

Kate Knuth, Ph.D.

Skilled civic leader with two decades of experience leading people, initiatives, and change efforts in government, higher education, and advocacy to leverage research, communications, and relationships to shape and implement policy at the intersections of climate, energy, and equity. **Entrepreneurial organization builder** with experience building and managing e programs within big, public institutions including people and budget management. **Scholar and practitioner of transformative change** with a particular focus on how to drive change through the large-scale, distributed efforts needed to address complex climate challenges while building racial and economic justice.

Professional Experience

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency 2023 - present

Climate Director

Manages climate section, Leads Climate Change Subcabinet interagency work including agenda-setting for subcabinet meetings, advisory council meetings, and weekly staff meetings. Consults on policy development and implementation as related to climate policy and programs at MPCA.

Democracy and Climate LLC 2019 - 2023

Founder and Principal

Advised non-profit, academic, and private organizations to advance climate solutions. This included shaping strategy and policy through research, communications, and coalition building in support of building a stronger democracy. Clients include:

Minnesota House Climate Action Caucus: Provided behind-the-scenes counsel to caucus chair and members regarding strategic approach to shape an ambitious climate agenda.

100% Campaign: Led research and policy development for this statewide coalition advocating for an equitable clean energy, climate resilient future. Acted as onsite manager, leading meetings and supervising staff. Published early climate adaptation white paper in MN and a series of 7 essays outlining how state offices can be used to lead on climate and multiracial democracy.

Just Transition Fund Coalition: Coordinated coalition of community-based groups in Minneapolis. Manage policy development. Through trusted conversations with 10 community-based organizations – many with Black, Indigenous, brown, and immigrant leaders – drafted a budget based on resource needs identified by coalition members.

Kate for Mpls Campaign 2021

Candidate for Mayor of Minneapolis

Launched and managed a \$225,000 mayoral campaign with 7 staff and dozens of volunteers to challenge incumbent based on a platform of equity, public safety, climate leadership, and sound governance during a time when Minneapolis was a city divided and navigating a racial justice reckoning on a world stage.

- Finished second in a field of 17 candidates and earned endorsements from half of the city council and half the state legislative delegation as a non-incumbent candidate
- Published six policy plans including a Minneapolis Green New Deal that continues to shape public conversation on climate action in Minneapolis
- Crafted and communicated a unifying vision to chart a path forward in a divided city by hosting three dozen community meet and greets to understand community concerns while sharing plan for vision and path forward
- Managed and motivated dozens of volunteers and team members, equipping them to become ambassadors to bring community members along on the path of building a just, unified city.

City of Minneapolis

2017-2018

Chief Resilience Officer

Served in a newly created role in city government tasked with building a strategy to increase the city's capacity to adapt to change and thrive.

- Successfully fostered relationships among elected officials, staff, community members, and foundation partners to socialize a new governance approach.
- Developed and executed community engagement plan involving survey, one-on-ones, and community workshop events that engaged with over 2,000 people

Institute on the Environment, University of Minnesota

2010-2017

Founding Program Director, Boreas Leadership Program

Built and led this cross-university program to help over 100 graduate students per year develop into the kind of leaders capable of taking on the complex sustainability challenges of our time.

- In four months, took Boreas Program from idea to program launch
- Designed workshop-based curriculum covering communications, systems thinking, integrative leadership, and public leadership skills. Facilitated 10-15 workshops annually.
- Member of UMN observer delegation to 2010 and 2015 UN climate conferences
- Grew and expanded the program to the national level through a collaboration with the Leopold Leadership Program at Stanford University by convening a group of field thought leaders to outline development of a national professional network supporting this work.
- Designed and taught a carbon and renewable energy course to graduate and undergraduate students including a study abroad to the 2010 UN Climate Conference

Minnesota House of Representatives

2007 - 2012

State Representative

Represented a suburban house district with 38,000 constituents with an even partisan split. Served on environment, energy, commerce, finance, and taxes committees

- Chief-authored and passed the Green Solutions Act, which laid out legislative engagement with the Midwestern Greenhouse Gas Accord process
- Chief-authored and passed the Toxic Free Kids Act, a nation-leading policy to better regulate toxic chemicals in products meant for children
- Chief-authored and passed stranger originated life insurance regulation, which protected elderly people from fraud and the life insurance industry as a whole
- 1 of ~50 state legislators invited by White House to partner on advocating for national climate and energy policy.
- Elected by colleagues to serve as assistant majority leader.

