



Southeast  
Service  
Cooperative

# *Connections*

January 2020

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Connect With Your  
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## *Branching Out*



# Developing People Into Leaders to Positively Impact Organizations and Communities



By Kari Kubicek

SSC is excited to be partnering with HueLife to offer a Hue-Man 101 Training four times in the upcoming months at SSC's Wood Lake Meeting Center. HueLife is a human understanding and engagement (Hue) consulting firm that works with public, private and government sectors in organization development, strategic planning, public and in-house facilitation training, consulting, executive search, community engagement, and leadership/team development. HueLife's training participants leave with new tools and open minds leading to increased efficiency in communicating, planning, implementing, reducing conflict, and problem-solving; and ultimately positively impacting their organizations and communities.

Hue-Man 101 Training provides basic understanding of human behavior and psychological preferences and how they impact individual learning styles, team dynamics and work outcomes. Human Understanding and Engagement are the two key strategies for initiating and implementing innovation and change. Participants will engage in interactive

activities and conversations, while learning the tools and methods for effective engagement and collaboration.

In order to create a collaborative culture and engage effectively with others, participants will first focus on gaining self-awareness through Insights Discovery® Personality Assessment. 20+ pages profile will be produced and distributed during the workshop for participants to reference during reflection and activities.

The two-day Hue-Man 101 training is being offered at SSC on the dates listed below from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM on each day. Click on any of the dates to learn more and register.

[March 12 – 13, 2020](#)

[June 9 – 10, 2020](#)

[September 23 – 24, 2020](#)

[November 3 – 4, 2020](#)

*The following article was published by HueLife administration on their HueLife website on May 8, 2019.*

**What are specific ways we can engage people to achieve excellence?**

This May, HueLife had the opportunity to exhibit at the PENworks 2019 conference. We posed a question at our booth for attendees to suggest their ideas: *What are specific ways we can engage people to achieve excellence?* We were excited to see how many people were willing to participate in answering this important question! Below is a compilation of answers from

participants as where they see ways to engage people to achieve excellence:

## **Honor Every Voice**

People need to be heard, understood and accepted. Honoring every voice does not only mean, "I hear you." Try adding, "I am curious, what do you have in mind?"

## **Fun**

Having fun and engaging in play is one way to inspire human connection and creativity. There is abundant research that supports "play" as a concept for both creativity and a tool for enhancing relationships in group settings.

## **Connect Personal "Why" With an Organization's Mission**

A personal connection to the mission and organization's purpose is critical. If your employees don't care what that mission/purpose is and what that means to them, chances are they don't fit. Find those who care and keep them there.

## **Give Individuals and Teams Autonomy, Even With Failure (Support/Encourage)**

Failing does not mean being sloppy, not paying attention, or having an excuse for poor planning and lack of judgment. It does mean testing new ideas, new ways of doing things or thinking that ultimately involve risk!

## **The Right Tools**

When people don't have the right tools, they cannot do their jobs. Processes, methods and techniques are all critical and often overlooked tools that can be learned to achieve excellence. Tools to enhance understanding, engagement and

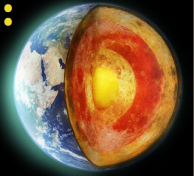
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# Science is Phenomenal: Teaching with the New MN Science Standards Event

Join other SE MN 6th grade science educators on February 27 at SSC to participate in this event designed to support our districts in the implementation of the new Minnesota Science Standards. Representatives from the Big 9 districts initiated the planning for this event which will feature presentations from individuals who were involved in the standards rewrite process as well as experts in the field of earth science.

## Science is Phenomenal: Teaching with the New MN Standards



*designed for 6th grade science  
teachers and administrators*

### The day will include:

- A brief overview of the purpose and process behind the science standard rewrite.
- A keynote from Lee Schmitt focusing on 3D learning through the lens of the practices and SEPA along with the DCIs and crosscutting concepts.
- Three breakout sessions covering various topics related to the implementation of the new standards.
- Lunch, refreshments and CEUs.

Space is limited so [register now!](#)

## HueLife Continued...

critical thinking are vital for innovation. Of course, our favorites are Insights Discovery personality assessment and ToP Methods.

### Clear Positive Vision

Visionary thinking is rare, most people operate in the here and now. Leaders must take responsibility to continue to remind and communicate the organization's vision to employees so they can see themselves making the vision a reality. A proven way to make this happen is to create a shared vision with everyone contributes and see themselves reflected. Once it comes from within, it's a lot easier to remind and communicate.

### Build Relationships / Human Connections

Human connections are the essence of every social network, including our work environments. The use of tools like Insights Discovery combined with communication techniques, help people gain the needed depth of understanding of self and others so

misunderstandings and can be avoided.

### Refer to Values Consistently and Authentically

We often refer to values as though it is something for others to be aware of and follow. If you are acting in contradiction with the organization's values, don't expect others to act differently. The only way to really find out is to ask, evaluate, and reflect. List the values and ask your employees for specific examples of when and how these values are present or not, in the organization. Once specific examples are identified, work on a course correction to show commitment to the values.

