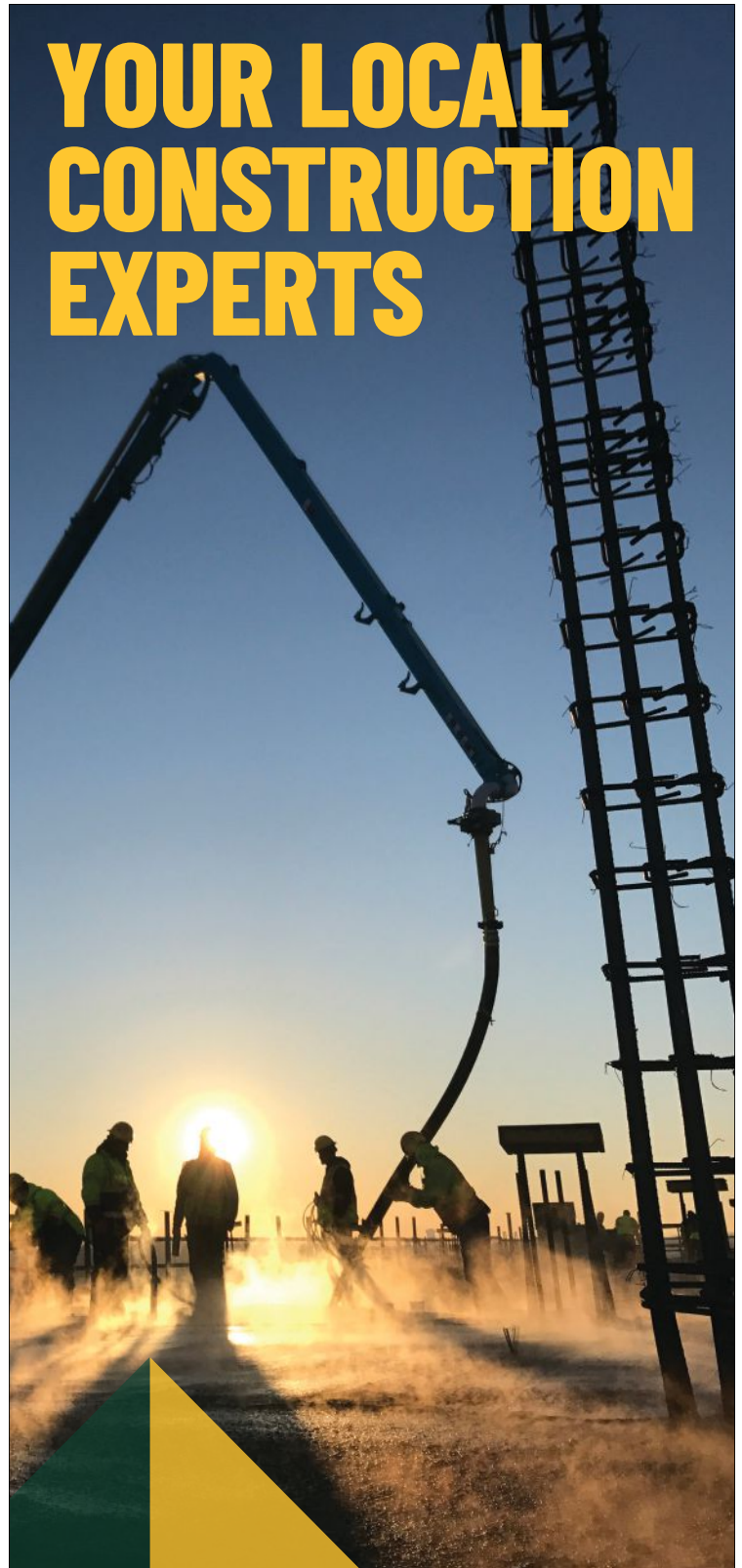
Yes, building permits are on the rise. Yes, the labor pool is shrinking. The math doesn't quite add up, and it's a challenge to find enough qualified workers to get a project off the ground. Profits may be lower. Risks may be higher. But our industry is still here, pushing forward, and MBEX is here to help.

Let's foster a greater appreciation for what each of us brings to the table. The way out of this maze is through dialogue, where contractors, construction managers, consultants and owners can sit down and truly understand each other's reality.

We're in this together, and by connecting and supporting each other, we'll not only weather the storm, but we'll also come out stronger on the other side.

PS – Help your business's bottom line by taking advantage of MBEX members-only benefit and discount programs offered on many useful goods and services like fleet fueling, uniforms, Verizon phone plans, office supplies, PPE, work wear and more. Visit [www.mbex.org/discounts](http://www.mbex.org/discounts) now to see all member offerings and start saving today.

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# SPORTING CLAYS NORTH

Duluth, Minnesota | Old Vermilion Trail | September 6, 2023

Shortly after the Labor Day holiday, MBEX traveled to Old Vermilion Trail in Duluth for the annual Sporting Clays North event. Duluth displayed its typical moody weather, but the competition and camaraderie were warm and friendly.

Eighty shooters took to two different courses to show off their aim, and awards were given for high scores and more.

Congratulations to all!



Before heading out on one of two shooting ranges, everyone tuned in for the mandatory safety talk.



When the clay shoot is done, we had some fun! Members were treated to a fabulous dinner prepared by Paul Zwak.



Matt Zupertz, with American Engineering Testing, was the big winner of the Hunter Raffle Package, generously donated to the event by Adolfson & Peterson Construction.



