The President’s Message

The CT Valley Chapter begins 2007 with warm appreciation for outgoing President, Jeanne Cormier, and Vice President, Leslie Haines. As the new CT Valley Chapter President, I'd like to welcome those assuming new positions on the Board of Directors, as well as returning veterans. The new Board has enthusiastically accepted a new goal: to make a contribution to the WTS-CT Valley Chapter this year and to serve and assist the Chapter in the years to come.

I, along with new Vice President Laurel Stegina and our entire Board of Directors, have a desire to engage and encourage anyone who has an interest in transportation to become more involved with WTS. We believe safe, reliable and effective modes of transportation are important concerns for the residents (and visitors) of Connecticut. Therefore, we believe that transportation has an impact on all of our communities and lives. Our goals this year are to encourage more transportation professionals to become WTS members, to participate at programs offered throughout the year, to attend professional development and networking events, and to volunteer their time to WTS, perhaps by serving on a committee.

You might ask, “What will I gain from becoming a member? What are the benefits? How will this improve my career?” The best answer to these questions is that WTS is an organization made up of people who share common interests and are willing to provide service and assistance in order to “better” the organization as a whole. All members reap benefits and personal achievements from the success of the organization. Simply stated, an organization can only be successful if everyone in the organization works to put the group’s goals and desires into action!

The WTS-CT Valley Chapter Membership wants YOU to be part of its success this year. We want to listen and support our existing members, encourage new members, and focus on transportation issues and goals that are significant and important to the people of Connecticut. We look forward to working with you and making 2007 the best it can be for our chapter.

Warm regards,

Theresa Albanese-Pereyo

WTS CT Valley President
Theresa Albanese-Pereyo is the chapter's new President. Originally from New Jersey, Theresa relocated to Connecticut in 2004 and became active with the CT Valley Chapter serving as the Membership Chair. She earned a B.S. in Natural Resource Management & Applied Ecology from Rutgers University. Theresa became certified as a Professional Wetland Scientist (PWS) in the early 90’s. Serving as an environmental consultant and wetland scientist over the course of her career, Theresa has worked for various companies in diversified roles. Much of her involvement in transportation has included performing environmental studies and permitting for state, county and local roadway widening projects, rail improvements, and other linear developments such as pipeline and utility projects. She currently serves as the Natural Resources Group Manager with Gannett Fleming, Inc. and has been employed with them for the past 4 years. Theresa provides environmental support to Gannett’s CT, NJ and NY offices on various transportation projects. Theresa is active in her community serving as a member of the Southington Township Conservation Commission. Her leisure time is quite fulfilling with raising three very active teenage daughters! Theresa is a “Naturalist” and enjoys gardening, hiking, exercising and is looking forward to spending more time visiting Connecticut’s state parks, forests and nature preserves. talbanese@fnet.com

Laurel Stegina, AICP, the chapter’s new Vice President, began her career in transportation and environmental planning in the late 1980s. While earning a B.A. from Wesleyan University, she gained industry experience as an intern for RPM Systems, a New Haven-based planning consultant, where she conducted surveys. After earning a Master of Forestry from Yale University, Laurel was employed as a Senior Planner by the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley, where she managed the region’s long-range transportation planning activities, served as the region’s household hazardous waste program coordinator, and participated as an alternate member of two of Connecticut’s five Transportation Investment Areas. She is currently employed by Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc., (FHI). Her responsibilities at FHI include NEPA documentation, environmental permitting, public outreach, and transportation planning studies. Laurel is also a member of the King’s Mark Resource Conservation & Development Area Council and the Society of American Foresters. In her leisure time, she enjoys her family, working on her new house, and the rewards of teaching a youth religious education class. Laurel is a relative newcomer to WTS and has been a member for two years. lstegina@fhiplan.com

MEET THE 2007 BOARD

Brooke M. Hoberman has been a member of WTS CT Valley chapter since its incorporation on January 31, 1992. She served as its treasurer for two years in 1996 and 1997, and has been its Treasurer since December 2003 to the present. Since 1984, Brooke has been employed at Rideworks of Greater New Haven, initially as its Office Manager for 6 years and now is the Employer Services Coordinator for the Greater New Haven region, managing and maintaining rideshare programs at employer sites. She also served as the treasurer of the Association for Commuter Transportation’s Connecticut chapter for many years. Before coming to Rideworks, Brooke was a paralegal for a major law firm in downtown New Haven, handling real estate and subrogation cases. BHoberman@rideworks.com

Sara M. Capps, P.E. joined the WTS Boston chapter in 2004 and became involved in the steering committee for the Rhode Island affiliate. After moving to Connecticut in 2005, she joined the CT Valley Chapter. In 2006, she decided to get more involved and became the Newsletter Chair. This year, she continues as the Newsletter Chair and is currently the Interim Secretary. Sara is a Project Engineer with BETA Group, Inc., where she is responsible for the design and development of construction plans for various transportation projects throughout the state. She earned a Bachelor of Civil Engineering from Auburn University in Alabama and is registered as a Professional Engineer in the State of Connecticut. Outside of her career, Sara is an avid runner who has completed two marathons. She also enjoys cooking and once considered going to culinary school. scapps@beta-inc.com

