

# Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium

## 2019 Annual Report



### Mission Statement

To develop and support the GIS professional in Minnesota for the benefit of our state and its citizens.

The Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium is a forum for communicating information to, and improving cooperation among, those interested in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Land Information Systems (LIS) in the State of Minnesota. Members include GIS users in local, state, federal and tribal government agencies; business and industry; educational institutions and nonprofits. Membership is **FREE** just by being on our mailing list.

The Consortium hosts annual statewide conferences and workshops, collaborates to recognize outstanding contributions of members and organizations, provides grants to support students and community organized activities, and establishes committees that deal with specific GIS/LIS-related matters in Minnesota. Opportunities to participate in Consortium activities are available through volunteer work with the board, its committees, the conference, and workshops. The Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium is an official 501c3 non-profit organization.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact any of your [board members](#).

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# Message from the Board Chair

As with anyone writing a report in 2020 that reflects on last year, it's strange to think about how much has changed in our world so quickly. As we move to an increasingly remote and digital world, I'm optimistic that our geospatial industry will answer the call, as we've done so many times in the past, and use our unique skills to serve our communities and help those around us navigate this challenge.



John Nerge  
2019 Board Chair

On a personal note, it was my honor to serve as your 2019 Board Chair. We explored new ways to support our longstanding members and reach out to our young and aspiring GIS pros to ensure the long-term success of our organization through continual growth of our membership. Thanks to all of you who serve and have served as Mentors at our conferences and as GeoMentors out in the Minnesota community.

The 2019 Consortium Conference was our 29<sup>th</sup> annual event. We also hosted our 5<sup>th</sup> annual educator day, part of our continuing commitment by to support GIS as part of K12 education. As a state organization, made up completely of volunteers, we continue to set the standards on how things can be accomplished, often through the leadership from dedicated individuals and idea that flourish into new traditions. Special thanks to our 2019 Conference Chair, Aaron Menza, for putting on a great event. Besides the exceptionally high quality of the workshops, presentations, and networking events, I've never eaten so well at any conference!

Reach out to any [board member](#) and ask questions on how you can get involved. You could join one of our committees, host a networking event, teach a workshop, or even join the board. We continue to explore what else we can do to support the GIS professional. Please consider getting involved and tell us how the MN GIS/LIS Consortium can help you grow!



5<sup>th</sup> Annual Educators Day



Saint Cloud, the home for our 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

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# Thank you to our contributors!

## Conference Sponsors

Bolton & Menk, Inc.  
ddms, Inc.  
Fugro  
Minnesota State University, Mankato  
North Point Geographic Solutions  
Pro-West & Associates, Inc.  
WSB & Associates, Inc.

## Conference Exhibitors

Ayres Associates  
Bolton & Menk, Inc.  
CES Imaging  
ddms, Inc.  
EagleView Technologies  
Eos Positioning Systems  
Esri  
Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College  
Frontier Precision, Inc.  
Fugro  
GeoComm  
Geocortex  
GISInc  
GPI Geospatial, Inc.  
GRAEF  
Houston Engineering, Inc.  
Minnesota State University, Mankato  
Minnesota Society of Professional Surveyors  
North Point Geographic Solutions  
Panda Consulting  
Planet  
Pro-West & Associates, Inc.  
Quantum Spatial  
Surdex Corporation  
University of Wisconsin, Madison  
Woolpert  
WSB & Associates, Inc.

## Higher Ed Workshop Hosts

University of Minnesota – Twin Cities  
Concordia College – Moorhead  
Sauk Rapids High School – Sauk Rapids

## Distinct Sponsorship

ddms, Inc. provides [Project Portal](#) *at no cost to the Consortium* for our online document management. This tool is an exceptional benefit to our everyday business.

## City, County, and State Government

A large percentage of the attendees and active participants at our annual conference, spring and fall workshops and other Consortium sponsored events are employees of local government throughout the state. Equally as many are state government employees.

## Federal Agencies

Federal agencies step up every year to involve their staffs in Consortium events and initiatives.