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## Winners

### High Scores – Hunter Course

**Erik Eklund**

The Jamar Company  
40

**Jessica Lind**

St. Germain's Glass  
36

### High Scores – Club House Course

**Ryan Linn**

A.W. Kuettel & Sons  
47

**Vanessa Weller**

The Jamar Company  
16

### First-Time Shooter

**Alanna Soukolla**

Marsh & McLennan Agency  
20

### 50/50 Raffle Winner (\$275)

**Tim Nelson**

St. Germain's Glass

### Twins Tickets Winner

**Ryan Linn**

A.W. Kuettel & Sons





# LivinConnected

## Unconventional Ways to Get and Give Mental Health Support and Save a Life

by LIVIN Foundation | 501(c)(3) Nonprofit

The LIVIN Foundation is a Minnesota-based, 501(c)(3) nonprofit with a mission of preventing suicide by creating quality connections through everyday conversations about mental health, by way of programs and partnerships. We want #LIVIN to be a universally recognized movement that promotes a world that is just as comfortable talking about mental health as it is the weather.

By way of the #LIVIN movement, natural and organic conversations about mental health have been started around the world. When people open up about their own personal struggles and share their story, it fosters a universe in which people feel heard, understood and cared for.

So often in our world, there is not only a stigma with mental health struggles in general, but a stigma with getting the actual help that is needed. Mental illness support looks and feels different for everyone, and there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach. In addition to and in parallel with professional mental health therapy, there are so many options for people to get support and help with mental illness.

Both the LIVIN Foundation’s founder and executive director lost their fathers to suicide. By sharing their own stories with the community, we have learned how powerful it can be! LIVIN Foundation’s focus continues to be on peer-to-peer support and sharing stories and life’s challenges. We have learned from our supporters that 99 percent of the people in this world are looking for new and refreshing ways to engage, connect and get support. Leaning on our own personal cohorts and communities can be therapeutic and life changing.

So how can we do this on a broader scale? We have the answer, and it’s called “LivinConnected” — a mental health support platform with a human touch! This platform is completely customizable by company and includes an avatar named, “Hope,” that takes your hand and walks you through the process to get resources and support in the community. In addition to this, the platform includes a peer-to-peer “Share My Story” section that includes a community chat



[livinconnected.org](http://livinconnected.org)

♥ LivinConnected

# #LIVIN

FOUNDATION

room and a platform to connect you with others who are feeling and experiencing the same things. Check out [www.livinconnected.org](http://www.livinconnected.org) to learn more! “LivinConnected” is the wave of the future when it comes to innovation within the mental health space and ultimately preventing suicide, and we hope you will be a part of it!

We truly believe that we can’t change the past, but **together**, we can affect the future.

Join us!

# 2024 ANNUAL MEETING + LUNCHEON

Mendota Heights, Minnesota | Mendakota Country Club | January 10, 2024



**2024 Distinguished Member of Service:**  
Tom Getzke, Immediate Past MBEX  
Executive Director



**Retiring MBEX Board Member:**  
Andy Ristrom, Bolander & Sons



**2024 MBEX Volunteer of the Year:**  
Brad Ober, Alliance Bank



**2023 MBEX Board President:**  
Greg Grazzini, Grazzini Brothers & Co.



**Joining the Board of Directors in 2024 (L to R):**  
Chris Niemand, Frattalone Companies; David  
Brandt, Schadeegg Mechanical (reelected);  
and Allie Brady, Veit. Kevin Bohrer, Donlar  
Construction, (not shown) was also voted onto  
the Board.

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# UNDERSTANDING MINNESOTA'S NEW SECURE CHOICE RETIREMENT PROGRAM

Minnesota is stepping into a new era of retirement planning. As of May 19, 2023, Minnesota joined the ranks of states like California and Colorado with its own state-run retirement savings plan — the Minnesota Secure Choice Retirement Program, an automated savings program that enrolls workers in an individual retirement account (IRA).

## Quick Facts to Know:

- **Eligibility** – If your construction business has five or more employees and does not offer or sponsor a retirement plan, participation in this new state-run program will be required.
- **Employee Participation** – Your employees will contribute a portion of their earnings every pay period into an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), defaulting to a Roth IRA, with an option for pre-tax contributions.
- **Timeline** – The program kicks off on or after January 1, 2025, and will be phased in. Larger businesses will join first, with smaller companies following over a two-year period.
- **Sector-Specific Importance** – For our commercial construction sector, staying informed about this program's progress and requirements is critical.

## Program Design – What's Next?

By this summer, the finer details regarding setting contribution rates and an annual

increase schedule until reaching the maximum contribution will be ironed out and shared with the public.

## Impacts to Consider:

While employers are not currently required to match contributions (as the program is currently written), your employees will have full ownership of their accounts immediately. They can choose their contribution type, opt out of the program or adjust their contribution rate, and these changes can be made at any time. But keep an eye out: Non-compliance could attract penalties from the state.

Although the full impact of the program is yet to be fully understood, similar programs and initiatives in other states have expanded retirement savings participation significantly.

## Making the Right Choice for Your Business:

It's decision time. As a contractor, subcontractor, supplier or other construction

service, it's vital to discern what's best for your business. Remember, the state plan isn't your only choice. With a \$6,500 cap on annual contributions (as of 2023), compared to the \$22,500 limit for 401(k) plans, alternative plans might offer more benefits.

Consider collaborating with a retirement plan provider who understands the unique needs of the construction industry. They can help set up a retirement plan that not only helps in attracting and retaining skilled workers, but also offers tax advantages and minimizes administrative hassles.

*Alliance Bank is a partner of the Minnesota Builders Exchange and has been offering its services to our members for many years. If you are interested in discussing the Minnesota Secure Choice Retirement Program or alternative retirement plan options, please contact Brad Ober at [brad.ober@alliancebanks.com](mailto:brad.ober@alliancebanks.com) or (651) 229-2874.*

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# 2023-2024 MBEX/TBG CONSTRUCTION SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

**T**ogether with its partner, The Builders Group Education Foundation, MBEX was again able to award scholarships to 13 qualifying students pursuing a degree in a construction-related field at an accredited post-secondary institution in Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, North Dakota and Wisconsin. Scholarship awards ranged from \$1,500 to \$2,000. In addition to the cash scholarship prize, MBEX also provides its scholarship recipients complimentary invitations to all MBEX-offered social events and education opportunities.