### Role Model: It's The Managers

"People don't quit their jobs, they quit their bosses." The most recent business research reveals that the relationship between middle managers and employees is responsible for the greatest impact on every meaningful measure of

organizational effectiveness. It's the managers who set the tone for employees to move towards excellence (asking questions, being curious, trying new things), towards status quo (refusing to add more to their plate, resisting new things), or sabotage (asking questions, spreading misinformation, undermining others). Managers need to be fully included in the company's big picture and be given the training, tools, and freedom to execute.

### Just Ask

"Tell me and I will forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I will understand" Confucius. Involve your employees in all aspects of the organization, not only in problem-solving, solution building or process improvements. When they feel that they matter and their ideas are valued, they will think and act in the interest of the employer, they will strive for excellence and prove their worth/value to you!

# Break Through the Noise and Connect with Your Audience in 2020

By Katie Schmitt

We are pleased to announce a new partnership with [OrangeBall Creative](#) to provide marketing and communications training and services. We secured discounts on training, professional services, and consultation just for you - our members!

If you are working to connect with stakeholders, increase participation in your programs, reach new audiences, or engage parents and community, you now have resources to improve your marketing and communications approach.

## Why OrangeBall Creative?

They are a full service, professional marketing firm that strives to connect with clients. They offer a wide spectrum of services and training opportunities. And they are fun - they make learning engaging and simplify marketing so you can implement strategies on your own, even with a tight budget! They are good listeners. With every interaction I've had with OrangeBall Creative staff, they put my needs at the center of the conversation and add positivity to every discussion. I know that our members will enjoy working with OrangeBall Creative.



## Training service available

This spring, we will host a marketing and communications workshop to help you gain an understanding of your brand and how to connect with your audience. The workshop will be led by OrangeBall Creative's marketing pros. Dates, details, and registration information will be available soon.

In addition to the marketing and communications in-person workshop, OrangeBall Creative will offer a *BIY (Brand-It-Yourself)* Brand Bounce Bootcamp. BIY is a self-guided online learning program and perfect for organizations with tight budgets. BIY will be available to SSC members during a limited buying window.

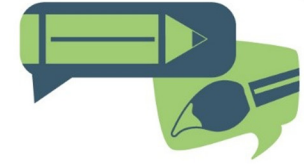
If you would like to host facilitated team Brand Bounce Bootcamp at your site, OrangeBall Creative can provide a private, coached Bootcamp just for your organization.

## Professional services available

OrangeBall Creative offers full service strategic marketing services and per-project based services including: brand message and copy writing, logo design and brand identity, website and digital development, SEO strategy and traffic, digital marketing, email, and social media, and print marketing.

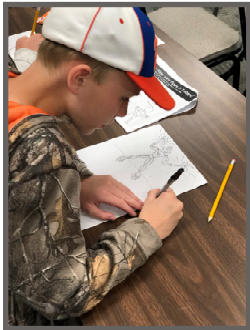
Updates on this new partnership with OrangeBall Creative will be provided via email and posted on the SSC website at [www.ssc.coop/orangeball](http://www.ssc.coop/orangeball).

*Save the date for the 33rd Annual*  
**Young Authors, Young Artists**  
**Conference**  
**May 20-22**



Young Authors  
*Young Artists*

Students in grades 3-5 are welcome to join in learning from over 15 professionals in their field. Some topics include: sculpting, comic drawing, creative storytelling, pastel and acrylic painting, origami, song writing, and so much more!



Please visit our website  
for more information

**Do You Receive Your Blue Cross/Blue Shield Insurance  
Through the Minnesota Service Cooperatives?**

**You're in Luck!**

As part of your insurance plan, you're eligible to enjoy the wellness benefits below. Click the links to learn more, or contact Nicole LaChapelle-Strumski at [nlachapelle@ssc.coop](mailto:nlachapelle@ssc.coop).



[Omada](#)

[Sharecare](#)

[Learn to Live](#)

[SmartShopper](#)

[Blue 365](#)

[Dr. on Demand](#)



# FUTURE READY

## CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

## Future Ready CTE Collaborative Project Funding - Guidelines and Timelines

By Sarah Ness

The Future Ready CTE Grant aims to provide CTE opportunities for students that are innovative and collaborative, engage local and regional stakeholders, equip all students to pursue a CTE pathway that best fits them, increase efficiencies, maximize impact, and support sustainability within the Service Cooperative's multi-county region.

### Project Funding

As part of this grant, SSC has funding available to support CTE projects in our region! Project submissions must involve at least one school district and at least one additional collaborative partner (e.g. Service Cooperative, additional school district(s), business and industry, post-secondary and higher education institutions, trade partners, nonprofit organizations, and/or government agencies). The lead district/organization for the applying partnership can be a school district, service agency, non-profit, or business, but at least one partner must be a member of SSC.

