

JOHN SHRESTHA

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## Mission Statement

I am John Shrestha, graduating in Civil Engineering from Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am planning to pursue my career in transportation engineering & photojournalism. I hope gain experience from work after graduation to prepare myself for grad school & professional life.



# HONORS PROGRAM

## Honors Mission Statement:

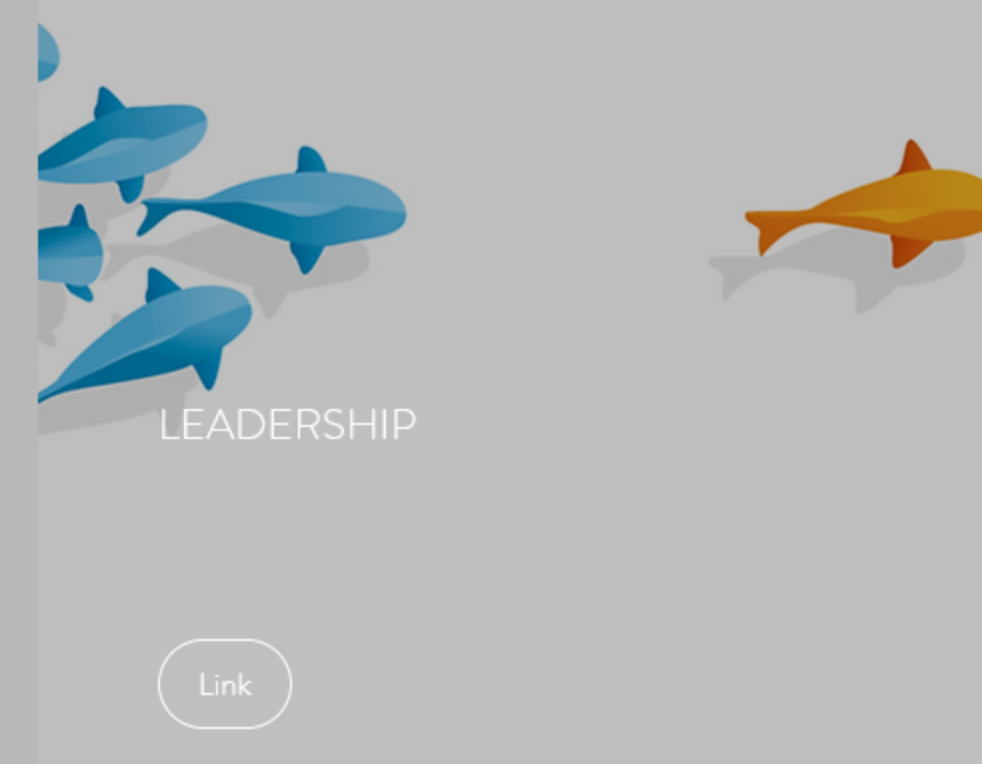
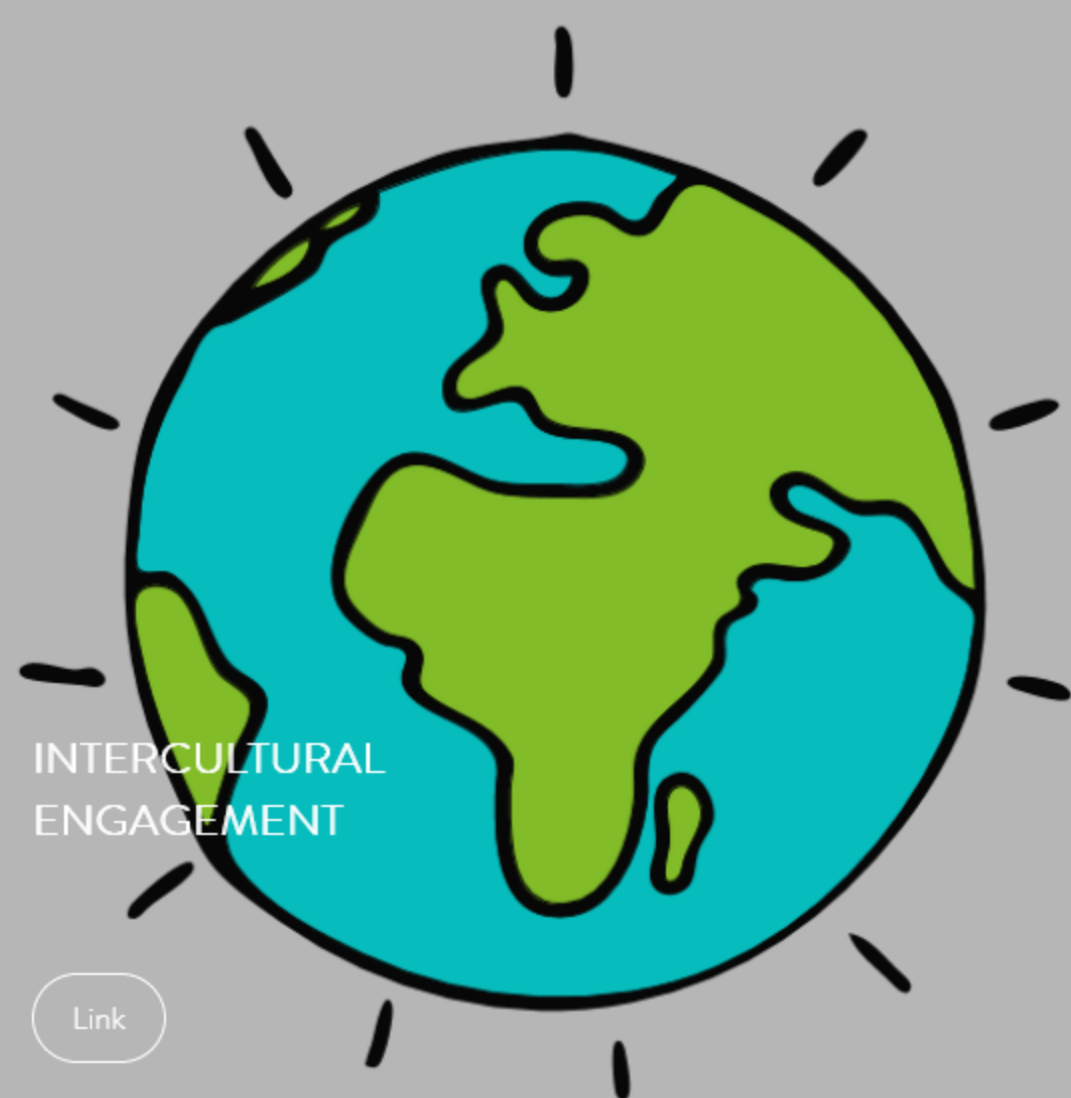
The Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato is committed to supporting motivated undergraduate students by providing them with exceptional learning opportunities, mentoring relationships, and a supportive community that fosters their personal, academic, and professional development.