Since 2003, the MBEX Scholarship Committee has reviewed more than 550 applications from post-secondary students pursuing degrees at 63 different universities and colleges across the five-state area, and MBEX's Scholarship Fund has awarded more than \$284,500 to 140 students pursuing a construction-related career.

The Minnesota Builders Exchange is dedicated to supporting the construction industry and its future workforce. Individual memberships and member companies represent design, construction and support industries associated with the commercial construction sector throughout Minnesota and the surrounding five-state area. MBEX is committed to keeping its members on the leading edge of project information via its Online Plan Room, the sharing of plans, and creating connections and community throughout the construction industry, as well as offering educational opportunities to advance skills needed in today's workplace.

Meet the 2023-2024 MBEX/TBG Scholarship awardees:



## Yones Abdulla

Attending Dunwoody College of Technology | Bachelor of Science in Construction Management | Lives in Eagan, Minnesota

Awarded \$2,000

I am inspired by the knowledge of my teachers, and I want to share my knowledge with future students who are interested in the construction industry. I also plan to attend schools to spread more awareness about the construction industry to students. As a young African American, I am glad to see the companies in construction promoting more diversity and encouraging more women into the workforce."



### Anthony Alioto

Attending Minnesota State University – Mankato | Bachelor of Science in Construction Management | Lives in La Crescent, Minnesota

Awarded \$1,500

To honestly talk about why this scholarship would benefit me and my goals, you need to know a little more about me first. I was born deaf and had an uphill battle when it came to education in my life. My hearing was something that affected my ability to collaborate at a young age, but nowadays I don't let that affect me, and I work better than ever with others. I hope I can give back to the field when I'm older by inspiring others and helping future students with ideas I have learned and hope to learn."



### Riley Corrigan

Attending the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities | Bachelor of Science in Architecture | Lives in Young America, Minnesota

Awarded \$2,000

After I gain foundational experience working at an established firm, I intend to feed my entrepreneurial spirit and build my own business focused on sustainable architecture and construction. I will employ my positive and resolute outlook to inspire clients, employees and business partners. I will teach, demonstrate and emphasize the importance of relationships, time management, positivity, purposeful action and sustainability."



### Cale Denk

Attending the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities | Bachelor of Science in Construction Management | Lives in Columbus, Wisconsin

Awarded \$2,000

As a finish carpenter, I have honed my craft and developed a keen eye for detail and quality craftsmanship. I believe that excellence is not just achieved through proficiency in a job, but also through a commitment to delivering an exceptional quality of work. By upholding the highest standards in my work, I will strive to exceed client expectations and contribute to the overall excellence of the projects I am involved in."





### William Goehle

Attending University of Wisconsin – Madison | Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering | Lives in Minnetonka, Minnesota

Awarded \$1,500

I hope to work as a civil engineer and pursue a career in construction before eventually returning to graduate school to earn my master's. After my master's, I hope to get a high-ranking job at a construction firm or start my own business to improve Minnesota's infrastructure."



### Owen Hill

Attending St. Cloud Technical and Community College | Electrical Construction Technology | Lives in Cambridge, Minnesota

Awarded \$2,000

I plan to utilize my accomplishments to help my career in many ways. Firstly, my Eagle Scout experience has taught me dedication, leadership and the value of hard and consistent work. I am also a former captain of my school's FIRST Robotics Competition team. Overall, I plan to give back to the construction industry by teaching others what I've learned, starting a business, working hard and setting a good example. Any knowledge that I have should be shared because it will help everyone in the long run."



### Hans Lagerquist

Attending the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities | Bachelor of Civil Engineering | Lives in St. Paul, Minnesota

Awarded \$1,500

Ever since I was a small child, I have been captivated by the way that structures are built and the impact that they have on their surroundings. I loved watching shows like *Bob the Builder* and *Handy Manny*, where I got to see the buildings that they worked on appear from episode to episode and see the landscape evolve."



### Quinn McCalla

Attending Alexandria Technical & Community College | Associate Degree in Carpentry | Lives in Monticello, Minnesota

Awarded \$1,500

Using lessons from my accomplishments, as well as the accomplishments themselves, one of the biggest ways I am able to give back to the construction industry is by teaching new employees the skills I've learned that are often needed within the field to strengthen the industry as a whole. I say this because it seems like everyone wants to become a millionaire but, in my eyes, knowledge is the greatest form of payment because you must first become knowledgeable within a job field before you start making lots of money. After all, money comes and goes, but the skills you learn and the knowledge you gain in life last forever."



### Liam McVety

Attending Iowa Central Community College | Associate Degree in Carpentry, Welding Technology and Industrial Business | Lives in Shakopee, Minnesota

Awarded \$2,000

I believe strongly in giving back and serving others. Those are important values to me. I believe that the best way to lead is by example, and the best leaders are wise enough to serve others as well. I want to invest in kids who are interested in building trades. I want to be that business owner or tradesman who is patient and encouraging to a high school kid who is curious about his own future. I want to explore organizations that are teaching carpentry to at-risk youth. I want to build things, and I want to build up people while I do it."



### Jordan Rodenberg

Attending Dunwoody College of Technology | Associate Degree of Applied Science in Electrical Construction and Maintenance | Lives in Blaine, Minnesota

Awarded \$1,500

The construction industry is constantly evolving with new technologies and techniques. By working in the electrical industry, we are required to have projects completed up to code. By helping to bring houses and businesses up to code, we will be improving safety measures for the occupants."





### Paige Sanders

Attending North Dakota State University | Bachelor of Science in Environmental Engineering | Lives in Foxboro, Wisconsin

Awarded \$1,500

I will strive to do my best work in all projects by not only developing safe, economical and sustainable designs, but thinking about those that will do the work to implement my designs. I know how hard those in the construction industry work, so I will do my best to make my plans as simple and safe to implement as possible."



