

>>> NEWSLETTER <<<

MI GREAT LAKES CHAPTER



>>> PRESIDENT'S CORNER

**SUMMER
HITCHENS**

**MI SWANA
CHAPTER
PRESIDENT**



Welcome to a brand-new year filled with possibility. As we step into 2026, I'm energized by the momentum we've built and the exciting path ahead. This year promises meaningful events, new opportunities for connection, and continued growth across our MI SWANA.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we'll make 2026 a year defined by progress, collaboration, and shared success.

>>> THANK YOU TO OUR ANNUAL MEETING SPONSORS <<<

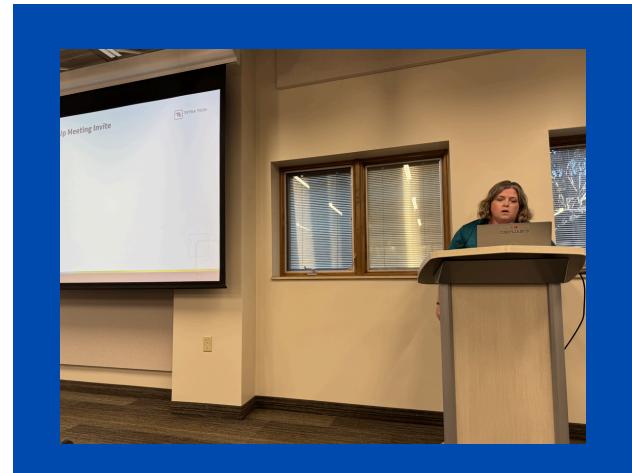
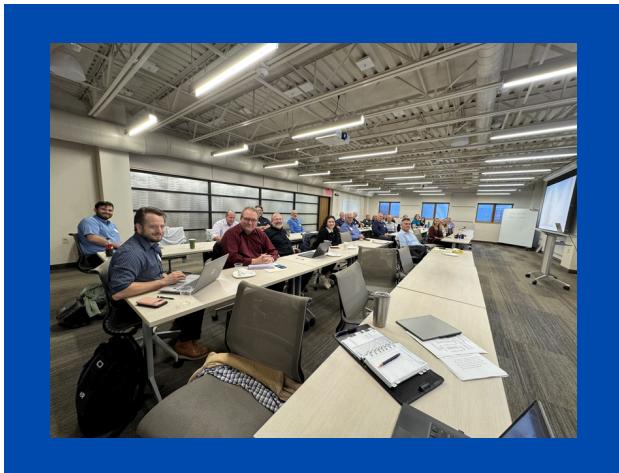
Tetra Tech – Energy Developments – Granger Waste Services

MI SWANA is always grateful to our sponsors who help our events become realities.

Thank you - to Tetra Tech for Breakfast

Thank you - to Energy Developments for Lunch

Thank You - Granger Waste Services for hosting us



MI SWANA UPDATES & OPPORTUNITIES

>>> QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

March 27, 2026

Location: Virtual

Time: 12:00PM EST



June 19, 2026

Location: TBD

Time: 12:00 PM EST

September 18, 2026

Location: TBD

Time: 12:00 PM EST

**If you are interested in hosting a SWANA quarterly meeting please reach out to Jennifer Bowyer (Jennifer.Bowyer@tetrtech.com)

>>> YOUNG PROFESSIONAL HAPPY HOUR

Our YP's are gathering after the ESD Solid Waste Technical Conference on March 3, 2026. More details to come shortly.

If you are interested in Happy Hour or joining the YP's reach out to Tyler Ganus (TGanus@landfillmanagement.com)

>>> WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP SWANA GROW? <<<

Our Chapter is looking for volunteers to help plan events, review bylaws, join the legislative discussion and more! If you are interested please reach out to one of the Liaisons listed below, we would love to have your help!

Summer Hitchens (Summer.Hitchens@edlenergy.com) - Scholarship & Bylaws

Jennifer Bowyer (Jennifer.Bowyer@tetrtech.com) - Programs & Arrangements

Tyler Ganus (TGanus@landfillmanagement.com) - Young Professionals

Kim Smelker (kimberly.smelker@wsp.com) - Legislative

Paul Sgriccia (paul@ptsconsultingllc.com) & Matt Birolette (mbirolette@fveng.com) - Membership

LITHIUM-ION BATTERY FIRES- INVEST IN EDUCATION & PROTECTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

How many times have you heard someone in the industry say, "we need more education on lithium-ion batteries"? The hazards of lithium-ion batteries are well documented. Whether you operate a landfill, transfer station, MRF or are in the haulage space lithium-ion batteries are a concern. It only takes one battery to start a fire.

The reality of an operator is this: lithium-ion batteries will make their way to your facility and a fire is possible. How big or small the fire will vary, but it is likely that you will deal with a fire at some point. True, we need to continue to educate about lithium-ion batteries. Proper handling, recycling options, etc. Equally important is the investment in protective infrastructure to protect our workers and equipment in the event of a fire.

For operators, while budgeting and planning for a facility, consider the following:

- Educate your share or stakeholders on the dangers of lithium-ion batteries and fires.
- Public or private, budget for education AND protective equipment.
- Review multiple options to best fit your application.
- Communicate with your local fire regulatory agency.
- Investment into personnel and facility fire protection.

On the operations side, consider the following:

- Fire drills: ingress and egress, escape routes.
- Landfill fires: response plan and procedures, limitations.
- Fire extinguisher and other apparatus' training.
- Waste/recycling truck fire procedures.
- Collaboration with local fire department: conduct facility walkthrough

Stay Alert - Stay Alive

BRAD AUSTIN, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT - ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY AT GREAT LAKES FUSION



**BRAD
AUSTIN**

**MI SWANA BOARD
OF DIRECTORS**

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL SPOTLIGHT



ANNA THOMAS

Ann is new Young Professional within the MI SWANA Chapter. She has currently a senior at Michigan State University, pursuing a B.S. in Environmental Studies and Sustainability with a minor in Business and Economics.

Anna is currently finishing up her second year with Energy Developments, Inc. where she has assisted with establishing the North American ESG program, streamlining report and much more!

Connect with her on LinkedIn!
Email: anna.thomas@edlenergy.com

Q&A WITH ANNA

Q: Why did you join SWANA?

A: I joined to help stay up to date on the latest news on what is happening in the solid waste world. I think we all need to collectively get smarter to reduce, reuse and recycle solid waste and make a more sustainable world.

Q: What are you looking forward to as a SWANA member?

A: I look forward to expanding my network with new colleagues and friends that have a shared interest in solid waste while having access to learning courses and the opportunity to obtain certification to further my career. I really appreciate SWANA giving students an avenue to participate and further develop their career with no cost.

Q: What is your favorite weekend activity?

A: I love to play pickleball with friends and read books.

Q: What is your favorite place to eat in Michigan?

A: Cask & Co in Lansing, the Mediterranean tacos are delicious!

Q: What is your favorite place to visit in Michigan?

A: The family cottage on the Au Sable River in Grayling. It is a nice little quiet cottage in the woods where I get to enjoy nature and spend time with family.

ESD SOLID WASTE CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS OPEN

>>> APPLICATIONS DUE JANUARY 31, 2026

It's that time of year again, time to apply for an ESD Scholarship with Michigan SWANA!!

Applications can be found at <https://swanami.org/scholarships>

Please contact Summer Hitchens (summer.hitchens@edlenergy.com) with any questions!