## My Words:

After years of being able to experience life in the Honors Program, I am graduating soon. During past years as an Honor student, I get to know and meet people who have similar ideas and interests in life.

By getting involved in Honors and becoming part of many of the events, I feel it has prepared me for future life after graduation. By being in honors, I had more responsibilities than my fellow students.

We all have 24 hours a day and 7 days a week but once you get those responsible with deadlines, you start to find space in between the activities. You start to create one. Honor Program has taught me to find time and be productive.



[Learning Plan 2017-18](#)

[Learning Plan 2018-19](#)

[Learning Plan 2019-20](#)

[Learning Plan 2020-21](#)

## INTER-CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

From the first day of joining college to this day, I can clearly see my vision of making a difference in my community. I never imagined I would be able to travel to another side of the world for my education. [Studying abroad](#) mainly here in the US was not in my mind. I grew up in a different environment and culture. My community back home does not even speak English, so it was difficult to adjust at the beginning with the language and cultural differences the nation has. During the past years at Minnesota State University Mankato, I have been involved in [activities](#), where I got the chance to interact with cultures about which I was unaware. I learned that it is important to learn about other cultures and languages because until you know each other, one cannot move forward to work as a team.

I have gained valuable experience in my professional and personal life. From engineering events to fun games by Student Event Teams, I am glad to get involved and be part of American college life. Homecoming parades, weekend football games, and cultural nights have helped me to understand and be close to what it's like to go to an American college. These involvements have changed my perspective, beliefs, and values. One of the changes I saw within me is I learned that it is important to recognize our history and represent all the communities and societies with respect.

The main two experiences that helped me change were an Honors sponsored trip and the campus International Festival. I had the opportunity to travel to [Washington D.C.](#) on a full-paid trip to learn about the Holocaust and World War II. During a day-long trip to DC, I got to witness what happened in our history and how humans were treated. I think it is important to learn what happens in past and how we might mitigate similar disasters happening in the future. With the present condition of western Europe, I have the fear that we might repeat history. We were supposed to learn from our mistakes, not repeat them. We were supposed to learn from our past and work on the present to make a better place for everyone. But it is good to hear those agencies like the UN are working to meet those criteria, educate people and keep everyone updated. One of the other major events I would like to mention is the [International Festival](#). The International Festival is an annual event organized by the international office of MNSU. This event was meaningful in the sense that I was able to not just learn about those countries around the world but also about the United States. I was able to evaluate other cultures based on the standards of my own culture. Learning about their cultures has helped me a lot in developing an understanding of a different cultures I have never encountered before. This event encouraged me to get more involved in understanding other cultures and their way of life.

During my time here at university, I got the opportunity to get involved in various [campus events](#) from which I was able to understand and develop my framework for intercultural engagement. My framework illustrates that by getting involved with different cultures, we might be able to effectively behave, communicate and develop bonds with mutual respect. I want to get more involved in understanding more about intercultural engagement. In the near future, I will continue my involvement to get to understand other cultures more. As I transition to a full-time position after graduation, I will consider and try to better understand how other people unique individuals are by getting involved in-office events like golfing and other networking opportunities. To develop those strengths, I will use my skills in going in-depth and to discover more intercultural in both professional and personal life.

## RESEARCH

As I got to know more about the engineering world, I became interested in transportation engineering. That interest led me to take classes related to engineering and helped me to understand the topics within transportation. Later, I started taking classes mainly focused on transportation engineering. Transportation Asset Management, and Highway Design helped me understand the world of transportation a little closer than I had imagined. I started meeting engineers, technicians, and staff who have spent years of their life in the transportation world. This connection has led me to be aware of the questions that have not yet been answered. I felt like I needed to understand and get a closer look at what has been done around those fields. Therefore, I chose to research in this area to get the answers that I have been looking for.

For my [senior capstone design project](#), I worked along with my classmate to organize a plan that worked for all of us in understanding and developing a goal to tackle the problem. I first brainstormed on tasks we might have to complete for our project and shared those with my team. Topics like ADA standards during designing the stations and routes for our [Hyperloop](#) were some issues we tried to work on. Throughout the semester, we planned and worked on a weekly basis. As the semester progressed our faculty mentor shared very helpful information helping us to keep our research active. We needed this information and help from faculty as we did not have any experience on real world work projects. Faculty guidance and support helped us to take the right direction for [our project](#). If I happen to do a similar project in future, I will follow these ideas of approaching a mentor to get suggestions and guidance on a project. At the end of the semester, we presented the findings in a public event full of engineers, alumni, students, faculty, and community members. We also wrote a report and submitted it to our faculty. I applied the learning process from this project in my project from my wastewater treatment class, where we collected from multiple sources and presented the idea in the form of a report.

For Water and Wastewater Treatment class, we were divided into groups of 4 for a [project](#) called [Great Kato Waste Runoff](#), which was based on the show The Great British Bake Off. During our research practices, we ran into multiple issues. The main issue was managing resources and information that we had. Our main idea was to come up with a poster at the end. We needed to represent the information visually and help the audience understand what we had been doing. Our faculty and friends helped us connect with people from the field who might help us to get a closer look at the topic. This involvement allowed us to learn about different topics and network at the same time. We, in the end, submitted the poster to our faculty. I hope he will use this to teach others about the topic and make everyone aware of the activities and organization that contributed to this project.