### Hans Stelpflug

Attending the University of Wisconsin – Stout | Bachelor of Science in Construction | Lives in Colgate, Wisconsin

Awarded \$1,500

It has always been my dream to become an owner or partner in a construction company and to bring people together to develop a successful and sustainable company."



### Bridget Womack

Attending University of Wisconsin – Whitewater | Bachelor of Science in Occupational Health and Safety with a Construction Emphasis and a Minor in Spanish | Lives in Golden Valley, Minnesota

Awarded \$2,000

My 2021 summer internship with Mortenson Construction was the best summer of my life. I worked in Mojave, California, on the Edward Sanborn Solar Farm (which, once completed, will be the largest solar farm in the world — how cool is that?)."



# MEMBER NEWS

## Winter 2024

### **Kraus-Anderson**

Kraus-Anderson (KA) has opened a new regional office in Fargo, North Dakota. The office's regional director is Ross Wilmes, who serves as KA's vice president and director of operations for North Dakota. In the past five years, KA has delivered dozens of notable projects in the Fargo area, totaling nearly \$300 million. Clients include North Dakota State University (NDSU), City of West Fargo, Coborn's, Hornbacher's and Dakota Carrier Network.

### **Ulland Brothers Inc.**

Ulland Brothers Inc. received an Asphalt Paving Merit Award from the Minnesota Department of Transportation and Minnesota Asphalt Association for outstanding work on Freeborn County CSAH 26's reconstruction. This project consisted of approximately 65,000-tons of mix and 70,000-tons of base aggregate.

### **Finance & Commerce's 2023 Class of Rising Young Professionals**

In its third year of honoring Minnesota's rising stars and business icons, the following individuals were recognized in

*Finance & Commerce's 2023 Class of Rising Young Professionals: Kori Shingles, JE Dunn Construction; Paul Noll, Kraus-Anderson; Payton Hosch, Kraus-Anderson; Peyton Kringlie, LS Black Constructors; and Zae Sellers, Mortenson Construction.*

### **Adolfson & Peterson Construction**

Tom Dykhoff, Adolfson & Peterson Construction, was named a "Business Icon" by *Finance & Commerce* for working 51 years with his construction company and for his work in giving back to his community.

### **Bituminous Roadways Inc.**

Bituminous Roadways Inc. (BR), accepted the 2023 Commercial Parking Lot Paving Excellence Award from The Minnesota Asphalt Paving Association (MAPA) during their annual Asphalt Conference and Trade Show held at Mystic Lake Event Center. The winning project, FedEx in Rosemount, Minnesota, was the largest parking lot paving project to ever be completed in BR's 77-year history. R.J. Ryan Construction hired BR in August 2022 to complete the new construction paving project, which also included installing and grading 125,000



Bituminous Roadways Inc., MAPA Award

tons of aggregate. In total, the paving project resulted in more than 60,000 tons of asphalt installed over the course of a two-year period. This equates to 22 miles of dump trucks loaded single file.





The FedEx Facility in Rosemount, Minnesota, the largest parking lot paving project to ever be completed in Bituminous Roadway's 77-year history.

### **Mulcahy Company**

Mulcahy Company, the largest hydronics manufacturer's representative in the Upper Midwest, announced the opening of an additional service office and inventory storage facility in Grimes, Iowa. The move into Iowa caps off a significant year of growth for Mulcahy, with 11 added manufacturer lines, 13 new hires, a sixth consecutive Minnesota Top Workplaces award and plans for an additional 24,000 square feet of inventory storage. Mulcahy also celebrates its 95-year anniversary this year.

### **Border States**

Border States announced it will acquire Winston Engineering Inc. Winston Engineering Inc. is licensed in 16 states and provides professional mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) services for residential, commercial, educational and governmental needs. The acquisition will allow Border States to broaden service offerings across their three core markets with an initial focus on construction and eventual expansion into utility and industrial. The acquisition closed on March 1, 2024.

### **Brin Glass Company**

Brin Glass Company, a pioneer in the glass and glazing industry with more than a century of service, announced a leadership transition with the appointment of Priscilla Koeckeritz as president. Effective January 1, 2024, Koeckeritz assumed the role of president for Brin Glass Company, marking a historic

moment as the first female president in the company's 100-plus-year history and only the seventh president in the history of the Brin Glass family of companies. This pivotal change follows Bill Sullivan's seven-year tenure as president and CEO. Having joined the company in 1984, Sullivan served in various

roles before being named president in 2016 and later CEO in 2019. Koeckeritz joined Brin as CEO in 2022 after serving as a fractional chief marketing officer since 2021. Prior to joining Brin, Koeckeritz spent 25 years in the Twin Cities business community working in start-ups and consulting with small businesses.



Bill Sullivan, former President of Brin Glass



Priscilla Koeckeritz, President of Brin Glass

# 2023 GOLF NORTH EVENT

Duluth, Minnesota | Ridgeview Country Club | Held on August 23, 2023

## Winners

### Closest in 1-Shot:

Greg Nuss, SVL

### Men's Long Drive:

Russ Weets, Tenet

### Closest to the Pin:

Gary Kanuit, ArchCon

### Women's Long Drive:

Rose Misiewicz, The Jamar Company

### Closest to the Keg:

Tim Shadvig, Benson Electric

### Women's Long Putt:

Sarah Byers, Kraus-Anderson

### Closest in 2-Shots:

Jack Zabel, Bluum Technology

### Closest to the Center Line:

Dave Peterson, Phil's Garage Door

### Closest in 2-Shots:

Mark Udd, Northland Consulting

### Men's Long Drive:

Patrick Miller, Tenet

### Women's Long Drive:

Rose Misiewicz, The Jamar Company

### Men's Long Putt:

Chris James, Marsh & McLennan Agency

## Awards

### Team Low Score:

Tenet – Team No. 2 (score of 57)