### Funding Parameters

Funds will be awarded to applicants to launch new (or expand existing) CTE courses and opportunities for middle and/or high school students through school district, college, business, and agency collaboration. Grant applicants do not need to follow Perkins V requirements as this grant is meant to provide more flexibility and support the efforts of Perkins V initiatives. Funded projects must include one or more of the following focus areas:

- Focus on the development of courses and programs that encourage collaboration between two or more school districts;
- Develop new career and technical programs that focus on the industry sections that fuel the rural regional economy;
- Facilitate the development of highly-trained and knowledgeable students who are equipped with technical and workplace skills needed by regional employers;
- Improve the access to career and technical education programs for students who attend sparsely populated rural school districts by developing public and private partnerships with business and industry leaders and by

*February is  
CTE Month!*

**In celebration of CTE Month here are a few things you need to know...**

- Future Ready CTE Grant
- Changes in Perkins V Legislation (See related article)
- SSC wants to send a sincere thank you to all of our CTE educators around the region!

increasing coordination of high school and postsecondary program options;

- Increase family and student awareness of the availability and benefit of career and technical education courses and training opportunities;
- Provide capital start-up costs for items including but not limited to a mobile welding lab, medical equipment and lab, and industrial kitchen equipment;

*Continued on the next page...*



- Address the teacher shortage crisis in career and technical education through incentive funding and training programs; and/or
- Provide transportation reimbursement grants to provide equitable opportunities throughout the region for students to participate in career and technical education.

### **Timelines**

There is a pre-determined dollar amount allocated for Collaborative Project funding within the Future Ready CTE grant to Southeast Service Cooperative. Reimbursement to partners for all funded project expenses must be completed by June 30, 2021.

To streamline the process, we are requesting short letters of intent to allow the advisory committee to assess whether or not there is a good match between your project and our funding goals. This includes an outline

of your project, goals and deliverables, who your partners are (lead organization, partnering K-12 districts, non-profits, business and industry, post-secondary/higher education partners, cities, counties, chambers of commerce, economic development agencies), the extent of partner's support, outline if this is a planning or implementation grant, and lead organization contact information. This should be 1-2 pages. If selected, a more detailed application will be required.

Please note that if funds remain after the April awards, we will open a second round of funding to be awarded in August for the 2020-2021 school year.

### **Application Timeline**

- Submit Letter of Intent by February 1, 2020 to Sarah Ness at [ssness@ssc.coop](mailto:ssness@ssc.coop).
- Advisory Committee Reviews Letters of Intent.
- Feedback and Invitations to

Finalists by February 15, 2020.

- Full Application Due March 1, 2020.
- Awards Made April 1, 2020.

### **Grant Advisory Committee Seeking Two Principals and Two Superintendents**

Future Ready CTE Advisory Committee is seeking two principals and two superintendents to join our Collaborative Projects team. These two individuals will join a multisector advisory committee charged with reviewing project proposals, issuing Future Ready CTE funds to award winners, and measuring success of overall projects. If you are interested, email [ssness@ssc.coop](mailto:ssness@ssc.coop).



## **Otto Bremer Trust Supports FutureForward™ Portal to Connect Classrooms to Careers and Learning to Life**

SSC received grant funding from the Otto Bremer Trust to create and launch a web-based platform that seamlessly connects employers to educators and students in career-connected experiential learning opportunities to better develop future workforce (with a special focus on STEM and CTE), connect career pathways in high-demand industries, and retain and build vibrant regional communities.

**Thanks to legislated funds, SSC can pay for all members to launch this product in their community's high schools and middle schools.**

The pilot is launching in 26 school districts in eleven southeast counties of Minnesota, and has the potential to grow throughout the state of Minnesota through partnerships with the [Minnesota Service Cooperatives](#), local chambers of commerce, and

economic development agencies. [View a recorded demo of FutureForward™.](#)

If you are a local government member of SSC, employer, or organization looking to be connected, visit [www.futureforward.org](http://www.futureforward.org) to watch a short demo and register. If your community is interested in using FutureForward™, email Sarah Ness at [ssness@ssc.coop](mailto:ssness@ssc.coop).

# Perkins V Legislation Changes That Impact SSC Members

By: *Brian Cashman, Southeast Perkins Consortium*

Federal Perkins legislation and funding aims to support high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming. For the past number of years, states worked under Perkins IV legislation. In July 2018, the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act* was signed into law. Also referred to as Perkins V, this legislation went into effect in July 2019 and kept a number of things in place from previous legislation. There were also some notable changes that will impact school districts. A brief summary of these changes is as follows:

- In years past, each Perkins consortium was required to submit an annual one-year plan.

With Perkins V, consortia will submit a two-year plan. This first two-year plan will be due in May 2020.

- Each Perkins consortium is required to conduct a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) to support data-driven decision-making in regard to programming and spending plans. There are five elements to the CLNA: (1) Student performance on federal accountability indicators, (2) Program size, scope, quality, and alignment to the labor market, (3) Progress towards implementation of CTE programs of study, (4) Improving recruitment, retention, and training of CTE professionals, including

underrepresented groups, and (5) Progress toward implementation of equal access to and equity within CTE programs.