As I want to make a career within the transportation world, getting involved in this research has helped me a lot to gain deeper knowledge about the future of engineering. The networking opportunity I have from this experience will also be very helpful as I am joining the transportation field of engineering after graduation. I will invest myself in future projects like the self-driving vehicle, communicating vehicles, and other possible new modes of transportation like [Hyperloop](#).

## LEADERSHIP

"[Stay hungry, stay foolish](#)", is how Steve Jobs ended his 2005 Stanford Commencement Address. Those words always motivate me to move on as a leader. Those words from Steve Jobs have pushed me to take a step and to lead. From the first day of starting college to this day, I can clearly see my vision of making difference in our community as a leader. The Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato has helped me develop my strengths, and taught me how I can improve these skills in the future.

In Honors FYEX we took the [StrengthsFinder](#) inventory. According to the StrengthsFinder assessment, my top 5 strengths are; context, competition, focus, consistency, and futuristic. By reading the "Strengths-Based Leadership" book by Tom Rath, I got deeper knowledge about my strengths. In "Strengths-Based Leadership", Rath and Conchie state that "Without an awareness of your strengths, it's almost impossible for you to lead effectively" (2008, p.10). Hence, we should take on challenges and work hard on them. Even if we make a mistake, we can learn from those mistakes by not giving up. Just before joining MNSU, I took the TOEFL test where I got a low score. But instead of giving up on my dream to study abroad, I went on to take the SAT even though it was not required for international students. By overcoming that challenge, I became the first student from my family to attend university but also the first from my family to hopefully become an engineer.

During my time here at the University, I learned that it is important to learn about team members because until you know the ability of the team, one cannot move forward with the goal of the team. While being part of engineering clubs like the [American Society of Civil Engineers \(ASCE\)](#), I learned that the team is like a chair you are sitting in, and those four legs are the individual members who are supporting the whole team. Basically, the team strength is supported by all the members like a chair is supported by all those four legs. If one of them breaks, the whole team cannot function correctly. Therefore, I learned that it is always good to understand the team's strengths. For example, during one of my [Honors upper-level seminar classes](#), I worked with a team of students to tackle a [social problem](#) we have in our community. We worked together and functioned as a team to find solutions to this problem.

I continued to gain knowledge about effectively working in teams as part of the [CSU Operation Crew](#) where I learned that every single member in a group is important no matter how small or big the responsibilities are that they are in charge of. I am responsible to monitor and set up for major events happening around the building. Aside from that, I work in a team to maintain the rules and regulations of the university and the student union. I saw autocratic leadership skills being effective here. This experienced helped shape my leadership philosophy, which sees value in more direct leadership styles.

In the future to continue developing my strengths, I will use my skills to go into more depth in my leadership roles. As I grow in the engineering field, I will try to be more open to sharing the experience with people around me. Since I later want to focus on research activities in transportation, understanding teamwork is very important. And acting accordingly to the situation would be a great chance to develop the team strengths.

It is clear that leaders may not know everything, but they definitely know how to use someone's strengths from the team. So, the more we are able to know about ourselves and the team, the more we get to be a strong leader. Being in Honors has helped me to develop both individual strengths and help me to understand ways of working in a team. After graduating with Honors, I would like to use the knowledge I gain during my time at Minnesota State University Mankato to lead in my professional field by staying hungry and staying foolish.



Born and raised in third world country Nepal, I never got the opportunity to play with pictures and cameras. But with my exposes to friends and family with a camera, I was able to learn some basics of photography. And with my passion, I have worked and published my photos in a different journal like [MNSU Reporters](#) and [Free Press Mankato](#). I still don't own any camera equipment, not even a camera itself. But that did not stop me from archive what I want in photography life.

Currently, I am working on my first bachelor's degree in Civil Engineer. With the understanding of changes happening world around me, I feel photography plays an important role in showing what's happening around the world. As I am eager to learn from experiences and people, I have worked with the team of the photographers from the Reporters, a student-run University newspaper.

***(I still don't own any camera equipment, not even a camera itself. All this picture were taken from a borrowed items)***

*Achievement in Photography:*

Decorated by Award of Excellency 2019 by the City of Mankato, MN State

Mentioned in the state-level newspaper

[Instagram](#)

[Newspaper MNSU Reporter](#)