### Foursome:

Patrick Miller, John Hobbs, Brad Corbin and Mike Plummer

### Lucky Golfer Raffle:

Bill Lowry, Max Gray Construction

### 50/50 Cash Raffle:

Patrick Miller, Tenet (\$420)

### 5th Hole Par Three Contest:

Sarah Byers, Kraus-Anderson

### 12th Hole Par Three Contest:

Shawn Schwaab, Scaffold Service

### 17th Hole Par Three Contest:

Heather Salfer, Tenet

### Shawn's Choice (at 15th Hole):

John Hobbs, Tenet







The University of Minnesota – Duluth’s Dance Team joined MBEX out on the course for a few holes, raising funds for their upcoming competitive season, as well as offering snacks and refreshments to golfers.



Bill Lowry with Max Gray Construction went home the winner of the Lucky Golfer Raffle. Fun fact: Bill has won this door prize on three separate occasions at MBEX’s Golf North event!



After a full 18-hole course, golfers were treated to a well-earned and delicious dinner prepared by Ridgeview Country Club’s staff.



## Thanks to Our Sponsors!

### Premier Sponsor

The Builders Group (TBG)

### Beverage Sponsors

Marsh & McClennan Agency and Western National Insurance

### Dinner Sponsor

North Shore Bank

### Lunch Sponsor

Northland Constructors

### Golf Cart Sponsor

Veit

### Hole Sponsors

Hole 1: North Shore Bank | Hole 2: Tenet | Hole 3: Scaffold Service  
Hole 4: Sorlie Acoustics | Hole 6: Benson Electric  
Hole 7: Phil’s Garage Door | Hole 9: Max Gray Construction  
Hole 11: Marsh & McClennan Agency | Hole 13: UHL  
Hole 14: A.W. Kuettel & Sons | Hole 15: Phil’s Garage Door  
Hole 16: Maverick Cutting & Breaking  
Hole 18: Western National Insurance

### Golf Range Sponsor

Northern Industrial Insulation

### Hole-In-One Sponsor

The Jamar Company

### Par Three Snacks and Contest Sponsors

Scaffold Service & Sorlie Acoustics

### Cigar Sponsor

Sorlie Acoustics

### Door Prize Donors:

Advanced Shoring, American Engineering Testing, A.W. Kuettel & Sons, Benson Electric, The Builders Group, The Jamar Company, Kraus-Anderson, Red Cedar, Scaffold Service, and Swanson & Youngdale

### Giveaways

Hole 15 Sponsor and Giveaways: Phil’s Garage Door  
Hole 16 Sponsor and Giveaways: Maverick Cutting & Breaking





# TRENDS TO WATCH IN 2024

Ashlee Hartwig | Membership and Communications Manager



As we move forward in 2024 and beyond, construction professionals need to stay informed and adapt to the changing landscape in order to take their projects to new heights in the years to come.

The construction industry is on the brink of a transformative era, driven by technological advancements and a growing global population.

The construction landscape is evolving rapidly to meet future challenges, from the rise of robotics to the increasing use of prefabricated materials and cutting-edge technologies.

Several trends will reshape how buildings are designed, constructed and managed over the next year. Let's dive in:

## 1. Sustainability and Green Buildings

Sustainable practices are a hot topic, and construction is no exception. More companies will source eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient designs, focus on waste-reduction techniques, and strive to achieve net-zero targets.

Green buildings are more cost-effective in the long run, appealing to a growing eco-conscious market. The only drawback is

sometimes green materials and construction methods are slightly more expensive than the traditional.

## 2. Robotics and Automation

From laying bricks to rebar tying, to handling industrial solar installations, robotics are making construction faster and more efficient. They can complete many repetitive and time-consuming tasks, freeing up manpower for more intricate aspects of projects as well as reducing the risk of worker fatigue and injury.

While the future potential for robotics in construction is great, their use has some boundaries. For example, robotics may not be able to navigate certain obstacles or work in certain weather conditions.

## 3. Virtual Design and Visualization

Enter the world of virtual design and construction (VDC), which includes Building Information Modeling (BIM) and Construction Management software. It's like building structures in a video game before



they become a reality, and these virtual environments can be accessed via desktop and mobile devices.

It's estimated that reworks of faulty or incorrect builds account for nearly 30 percent of construction industry costs, and VDC can help cut down on this.

#### 4. Modular Construction and Prefabrication

General contractors, architects and developers are increasingly finding that prefabrication and modular construction help reduce labor costs, offer increased efficiency, and align with green and sustainability initiatives by reducing waste and energy consumption.

While prefabrication allows a project to be cost-effective and efficient, it doesn't leave a lot of room for choices, and final results can be somewhat cookie-cutter. Certain kinds of buildings do lend themselves better to this kind of construction than others. For that reason, builders should pick and choose where to apply this process.

#### 5. Innovative and Advanced Building Materials

The industry needs enhanced durability, sustainability and functionality, and advanced materials that facilitate smooth construction will be a focus in 2024.

Examples of such materials include graphene, a material made from carbon and stronger than steel; calcium silicate board, a material made from natural elements like sand, clay and lime, which is resistant to fire, moisture and pests; Engineered Cementitious Composite (ECC), a material stronger than concrete due to its polymer-derived fibers; and 3D printed building materials, currently being used to make concrete walls and floors.

Bamboo, hempcrete (a material made of hemp fibers and lime), aerogel, spider silk, carbon composites, hydroceramics, bioplastics and biofoam are also examples of sustainable materials growing in popularity across the commercial industry.

#### 6. Drones and UAV Technology

Once considered a novelty item, drones are now being used across job sites for a variety of tasks. Drones are being used to survey construction sites before work begins for mapping and planning; tracking a project's progress with live views of the site, allowing developers and contractors to identify potential problems early; documenting a building's progress; and monitoring workers to ensure they're following safety guidelines.