- In years past, Perkins dollars could be used to support career exploration in grades 7 and 8. With Perkins V, career exploration can now be supported as early as grade 5.

These changes are all designed to ensure that our Perkins consortia are effectively supporting the creation, implementation, and/or refinement of high-quality CTE programming.

If you have questions and/or feedback, please reach out to your Perkins Consortium coordinator.

## Perkins Consortium Coordinators



**Brian Cashman**  
Southeast Perkins  
Consortium



**Kay Frick**  
Zumbro Education District



**Brandon Macrafic**  
Rochester



**Ryan Stanley**  
Riverland Perkins  
Consortium



# 9% of *Transcending Boundaries* Conference Hail from STEM Forward Schools!

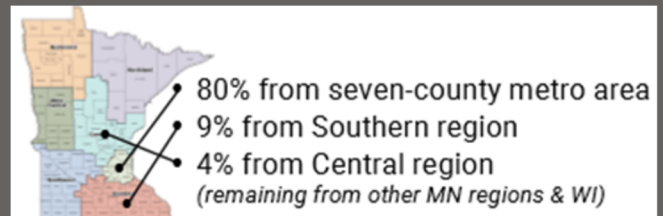
[STEM Forward](#) leads the state in STEM learning at SciMathMN's 2019 *Transcending Boundaries* Conference in St. Paul. Kudos to STEM Forward educators and partners for leading 20% of all breakout sessions and representing 9% of all statewide attendees. This conference brings together stakeholders from business, education, and before and after school programs, in partnership with The Works Museum, to connect Minnesota STEM resources and partners and build capacity within our communities to provide more effective and engaging STEM opportunities.

[SciMathMN](#) is a non-profit that advocates for effective, engaging, and rigorous science, technology, engineering and mathematics education opportunities for all Minnesota students, preparing them for citizenship, career, and college. Major initiatives include:

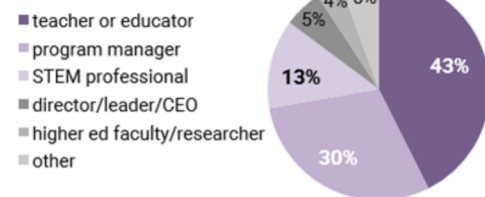
- Minnesota STEM Teacher Center
- Minnesota STEM Network
- Policy & Advocacy
- STEM Day at the Minnesota State Fair

## *The Intersection of STEM and CTE*

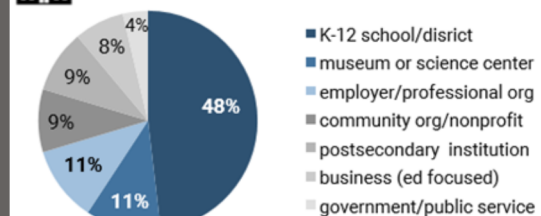
STEM Forward stakeholders have often been asked, what is the difference between STEM and CTE and how they connect? To better explain this topic three STEM Forward partners, Brian Cashman (SE Perkins Consortium), Kay Frick (Zumbro Education Consortium), and John Double (Albert Lea Public Schools) presented on this topic at the *Transcending Boundaries* Conference in December. View their [key findings](#) and [presentation](#) here to learn more.



Most attendees were educators & program managers

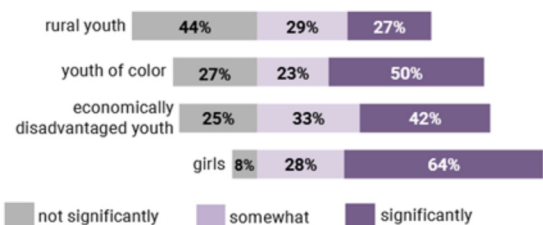


Most attendees came from educational institutions



Most conference attendees are involved with programs that serve youth who are underrepresented and underserved in STEM.

Attendees were asked: To what degree do the programs you represent serve the following audiences?



# STEM Forward Celebrates Two Outstanding Educators and Seven Nominees at Castle Community

By Sarah Ness

Burke Egner (Albert Lea Public Schools) and Angela Heitmann (Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools) were celebrated as the 2019-2020 Outstanding Educator Award winners at the Annual STEM Forward Dinner on January 8. Our award winners and nominees strive toward the highest levels of excellence within their schools and community, with a focus on initiative and continuous improvement in every aspect of their work. Nominees this year included John Bartucz (Rochester Public Schools), Paula Braun (Dover-Eyota Public Schools), Dan Devine (Rochester Public Schools), Katie Donlin (Byron Public Schools), Nate Pfeilsticker (Plainview-Elgin-Millville Public Schools), Alison Rumpca (Red Wing Public Schools), and Art Trimble (Rochester Public Schools).

Burke has created STEM electives which previously had not been offered at Southwest Middle School. The curriculum created is aligned to Minnesota state standards, ISTE standards, and CSTA standards, and all courses offered embed authentic real world unpredictable challenges for students to tackle. 89% of all students that take a STEM elective at Southwest Middle school are able to retain information taught in these courses and perform at the Mastery level on End of Course Assessments. In addition to the in-school offerings, Burke also leads after school competitive robotics teams and an all female coding club. In the first year of competitive robotics 50% of the students enrolled earned an invitation to the state robotics tournament by qualifying at regional events.

