

# Governor's Better Government Award

# WINNER

## INVESTING IN THE WATER UTILITY PUBLIC SECTOR WORKFORCE BY IMPROVING DIVERSITY AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

### METROPOLITAN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Employees are one of the Metropolitan Council's most valuable assets. Our Environmental Services division (MCES) is expanding recruitment, retention and promotion efforts to create a workforce that reflects the diversity of our region and a culture where employees are prepared, welcomed and supported in their work.

Our Diversity Outreach Program is a multifaceted strategy that includes building relationships with dozens of community partners from Big Brothers Big Sisters to the Twin West Chamber of Commerce. We work with teachers to help build STEM curriculum related to our work. We are visible and vocal in the community, participating in job fairs and hosting site tours and job shadowing, among many other activities.

We revamped our Employee Recognition Program to make it more robust and inclusive. It now includes a peer recognition component and a Keystone Award recognizing superior achievement of agency goals. Engagement in the program has increased significantly.

These efforts are helping to ensure that MCES is a sustainable, diverse, inclusive and competitive employer for years to come.



# MCES Outreach and Recognition

## Testimonials

"We recognize that planning an interactive day showcasing your industry, while keeping those teenage students engaged is no small accomplishment. Not only did you spark their interest as to what Metropolitan Council Environmental Services has to offer, but quite frankly you hit this Job Shadow experience out of the park. Career exploration and bridging skills necessary for the world of work never looked so good! This opportunity gave Roseville Area High School students an invaluable experience for years to come." -Heidi Schultz, Program Coordinator Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest

"I am an Outreach Champion because everybody poops and it doesn't magically disappear when the toilet flushes. I articulate the connections between our natural water resources and our built water systems as a way to explain the inextricable connections among life and water. I provide practical suggestions for engaged and responsible water use and protection. When more people understand our natural and built water systems, more citizens will become engaged water stewards, promoting practices and policies that protect local and regional water infrastructure and water resources." -- Casandra Champion, Princ. Environmental Scientist

## MCES Outreach

### What:

- Recruitment partnerships with nonprofit agencies serving specific populations and geographies
- Hosting career exploration days for high school students
- Working with educators to develop classroom curricula connecting STEM educational concepts with their real-world application

### Value to ES:

- Strengthening our workforce and ensuring a qualified talent pipeline
- Recognition of MCES as a leader among public utilities and regional government agencies
- Building MCES brand recognition & reputation

### Value to Community:

- Providing high quality career pathways, not just jobs
- An employer and public utility that actively shows its commitment to the 7-County region

108

Outreach engagements in 2018

30%

Since 2017

## New MCES Recognition Program

### Old Recognition Program vs. New Recognition Program

Old program

# of awards given in 3 years



New program

# of Awards given in 3 years



In May, 2017, MCES launched a new recognition program that allowed peers to recognize one another (WATER award), but also allowed for more prestigious recognition (Keystone award). Keystone awards are reviewed and approved by a committee of employee peers.

This program was created by employees, for employees, and has since increased engagement and timely and meaningful recognition.