Drones are also being utilized to inspect remote and hard-to-access areas without



putting any actual humans in harm's ways, reducing worker injuries and death.

#### 7. Workforce and Labor Shortage

The struggle is very real when it comes to finding enough skilled workers. As construction projects boom thanks to funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), CHIPS Act, and Interest Reduction Act (IRA), the labor shortage will continue to be a challenge.

Companies across the industry are tackling recruitment and retention methods through STEM education programs, training the tech-savvy Gen Z into the workforce, focusing on diversity in hiring, attracting interest through social media and offering retention bonuses.

There is good news on the horizon. Enrollment in construction trade programs at community colleges saw a 5 percent increase between 2019 and 2021.

#### 8. Wearable Tech for Safety

Move over, hard hats — there's a "helmet revolution" underway. Safety helmets, like the ones seen on rock climbers, are now the recommended safety wear for construction workers. Because safety helmets have a chin strap, it stays on a worker's head if a fall occurs. They also provide a greater field of vision and a more compact, ergonomic fit.

Wearables are also becoming very popular. These devices, integrated into workers' protective equipment (including safety helmets), use GPS tracking and biometrics to enhance safety. They monitor factors such as slips, falls, noise levels, dust saturation, body temperature and hazardous substances, contributing to a safer work environment.

#### 9. Artificial intelligence (AI)

AI took the world by storm in 2023, offering opportunities for upskilling, workforce development and enhanced safety. Imagine optimizing production schedules, scheduling predictive machine maintenance or even mapping your job site for accessibility — all with the help of AI.

Like every new piece of technology, contractors should be cautious. A large language model, like ChatGPT, relies on its users feeding it information. If the model is given the wrong information, a worker could very well take it as fact and act on it, causing potentially major problems.

#### 10. Smart Cities

Smart cities leverage connected digital technologies, often called the Internet of Things (IoT), to optimize urban living environments.

This goes beyond simply constructing smarter buildings — it's more so understanding large-scale urbanization and the significance of incorporating IoT into construction methods.

#### Closing Thoughts

The future of construction looks bright, with new technologies and trends driving innovation and efficiency. The construction industry can meet future challenges and achieve sustainable growth by embracing green and sustainable building, modular construction, prefabricated materials and advanced technologies.

As we move forward in 2024 and beyond, construction professionals need to stay informed and adapt to the changing landscape in order to take their projects to new heights in the years to come.



**POWER Series**  
Professionals Offering Women Engaging Resources

# EMPOWERHER:

## The 2024 MBEX POWER Workshop Lineup

The MBEX Women's POWER series is gearing up for a dynamic return in the new year, featuring four exciting workshops that are set to continue our mission: empowering women throughout the construction industry with education, fostering connections and elevating professional journeys.



POWER, short for Professionals Offering Women Empowering Resources, made waves during its inaugural season by addressing essential topics unique to women, such as financial wellness, navigating challenging conversations with male coworkers and superiors, and confidently tackling one's personal branding on LinkedIn and the finer points of online networking. A POWER-ful highlight was the organizing and debut of our Self-Care Health Fair at the MBEX Fall Social, where a diverse array of physical and mental health professionals showcased their services. With the concerning industry statistics that show a significant rise in mental health challenges within the construction sector, it's a topic we couldn't overlook — after all, everyone, regardless of gender, deserves self-care for their own well-being and that of their loved ones.

In 2024, the upcoming POWER workshops are revisiting familiar topics from last year, but this time, they will be guided by none other than the incredible Nicole Middendorf, the CEO of Prosperwell Financial and the visionary behind the Live It List.

Nicole is a financial expert, a knowledge junkie, a survivor, a single mom and a born coach. In 2003, she boldly ventured out from Morgan

Stanley to establish her own wealth management firm, Prosperwell Financial. She's also the author of five books, as well as a world traveler, a philanthropist and a pro when it comes to public speaking.

As a wealth advisor, her mission revolves around helping people discover happiness in life while achieving financial confidence. Nicole shares valuable financial insights and offers a down-to-earth perspective on saving, planning and investing to audiences nationwide. Her ultimate goal is to demystify complex money matters, making them accessible to all.

Sign up for the POWER email list and keep an eye on the MBEX website for upcoming details as they become available.

The best part of all? These workshops are open to all women in the construction sector. Whether swinging a hammer on-site, rocking it in marketing, managing projects like a boss or a trades-skill expert, these sessions are for you. Feel free to bring your girlfriends and colleagues along — the more the merrier, and we're all about building a rock-solid and POWER-ful support network for everyone.



### **Unstoppable: How to Make It in a Male-Dominated World**

**Date:** Tuesday, April 2

**Time:** 3:00–5:00 p.m.

**Location:** McGough Construction (Roseville)

Nicole's journey wasn't originally planned for a male-dominated industry, but she's on a mission to change the game. The number of women in these industries is slowly increasing, and she wants to accelerate that change. Join us for a passionate discussion on diversity and inclusion, and discover how we can empower more women to succeed in male-dominated careers. Let's engage in this inspiring conversation and seize the opportunity to make a difference.



### **Women, Money and Happiness**

**Date:** Wednesday, June 26

**Time:** 7:30 a.m. – Breakfast; 8:00 a.m. – Workshop

**Location:** The Coven (St. Paul)

We all know that men and women are different in many ways, but did you ever consider how we handle money differently, too? Join us for a lively workshop where Nicole will share tips and tricks to help women become savvier and smarter with their finances. Women juggle a lot, and while managing the present is crucial, planning for the future is just as essential. This fun and empowering workshop will leave attendees with actionable steps to kickstart one's journey toward financial happiness, all while uncovering the intriguing secrets of how men and women approach money.