After a successful trial last spring using fertilized chicken eggs and hatched chickens in her classroom, Angela revamped her teaching this year basing all units around the incubation of fertilized eggs, the hatching of chickens and the beginning development of those chicks. All units are based on inquiry into what is happening genetically as the chicks develop within the egg, once hatched how the food the chicks eat affect their development, and how the characteristics of the chicks happen. Of course, part of the 'fun' learning for students is daily checking on the incubator for the first sign of chicks hatching, naming the chicks, and interacting with them. Daily checks by students on the



*Left to right : Angela Heitmann, Dan Devine, Burke Egner, Katie Donlin, Paula Braun*

eggs and/or the little chicks is evidence the students are 'buying in' to their learning and are vested in the science course.

As part of the unit on classification of life, Angela takes her students to the Minnesota Zoo; as a result of this trip students choose one organism and then develop a creative, colorful map of organisms, populations, communities and ecosystems with their researched based information about the organism on the back of the maps. Angela also researches and finds video experiences (ie: viewing knee replacement surgery), interactive labs, speakers, a variety of in-house labs, and field trips to enhance student learning experiences, plus she has arranged and chaperoned a student trip to the Galapagos Islands.

Angela is instilling an awareness of STEM careers almost on a daily basis. With each unit of study, she makes reference, points out career options and through field trips and interactive sessions exposes students to a variety of careers/jobs. One of Angela's student teachers pointed out that she, as a student teacher, hadn't put an emphasis on jobs/career options within her teaching, but through observation of Angela the student teacher learned the value and need to do so.

**Peer-to-Peer Hands  
On Professional  
Learning**



# SPRING FORUM

**BUILD STRONG STEM FOUNDATIONS | INCREASE DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION IN STEM | PREPARE STEM WORKFORCE FOR THE FUTURE | CHANGING MN SCIENCE STANDARDS | DEVELOP & ENRICH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS | ENGAGE STUDENTS WHERE DISCIPLINES CONVERGE | BUILD COMPUTATIONAL LITERACY | INCREASE PARENT ENGAGEMENT**

**4:30PM**

**04.08.20**

**ROCHESTER, MN**



## SEEKING BREAK OUT SESSION PROVIDERS

<https://forms.gle/VZDG8jrfd3wYSkky7>

## REGISTER TO ATTEND

<https://register.ssc.coop/index.html#sessions/6077>

## Meet Marco's Christina Welke

### Tell me a little more about you.

I grew up just outside of Plainview. I attended college in San Diego with a goal of earning my teaching degree in secondary education, but was presented an opportunity own my own company. It was during this time I developed a passion to help people find the "thing" they were looking for.

### Why did you decide on a career in the IT industry and what influenced you to decide on this career choice?

I decided on a career in IT because it provided me an opportunity to find work life balance, and I stayed because technology changes at rapid pace, implementing and supporting technology is challenging, and supporting technical and non-technical decision makers understand what they were buying is very important. My role is to support communication between technical and nontechnical people, to understand SSC members' priorities, develop a collaborative roadmap for technology and work alongside those who need guidance and support.

### How has technology evolved in the past five years and how can that benefit schools and city-county government?

Technology is changing for everyone, and it isn't likely going

to slow down anytime soon. Just about any device that plugs in can now be networked, it is called the IOT "Internet of things." What is changing is how we manage technology. Recently voice, physical security, wireless, videoconferencing, paging systems, and mobile devices now all connect to the network and traverse an Internet connection. In addition, cyber threats continually increase in complexity. We are seeing more data move to the cloud which reduces the hardware footprint on premise. Software is consumed on a SaaS (software as a service) model which decreases management. Although these products and tools can appear cost prohibitive, the return on investment comes from keeping a slim staff. This is important because hiring and retaining technical employees continues to be the number one challenge for all organizations.

**Marco's is SSC's partnered Technology Solutions partner. If you want more information about long term technology planning services, contact Christina Welke, [christina.welke@marconet.com](mailto:christina.welke@marconet.com).**





# SE MN Together Convenes Region to Address Workforce Housing Shortage

By Katie Schmitt

**"As towns in southeast Minnesota think about economic growth in the region and the current and projected workforce shortages, it is imperative to consider the related housing issues. The economic vitality of our region depends on attracting and retaining the workforce we need. Vibrant communities and a dynamic economy are built on livability and affordability. Affordable homes are in short supply and demand is high."**

**-- SE MN Together**



*Northfield Convening*



*Spring Valley Convening*

Housing is essential to growth in local communities and a vibrant regional economy. Right now many parts of southeast Minnesota are feeling a housing crunch. Home buyers are struggling to find homes due to low housing stock, slow development, lack of affordable options, and rising prices in some markets.