## Donated Honoraria

Every year many of our instructors generously decline honoraria, requesting instead that these funds be directed to our Education Investment fund.

## Education Volunteers

Thank you to all who have donated their time to participate in our education program as a scholarship or Minnesota on the Map Competition judge, Young Professional's Conference Mentor, GeoMentor or K-12 workshop instructor.

## Other Participation

All organizations that have graciously allowed their employees to donate time to present, moderate, plan, and attend our annual conference and other events.

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# Consortium events

The Consortium held several events in 2019. These events support our mission to advance education and communication among GIS professionals to the benefit of our state.

## Spring workshops

We had **14** workshops this year in two locations – 11 in the Twin Cities and 3 in Duluth. **74** people attended for a total of **110** half-day registrations. According to one attendee, “They did great! They even gave us more information after the workshop--which is greatly appreciated.”

## 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference: Find Your Geospatial Destiny

**550** attendees joined us to learn from peers and vendors at **20** workshops, **90** presentations and **7** panel discussions. Among attendees were **60** educators, **60** students, and **27** vendors. Attendees also submitted **13** student poster and **15** general posters. We also had **50** attendees for *Meet Me at the Corner*, an event that caters to our LIS-minded members, and **10** educator workshops and presentations.



With the commitment of our contributors, the Consortium was able to sponsor **7** student assistants to attend the 2019 Conference through the Student Assistant Program. We had another successful Mentorship Program with **14** pairings between mentors and mentees. We also hosted our first ever speed networking event and had **40** participants. Lastly, thank you to everyone who visited our booth and helped us raise over **\$3,000** for our education fund!

## Other events

### Event and education grants

Northeast MN GIS User Group meeting	\$300
U of M GIS Student Organization networking and career fair	\$250
Southeast MN GIS User Group meeting	\$480

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# Award recipients

## Polaris awards

The Polaris Leadership Award recognizes active, established leaders in the geospatial community who are inspiring and leading us through their contributions, energy, and creativity. Up to three awards are made each year. There were three awardees in 2019.



**Alison Slaats**  
MnGeo  
*presented by Chris Pouliot*



**Brad Anderson**  
City of Moorhead  
*presented by Jesse Adams*



**Ryan Mattke**  
John R Borchert Map Library  
*Presented by Stacey Stark*

## Lifetime Achievement award

The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes a person (or organization) who has made significant contributions in the fields of GIS or LIS that have improved the quality of life for the people of Minnesota. This award is given periodically when warranted.

In 2019, we gave this award to Scott Freburg.



## Governor's Geospatial Commendation awards

This award honors organizations that have gone the extra mile to deliver products and services, improve government responsiveness, promote public access to information, and demonstrate the benefits of collaboration that encourage, by example, others to do the same. There were two awardees in 2019.



Minnesota Wetland Inventory Project



Mapping Prejudice Project

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# Award recipients (continued)

## Student scholarships

The following students' schools selected them for recognition as MN GIS/LIS Student Scholars.

### Graduate students

First place	Raoul Blackman	Minnesota State University, Mankato
Second place	Lauren Strug	University of Minnesota
Third place	Alysha Alloway	University of Minnesota

### Undergraduate students

First place	Esther Ramsay	Macalester College
Second place	Vincent Deserto	University of Saint Thomas
Third place	Katie Koetz	Saint Cloud University
Honorable mention	Derek Dahly	University of Minnesota, Duluth

### Student poster competition

First place	Asami Minei	Minnesota State University, Moorhead
Second place	Sarah Rybak	Fond du Lac Community College
Third place	Angela Martini	Fond du Lac Community College

### General poster competition

First place	Jessica Schuler and Kitty Hurley	"Hit me with your best shot, fire away"
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## Mentor/Mentee pairs

Thank you, mentors, for stepping up to help lead and inspire our future workers!