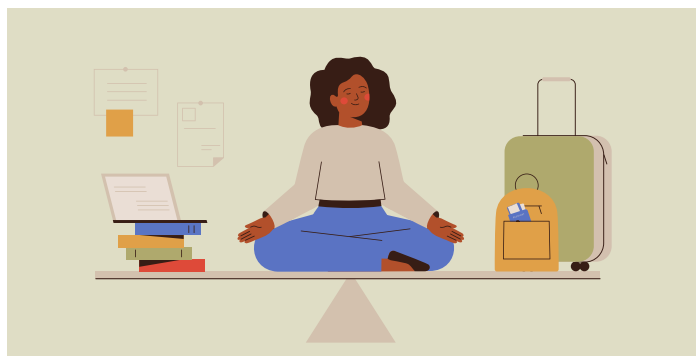
### **Balance Versus Blend: How to Have Blend (Not Balance) in Your Life**

**Date:** Monday, August 19

**Time:** 2:00 p.m. – Workshop; 3:15 p.m. – Happy Hour

**Location:** Prosperwell Financial (Minnetonka)

Nicole has been a single mother since her daughter was six months old and her son was two. She learned the art of juggling motherhood and running a business, and she firmly believes that every woman can have it all. Join us for this workshop where attendees will leave with practical ideas to find that perfect blend in life they're dreaming of. Say goodbye to the concept of balance and embrace the idea of a fulfilling blend.



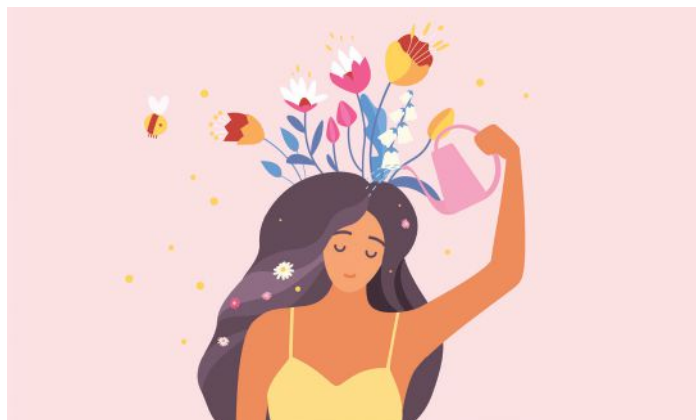
### **Living Life to the Fullest | MBEX Fall Social & Second Annual Self-Care Health Fair**

**Date:** Thursday, October 10

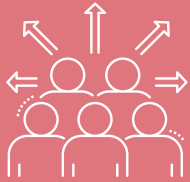
**Time:** 3:00 p.m. – Event starts; 5:00 p.m. – Presentation

**Location:** Hilton Minneapolis/Bloomington (Bloomington)

Get ready for an exceptional experience as Nicole takes the stage at MBEX's annual Fall Social event to further the POWER series' goal of enhancing one's personal well-being. Her presentation will help attendees unlock the secrets to true happiness and show them how to live life to the fullest. Nicole will share her remarkable journey of resilience and introduce you to the concept of the Live It List. By the end of her presentation, everyone will have the tools to set their goals, discover their "why" and define their own version of success. Attendees will walk away feeling inspired, motivated and armed with actionable steps to truly live life to the fullest.