In November, SE MN Together coordinated, "Housing Our Growing Workforce", a regional convening in partnership with Greater Minnesota Housing Fund to help shine a light on what is working when it comes to workforce housing. Leaders from across the region came together in Northfield on November 6 and Spring Valley on November 14 to explore strategies and solutions.

The convenings opened with presentations on regional data and recommendations from the MN Housing Taskforce. The sessions also featured panels and presentations by developers, state and local funders, and technical assistance consultants and planners. Small group discussions also addressed topics including multi-family housing development strategies, single-family production, homeownership for underserved populations, and supportive housing for homeless and special needs populations.

**"I learned more about ways folks across the state are working hard to make housing more available, accessible and especially affordable, the opportunities and constraints, and gained ideas I can work on as an advocate for housing."**

**-- Northfield Convening Participant**

Housing is a critical action area for SE MN Together and they are committed to sharing resources, sparking ideas, and building connections in the region. To support southeast Minnesota leaders and communities, SE MN Together [compiled the presentations and resources](#) from the "Housing Our Growing Workforce" convenings on their website.

*Southeast Service Cooperative is the fiscal host for SE MN Together. Katie Schmitt, Development & Innovation Specialist and Amy Grover, Director of Planning serve on SE MN Together's Core Team.*



Thank You "Housing Our Growing Workforce" Event Sponsors!

Sponsorships covered event costs so that these events could be offered free to participants.

Greater Minnesota Housing Fund	Dairyland Power Cooperative	People's Energy Cooperative
Freeborn Mower Cooperative Services	MI Energy Cooperative	Minnesota Housing
Southeast Regional Sustainable Development	MWF Properties	Joseph Development, LLC
Partnership, U of MN Extension	Destination Medical Center	SEH
Rochester Area Foundation	Southeast Minnesota Realtors	Home Federal
First National Bank	First State Bank Minnesota	

# Failure Resiliency

By Katie Schmitt

Failure is an inevitable part of creativity and innovation. In order to create the conditions for innovation, we need to be resilient. As leaders, we need to nurture a culture of innovation that supports our staff to take risks and to bounce back when things don't work out as planned. As evidenced in the growth mindset work of Carol S. Dweck, when people see that their abilities are dynamic (growth) versus static (fixed), they are more likely to embrace challenges and persist even through failure.

I am presenting a short workshop on failure resiliency through Performance Excellence Network (PEN).

## About the PEN Rochester Breakfast: Are You Failure Resilient?

In this workshop, you will take a *Failure Resiliency Self-Assessment*, which measures failure resiliency in the following themes: mindset, social-emotional skills, workplace culture, strategy, resources, and communication. You will explore ways to increase your resiliency and optimize what is already working. Hands-on learning and group activities will be included so you can connect with others, stay energized, and practice skills with your PEN peers. You will also be introduced to the Creative Edge Community's *Failure Autopsy Workbook*, which is designed to help you establish a systematic approach to analyzing failure and increase your return on innovation (ROI) individually or in a team.

Date: Tuesday, March 3  
Time: 7:30-9:00 AM  
Location: Wood Lake Meeting Center  
Register: Information for the PEN Rochester Breakfast is available at [www.performanceexcellencenetwork.org](http://www.performanceexcellencenetwork.org).



## About the Creative Edge Community

The Creative Edge Community provides practical innovation tools and resources to help small organizations and public agencies make meaningful change. Designed for organizational leaders, project managers, and emerging leaders, the Creative Edge Community connects you with resources to explore individual creativity and organizational innovation.

## CREATIVE EDGE COMMUNITY

*The Creative Edge Community is  
your place to:*

- Nurture creativity to unleash talent and connect with your staff.
- Get to know your own creative needs, preferences, and blockers to maximize your innovative potential.
- Grow as a leader. Get tools you need to manage the messiness of innovation.
- Explore systematic approaches to innovation - designed for small organizations and public agencies.

**Check out the On the Edge Blog:**

*4 Steps to Increase Your Failure  
Threshold*



# LYNN GORSKI

SSC BOARD MEMBER SINCE JANUARY 2017

By Jill Miller

**"Board members who clearly understand various aspects of public administration are critical to an organization's success, and Lynn is a knowledgeable, active participant in our planning and decision making."**

Steve Sallee, SSC Executive Director

Representing the interest of and advocating for cities and counties, Lynn Gorski has served on the Southeast Service Cooperative (SSC) Board since January of 2017 and is the current SSC Board Treasurer. During her term, she has served on SSC's Policies, Personnel, Finance, and Canvassing Committees. "Lynn is well respected by her Board colleagues and SSC staff. She sets high standards for herself and for others around her," Steve Sallee, SSC Executive Director, discussed.

During a recent interview, Lynn shared her personal story and why she became and remains involved with SSC and the SSC Board.

**Tell me your story. Why did you decide on your career and what influenced you to decide on this career choice?**

I am the Director of Human Resources at the City of Owatonna. I was looking for a career that could help everyone in an organization. It is important to me to be a resource employees trust and feel comfortable turning to when they need assistance.