<b>Mentor</b>	<b>Mentee</b>	<b>Mentor</b>	<b>Mentee</b>
Mike Dolbow	Luke Henry	Kate Scheurer	Katie Koetz
Kitty Hurley	Ossai Alu	Jessica Schuler	Luke Henderson
Andrew Lamers	Keely Hansen	Molly Shoberg	Christine Lindenberg
Andra Mathews	Andrea Haataja	Mark Sloan	Emily Ruetz
Eric Potvin	Elijah Howard	Ryan Stovern	Asami Minei
Cory Richter	Ulisses Jacobo	Sally Wakefield	Travis Ormsby
Kiah Sagami	Derek Dahly	Hal Watson	Nichole Dimick

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# Consortium highlights

We're proud of the work we did in 2019 as a board and with you, our members. Here are some of our featured accomplishments!

## Member survey

We conducted a member survey to learn more about our membership and your priorities. You can view the full report on our [website surveys page](#). We heard from about the popularity of networking events and user presentations at our annual conference. Some of the main reasons you don't or can't attend the conference are your location, session relevance, and unavailable funds. Popular areas to provide additional presentation content were for developers, open source GIS, and K12. Webinars and coding sessions were popular ideas for new events.

## Education fund

For many years, we've been working to get our education fund account to a benchmark of \$100,000. We're thrilled to report that in 2019 we finally reached this amount! Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this fund and the past boards that managed its development over the years. We look forward to managing the fund effectively so we can use the funds to support GIS/LIS education efforts into the future.

## Our first story maps

As an organization that supports people who make maps, we thought it was high time we have a map on our website, so we put together a story map to about our [board of directors](#). We also used a story map for our [annual business meeting](#) in Saint Cloud. More to come!

## Speed networking

After hearing from you in our member survey about the value of networking, we held our first ever speed networking session at the 2019 annual conference in Saint Cloud. 40 people attended and rapidly made a half dozen or more connections in a half hour period. We're looking forward to repeating this event at future conferences!

## Audit

The board of directors conducted our first ever financial audit. This was a multi-year initiative discussed by multiple boards to ensure we were following operational and financial best practices. An audit is not required for an organization with our size of assets, and we didn't have any specific concerns, but we gained valuable insight to some operational changes we could make to ensure the long-term financial health of MN GIS/LIS. For more information, please contact one of your [board members](#).

## Board representation

We hit a landmark in the last quarter of 2019 with over 50% of board of directors being women. While this alone of course does not automatically make us more inclusive as an organization, we believe it's an accomplishment to be celebrated. We look forward to continuing to work toward equitable representation amongst not only industries but also gender and cultural identities to ensure our mission statement applies to all current, and aspiring, GIS professional in Minnesota.

# Financials

Detailed accounting documentation is available upon request. Contact any of your [board members](#) for more information.

<b>Profit / Loss</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Conference Income	\$175,625	\$192,661	\$176,361
Spring Workshops Income	\$16,060	\$12,976	\$11,055
Education Income	\$3,488	\$5,879	\$8,827
Networking Events Income	\$307	\$400	\$0
General Operating Income	\$3,156	\$1,425	\$706
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$198,636</b>	<b>\$213,340</b>	<b>\$196,949</b>

Conference Expenses	\$124,677	\$153,093	\$146,059
Spring Workshop Expenses	\$8,281	\$4,093	\$7,068
Networking Events Expenses	\$1,053	\$496	\$0
General Operations Expenses	\$31,408	\$35,090	**\$54,812
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$165,419</b>	<b>\$192,772</b>	<b>\$207,940</b>

<b>Balance Sheet</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Net Amount - General Fund	\$77,571	\$104,630	\$69,529
Reserve Fund	\$45,265	\$45,310	\$45,356
Scholarship Fund	*\$0	*\$0	*\$0
Education Investment Fund	\$76,556	\$84,366	\$106,344
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$199,392</b>	<b>\$234,306</b>	<b>\$221,228</b>

\* Scholarship fund merged into Education Investment Fund. See description below.

\*\* A significant portion of this increase was for a financial audit - see Consortium Highlights above for more info.

## **DESCRIPTIONS:**

*Conference Income* – Workshop and Fall Conference registration fees, exhibitor fees, and interest from General Operations account.