## NUMBERS AT A GLANCE



118

New Members in 2023



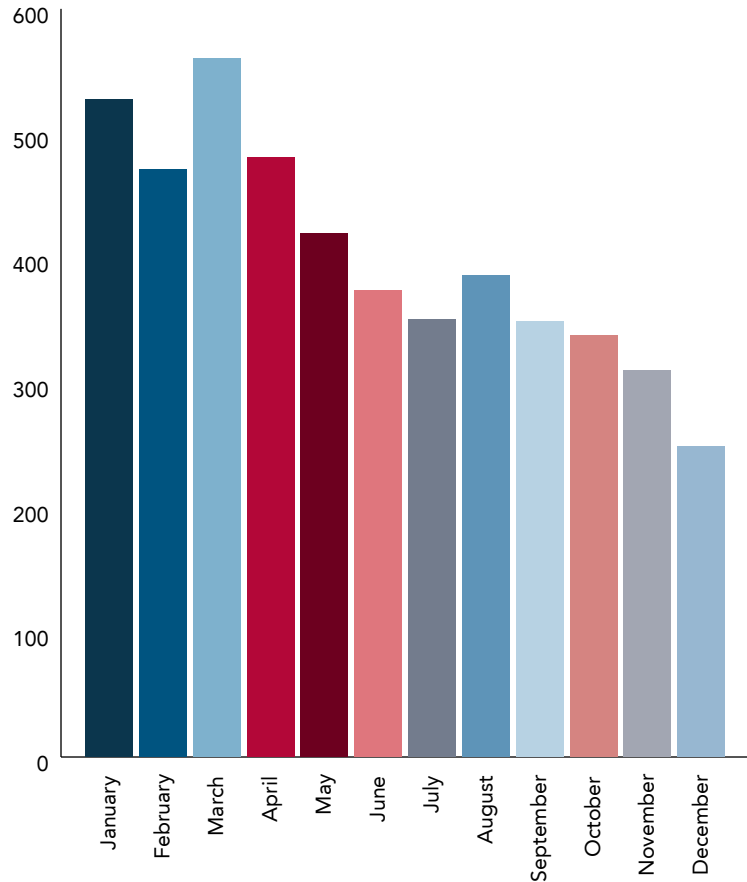
4,816

Total Projects in the Online Plan Room in 2023

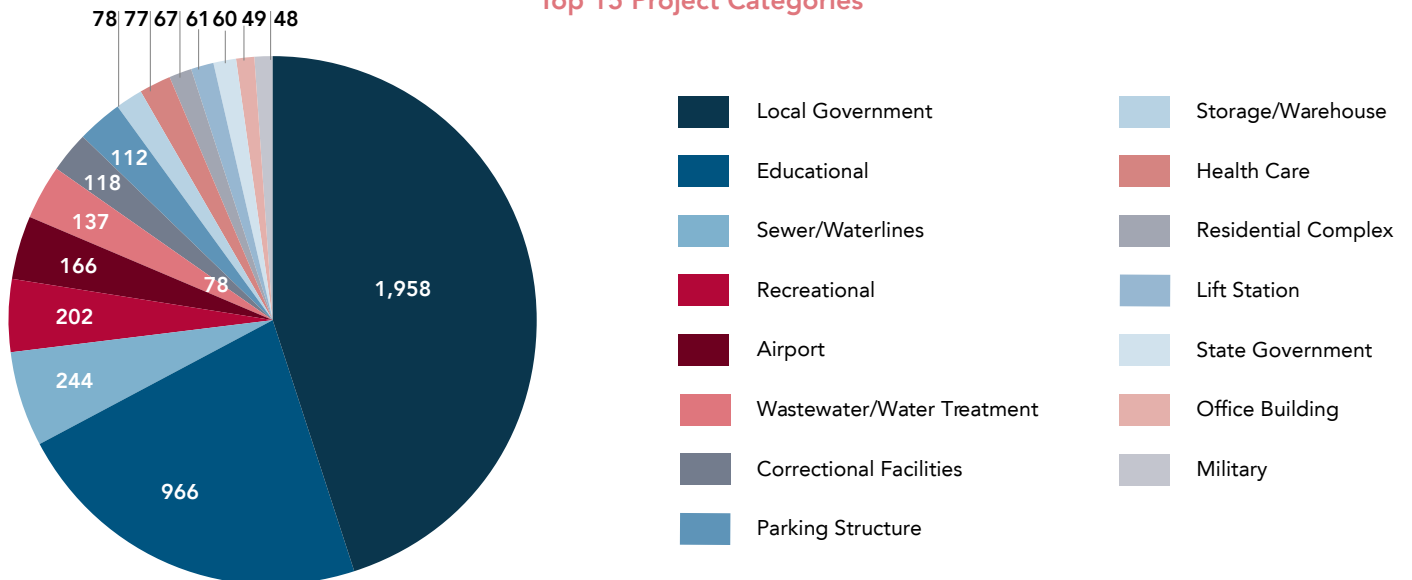
# 2023 Year in Review

Information is for the date range 1/1/2023 – 12/31/2023

## Total Projects in the Online Plan Room in 2023

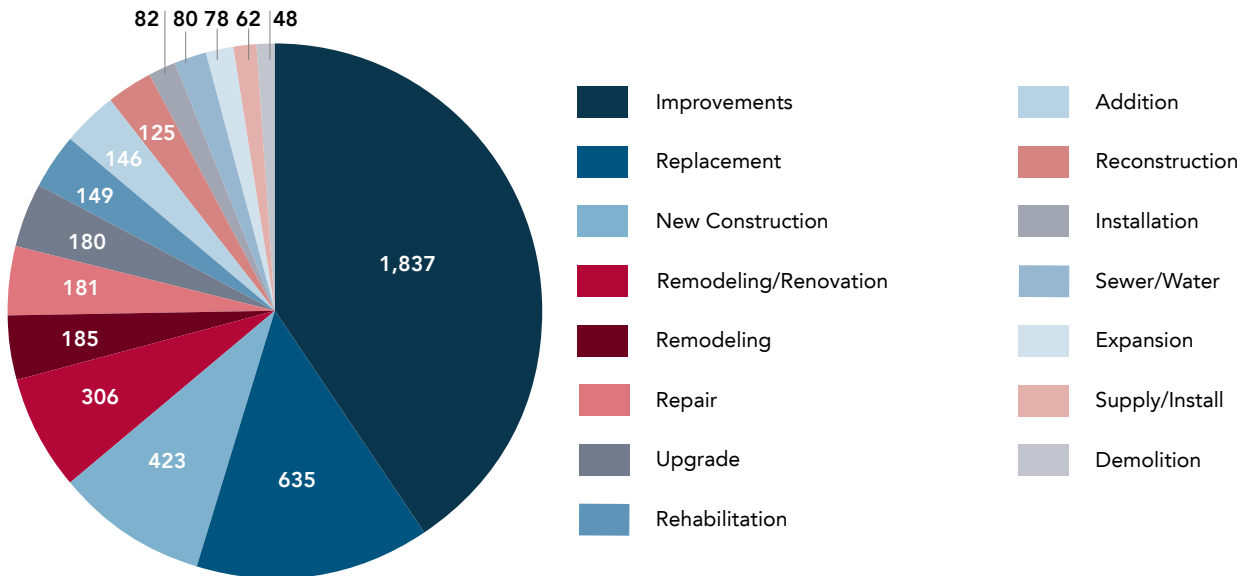


## Top 15 Project Categories





## Top 15 Project Types



## Lumber &amp; She Builds Nation Key Figures for Women in Construction



85%

of respondents said that there are no **maternity-friendly safety equipment** at construction sites.



72%

of respondents believe there are ample **opportunities for women to advance** in the construction industry.



64%

of respondents said that the availability of **gender-friendly restrooms** at construction sites was a challenge.



66%

of respondents say that there is potential for women to **thrive in entrepreneurship** within the industry.



67%

of respondents said that **gender-friendly safety equipment** is not available at construction sites.



55%

of respondents said that there is no adequate **support system** for women.



51%

say that the industry does offer **equal pay with men** in the same position.

Data from the Lumber and She Builds Nation March 2024 report: *The Business Case for Supporting Women in Construction*. For more information or to download a free report, visit [www.lumberfi.com/shebuildsnation](http://www.lumberfi.com/shebuildsnation).



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