**Tell us something about yourself that is surprising or that most people don't know.**

Most people probably don't know that I have been tazed by a police officer. Let's just say I am a big team player and I can check that off my bucket list. It is not everyday that HR lets you taze them. Let's just be clear that this was for a demonstration purpose.

**What is the most rewarding part of your work?**

The most rewarding part of my position at the City is helping our employees out with anything and everything. I am trying to change the mentality that Human Resources is in existence to fire and discipline employees. This is the farthest away from the truth. Human Resources is an essential part of an organization.

**What motivated you to become involved with SSC?**

I was first involved with SSC when I worked as a Benefits Specialist for the Owatonna Public Schools. They were a resource for training and provided the district with health insurance.

**SSC's Mission is: "We mobilize resources, add value, and promote continuous improvement through member-focused solutions." What makes SSC's mission meaningful to you?**

SSC really focuses on their members. Their strategic planning is focused and developed for their members' needs. The staff and Board at SSC care about the issues and want to make sure they offer the resources to help assist organizations.

**We live in an ever-changing environment. In your opinion, how has SSC been aware and responsive in order to survive, sustain, and grow?**

Listening to their customers. SSC is open to change and opportunities for all the organizations they represent.

**What struggle has SSC helped you resolve or what goal have they helped you reach?**

The first thing that comes to mind is health insurance. This is a common issue for all organizations. SSC has assisted me in communicating to our employees and helped us stay in compliance with new rules and regulations. They have provided me with a professional network. I trust and value their professional advice.

**If SSC were to be on the cover of your favorite newspaper or magazine in five years, what would the story be about?**

SSC would be receiving an award on innovating and empowering their members.

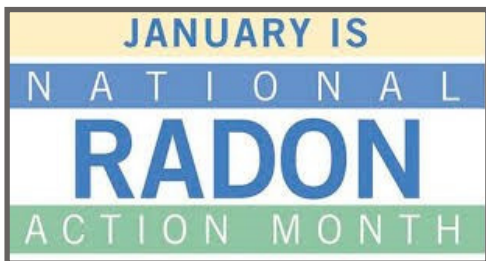
**What do you wish others knew about SSC?**

I want others to know that SSC does more than insurance and professional development for teaching staff. Need a great space for a meeting? Alicia and Donna can line you up. Need assistance with purchasing? Looking for assistance with a mock OSHA walk through? Need specialized training for your local government or school? Looking for great health insurance rates? SSC is a customer-focused organization with so much to offer!



# Radon Could Be a Threat To Your School

By Angie Radel, IEA



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and the Surgeon General's Office have estimated that as many as

20,000 lung cancer deaths are caused each year by radon. Radon is a cancer-causing radioactive gas and is the second leading cause of lung cancer. You cannot see, smell or taste radon; because of this, the only way to determine if radon levels are present is to test for it.

A nationwide survey of radon levels in schools estimates that nearly one in five has at least one schoolroom with a short-term radon level above the action level of 4 pCi/L (picoCuries per liter); the level at which EPA recommends that schools take action to reduce the level. EPA estimates that more than 70,000 schoolrooms in use today have high short-term radon levels.

It is recommended that schools test for radon every 5 years and after major building renovation or changes to the HVAC system.

*School districts that receive health and safety revenue to conduct radon testing must conduct the testing according to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) 'Radon Testing Plan', which includes the following:*

- Use certified radon testing devices.
- Use a licensed radon professional for the testing or consider becoming licensed if the testing will be done by school staff.
- Test all frequently occupied rooms, including rooms with ground contact and rooms immediately above unoccupied spaces that are in contact with the grounds (e.g. crawl spaces and tunnels).
- Conduct follow-up testing in all rooms that are above the Action Level.
- Mitigate or take corrective measure in rooms that are still above the Action Level after follow-up testing.
- Re-test after corrective measure to show radon reduction.
- Report all radon test results to MDH and at a local school board meeting.

For more information on Radon testing, call Angie Radel at the Institute for Environmental Assessment at (507) 281-6682, or e-mail [angie.radel@ieasafety.com](mailto:angie.radel@ieasafety.com)

## Building Strong Connections with



By Eryn Sorensen

Facilities play an important role in people's lives and are central to providing places to live, learn, work, and play. Founded in 2006, ICS has provided innovative facility solutions to clients across the Midwest for 13 years. Throughout that time, the organization has experienced

significant growth with mergers, staff, and services. The company is taking this opportunity to evolve the brand and position ICS to move up and into an exciting future. Up to now, ICS has primarily worked with public sector customers throughout the Upper Midwest to help them with facility planning, construction, and building commissioning. The rebrand positions ICS to increase the services they provide as well as the markets they serve. More than just a consulting firm, ICS's mission is to positively impact people through innovative facility solutions.

No matter where you are in the process, our team of construction consulting professionals work across all phases of a project's life-cycle. We bring innovation, clear communication, and unparalleled technical expertise so you can make informed decisions that will positively impact your project and the people it serves.