*Spring Workshop Income* – Workshop registration fees.

*Education Income* – Donations, fundraising, and interest.

*Networking Events Income* – Networking events fundraising.

*Annual Conference Expenses* – Including but not limited to event space rental, food & beverages, audio/visual fees, printing, and honorariums for workshop instructors.

*Spring Workshop Expenses* – Including but not limited to event space rental, food & beverages, printing, and honorariums for workshop instructors.

*General Operating Expenses* – Expenses for the general operations of the Consortium including but not limited to professional management fees, website maintenance fees, student scholarships, printing, and event grants.

*Net Amount* – General Fund – Operational account balance as of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

*Reserve Fund* – A fund to protect the solvency of the Consortium in the event that Annual Conference revenue cannot offset expenses.

*Education Investment Fund* - This fund was created in 2017 from the consolidation of the Scholarship Fund (Education Fund) and Investment Account. This was created for the long-term investment of education monies and will be used for education purposes. Going forward the Scholarship Fund will not exist.



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# Volunteer opportunities

## About the MN GIS/LIS Board of Directors and Consortium Committees

Board positions are elected by our membership. We encourage you to run for a seat that matches your experience and current association. In addition, there are many opportunities for you to contribute your skills, time, and enthusiasm to make a difference, without having to run for office. Several committees need your help. We're sure you will enjoy working with such an interesting group of people who are dedicated to providing the best possible educational and networking opportunities to our membership of GIS professionals.

**The Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium is run solely by volunteers. All members are invited to participate. Here's how to get involved:**

### Awards Committee

Select recipient of Polaris and Lifetime Achievement Awards. You must be a past award winner to sit on this committee.

### Conference Committee

Help to plan and execute a fun, educational and successful fall conference. Opportunities include planning entertainment events, selecting speakers, coordinating facility set up, and assisting onsite.

### Education Committee

Work to foster relationships between the consortium and educational institutions to support GIS in K-12 and higher education. Help manage student scholarship program for the fall conference.

### Communications Committee

Promote the GIS/LIS Consortium, its mission and events through social media and our blog.

### Spring Workshops Committee

Plan, prepare, and assist with technical spring workshops for GIS professionals.

### Database/Web Committee

Assist with design and management of the Consortium database and website.

Please feel free to contact us at any time at [webmaster@mngislis.org](mailto:webmaster@mngislis.org).

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# Board of Directors



**Aaron Menza**  
Conference Chair  
City of Rosemount



**Alison Slaats**  
Treasurer  
MnGeo



**Dan Ross**  
MnGeo Ex-Officio (Jan-Sep)  
MnGeo



**Gerry Sjerven**  
Past Board Chair  
Allete, Inc.



**Jared Hovi**  
Past Conference Chair  
Carlton County



**Jason Menard**  
Higher Education Rep  
Lake Superior Consulting



**Jessica Schuler**  
State Government Rep  
MN DNR



**John Nerge**  
Board Chair  
City of Brooklyn Park



**John Studtmann**  
Local Government Rep  
City of Minneapolis



**Katie Rossman**  
Conference Chair-Elect  
MN DNR



**Leah Spurduto**  
Secretary  
City of Eagan



**Rebecca Foster**  
Board Chair-Elect  
City of Edina



**Ryan Stovern**  
MN GAC Ex-Officio  
Saint Louis County



**Sandi Stroud**  
MnGeo Ex-Officio (Sep-Dec)  
MnGeo



**Sharvari Sangle**  
Private Sector Rep  
SRF Consulting



**Tanya Mayer**  
At-Large Rep  
Metropolitan Council

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# Association and Event Management

## Ewald Consulting

Eric Ewald	Vice President of Association Management
Kathie Pugacewski	Vice President of Communications and Technology
Amanda Ewald	Vice President of Finance and Client Accounting
Tommy DeMartino	Client Accounting Specialist
Anne Solheid	Client Accounting Specialist
Sarah Ewald	Event Manager
Michele Wolfer	Account Executive Assistant
Barb Mann	Director of Member Services