Public Service and Leadership

Bryn Mawr (Minneapolis) Neighborhood Association 2019-present
Board Member - President, Founder and previous Co-chair of the racial justice committee

City of Minneapolis Climate and Equity Plan 2022-2023
Steering Committee Member

Friends of the Mississippi River 2022-2023
Board Member - Executive Committee

Minnesota Environmental Quality Board 2013-2018
Citizen Board Member

- Appointed by Minnesota governor to serve as citizen member of this executive branch board consisting of nine state agency commissioners and eight citizen members
- Elected by colleagues as vice chair of the Board in 2018

Energy and Resilience Advisory Board for the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP) Redevelopment 2013-2015

- Spearheaded public effort that led to creation of energy and resilience advisory board and plan for this 400+ acre redevelopment

Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center 2014-2017
Board Member

Boy Scouts of America 2000-2001
National Venturing President, represented 250,000 youth in this coed program

Education

Ph.D., Conservation Sciences, University of Minnesota 2019
Dissertation: "How Collectives Drive Deliberate Transformation to Make Progress Toward Sustainability"

M.Sc., Biodiversity Conservation and Management, Oxford University 2005
Thesis: "Linking Environmental Leadership and Education: The Scouting Movement and the United States Congress"

Fulbright Fellow, Center for Development and Environment, University of Oslo 2003-2004

B.A., Biology and Philosophy, University of Chicago 2003

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Resume Addendum

Awards and Honors

40 under 40 in Clean Energy, Midwest Energy News, 2019

Fellow, Institute on the Environment, University of Minnesota, 2017- present

Willard Munger Award, Minnesota State DFL Party's top environmental award, 2012

National, Regional, & Council Venturing Leadership Awards, Boy Scouts of America, 2001

Venturing Silver Award, 1999, equivalent of Eagle Scout rank in this Boy Scouts of America program

Select Writing

2022 Let's vote like Minnesotans – for a better future for all. *Minnpost.com*

2022 [City climate action plans in Minnesota: overview and review](#). Published by the 100% Campaign.

2021 [Adapting to Minnesota's Changing Climate: Policy Proposals for Building Resilience in a Fast-Changing State](#). Written with Chris Conry. Published by 100% Campaign.

2020 Becoming a Climate Citizen. In *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis*. Edited by AE Johnson and KK Wilkinson. One World: an imprint of Random House, Penguin Random House LLC.

2020 From climate change and Covid-19 to racial injustice, we are in a period of rapid transformation. How do we make sense of what's happening? *Ensia*. (reported)

2019 Climate Strike: it's time to join our youth. *Minnpost.com*.

2019 To succeed, the Green New Deal must tap the power of collective action. *Ensia*.

2019 The term "resilience" is everywhere, but what does it really mean? *Ensia*. (reported)

2018 A University of Minnesota president for this time. *Minnpost.com*.

2018 What I did and what I learned as Minneapolis' chief resilience officer. *Star Tribune*.

2015 Pondering pensions at the climate talks in Paris. *Star Tribune*.

2015 The world has an historic agreement. How are we going to build our future?
Minnpost.com.

Professional and Leadership Development

Climate Reality Leader Training, Climate Reality Project, August 2019

Resilience Product Council Member, Urban Land Institute of Minnesota, 2017-2019

Equity and Diversity Basic Certificate, 30 hours training, University of Minnesota, 2015

Humphrey Policy Fellows Program, Mid-career civic & professional development, Center for Study of Politics and Governance, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, 2012-13

Young Climate Leaders Network, Select group of 27 people under 40 working on leadership development and strategy for climate solutions, 2012-13

Aspen Environment Forum Scholar, Aspen Institute, 2012

Emerging Leaders Program, State Legislative Leaders Foundation, Nominated by Minnesota Speaker of the House, 2010

American Council of Young Political Leaders, Delegate to Indonesia, 2009