**For more information, contact Mike Piper at [mike.piper@ics-builds.com](mailto:mike.piper@ics-builds.com) Karen Klein at or [karen.klein@ics-builds.com](mailto:karen.klein@ics-builds.com). In addition, please visit our new website at <https://www.ics-builds.com/>.**

# SSC Upcoming Events

## February

**Suicide Prevention and Mental Health: Be Present; Be Patient; Be Persistent**  
February 12

**SAC Meeting**  
February 25

**Respond Not React: Proactive and Preventative Strategies for Students with Challenging Behaviors**  
February 26

**MASA Region 1 Winter Session**  
February 26

**Board Meeting**  
February 26

**Science is Phenomenal: Teaching with the New MN Standards**  
February 27

## March

**Cultural Competency: A Deeper Dive into Self Reflection and Personal Bias**  
March 4

**Hue-Man 101 Training**  
March 12 & 13

**SAC Meeting**  
March 24

**SSC's Wellness Forum**  
March 24

**Board Meeting**  
March 25

## April

**Educator Forum**  
April 8

**Give and Get: Creative Elementary Classroom Behavior Interventions**  
April 8

**Anxiety 20/20: Why Does It Affect So Many and What Can We Do About It?**  
April 20

**SAC Meeting**  
April 21

**Board Meeting**  
April 22

**Restorative Circles: It's More Than Just a "Go Around"**  
April 29

## SSC Receives National Wellness Award *Appears in Forbes Magazine!*

SSC achieved Silver recognition for taking significant steps to build a culture of health in the workplace and was awarded recognition in the American Heart Association's 2019 Workplace Health Achievement Index.

SSC Executive Director Steve Sallee shared, "Wellness is embedded into our culture at SSC. It's something that you have to make a priority and not lose sight of. By incorporating wellness into our workplace, it helps our employees both professionally and personally. Nicole LaChapelle-Strumski leads our efforts and she has helped to create an extremely positive and healthy environment at SSC."

SSC is one of 15 organizations in Minnesota that have been awarded designations. Gold and silver winners were mentioned in the November issue of *Forbes*!



# SSC Board Actions and Information

In addition to routine fiscal and routine business actions, the Board took the following actions in recent meetings. Complete SSC Board of Directors meeting minutes are available on the SSC website at [www.ssc.coop](http://www.ssc.coop).

## September

- Approved resignation of Sonia Smith, Special Education Specialist for RCE, effective September 21, 2019.
- Approved posting for the RCE Special Education Specialist Position.
- Approved termination of Carolyn Olijnek, Math Specialist and School Advocate for RCE, effective September 1, 2019.
- Appointed new member, Mary Blair-Hoeft to Canvassing Committee, replacing Lynn Gorski. She joins Brien Maki on the committee.
- Approved 2019-2020 SSC Annual Plan.
- Accepted \$5,000 from the Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation to support regional Student Academics Programming for the 2019-2020 school year.

## October

- Approved Executive Director Contract for 2020-2023.
- Approved hiring a part-time Accounting Assistant through an employment agency.
- Approved posting 3 full-time Career Navigator positions & 1 full-time CTE Collaboration Specialist.
- Approved Dave Thompson's Consultant Agreement through June 30, 2021.

## November

- Approved the 2018-2019 Fiscal Audit Report by Abdo, Eick & Meyers.

- Approved the ByLaws changes after the second reading.
- Accepted \$4,500 People's Energy Cooperative Operation Round Grant for SSC Student Programs.
- Accepted \$3,000 from Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council for YAYA Elementary in May 2020.
- Approved posting 1 additional full-time Career Navigator position.
- Approved the 2018-2019 Annual Report.

## December

- Recognized Board Members Karla Bauer and Rob Mathias for their years of service.
- Approved resignation and retirement of Kirsten Kuehl, who is retiring at the end of December, after 37½ years.
- Declared new Board Members: David Klatt (Albert Lea), Mike Christensen (Red Wing), and Lynn Gorski (City of Owatonna).
- Approved Federal Grant Management Policies and Procedures Manual.
- Accepted \$10,000 donation from Mayo Clinic Health Systems, designated for SE MN Together use in 2020.
- Accepted \$3 million Rural CTE Consortium Grant from the Minnesota Department of Education, acting as fiscal host on behalf of South Central Service Cooperative and Southeast Service Cooperative through June 30, 2021.
- Approved posting a part-time Accounting Assistant position, to be hired as an employee.
- Approved Abdo, Eick & Meyers to complete audit work and reports for FY20, FY21, and FY22.

### SSC Service Consultants



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## SSC Board of Directors

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Houston County

**Mary Blair-Hoeft**, Vice-Chair  
City of Byron

**Lynn Gorski**, Treasurer  
City of Owatonna

**Brein Maki**, Clerk  
Lewiston-Altura Public Schools

**Mike Christensen**  
Red Wing Public Schools

**Dave Klatt**  
Albert Lea Public Schools

**Don Leathers**  
Austin Public Schools

**Jason Marquardt**  
Mabel-Canton Public Schools

**Jean Roth**  
Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools

**Monica Sveen-Ziebell**  
Plainview-Elgin-Millville Public Schools