Sofia M. Nirshberg, P.E. is the chapter’s immediate Past President and one of the chapter’s Directors-at-Large. She has been a WTS member for almost 10 years. She is the president and majority owner of VN Engineers, Inc., North Haven, CT. She has a Masters Degree in Civil and Transportation Engineering and 27 years of engineering and management experience. She is registered as a Professional Engineer in Connecticut, New York, New
Jersey and Rhode Island. Sofia tracks each project, reviews scheduling, and sees that all projects are on time and that all projects receive adequate quality control. Her industry experience includes design work on interstate highways, state roads, local streets, and bridges. She served as the Civil Engineer on the State Airport System Plan for the State of Connecticut and on the Airport Master Plan for the Hartford-Brainard Airport. Early in her career, Sofia worked in Kiev, Ukraine on the design of earth-filled dams. She is also a past president of the Connecticut Chapter of Institute of Transportation Engineers. She is a member of the Connecticut Business & Industry Association and the American Council of Engineering Companies. snirsh@vnengineers.com

Lori L. Long, the chapter’s Events Chair and one of the chapter’s Directors-at-Large: “I can vividly remember a WTS luncheon in 1996 when Connie Dice the CT Valley Chapter President asked if anyone would like to help with preparing the chapter newsletter. This was my first assignment with the chapter and since then I have remained an active chapter member, holding several committee and board positions as well as a four year tenure with International in the New Chapter Development Committee Chair position. WTS is my passion and I fully believe in the organization and what it stands for. It’s quite simple and something we all can do rather easily: ‘Women (and men) helping the advancement of Women in the Transportation Industry’. My career path has been consistent for the past 22 years, working for consulting/design engineering firms on several highway and bridge projects and more recently on railroad renovation and reconstruction projects. I am fortunate to be employed in this fine state of Connecticut where I was born and raised and was able to remain close to my family. My personal passion is spending time with my husband and son, and enjoying the great outdoors. My dream is to retire to our house on a lake in Maine, become involved in the community and not worry about time and schedules.” longl@pbworld.com

Silvia M. Militello is one of the chapter’s Directors-At-Large. She has been a WTS member for almost thirteen years. She is a Project Manager and Lead Civil Engineer of PB Americas, Inc., Glastonbury, CT. She has a Bachelors Degree in Civil & Architectural Engineering, and 13 years of experience in project management, and the planning and design of a wide array of infrastructure projects. Silvia was a Deputy Project Manager for various transportation projects New York and was very fortunate to serve as Route Section Deputy Manager and Construction Manager in the United Kingdom on the West Coast Route Modernization Project (WCRM). In 2006 she relocated from New York to Glastonbury to work on the New Haven Rail Yard Facility Improvement Project. Silvia has held board positions for the WTS Greater New York Chapter as Directors-At-Large and Vice-President, and has serviced as Co-Chair for the Students Affairs Committee on the International WTS board. She was elected WTS-GNY Member of the Year after her intense involvement in creating the 1st WTS Student Chapter in the U.S. Silvia loves to travel and is often planning trips to faraway places in her spare time. militel10@pbworld.com

Annual Awards Program – March 1, 2007

The Awards Program will be held at the Holiday Inn in North Haven. Three awards and certificates of appreciation will be presented. We will honor Ms. Judy Gott as the 2006 Woman of the Year. Ms. Gott is the Executive Director for the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG). We also will be announcing and presenting awards for the 2006 Employer of the Year and the 2006 Member of the Year. Please come and join us for an evening of networking, honoring deserving people, and meeting the 2007 Board Members. For more information please contact Lori Long at longl@pbworld.com. We are offering free attendance to this program if you become a WTS member on or before this evening (offer is exclusive to NEW MEMBERS only).

Social Mixer and Board Meeting – April 19, 2007

The CT Valley Board will be hosting a Social Mixer at the lounge of the Marriott Hotel in Rocky Hill. Come out for an informal “after work” social, meet the CT Valley Chapter Board Members and sit in on the Chapter’s Monthly Meeting! Bring a friend or co-worker and plan to arrive around 4:30 pm. Participate and make suggestions to the Board or just listen to the meeting which will begin at 5 or 5:30 pm. We encourage you to share your ideas, concerns and interests and perhaps help the Board with ideas to grow our Chapter and develop great programs for our members!
Mary E. Peters was nominated by President George W. Bush on September 5, 2006, and confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the 15th Secretary of Transportation on September 30, 2006, after spending more than two decades crafting solutions to our nation’s toughest transportation challenges.

Secretary Peters brings a unique perspective to her role as the nation’s transportation chief, having spent her career working on transportation issues in the private and public sectors, including leading both federal and state transportation agencies. This hands-on experience allows her to understand and appreciate the real-life aspects of planning, building and operating transportation systems on local, regional and state levels.

Over her 20-plus years in transportation, Secretary Peters has earned a solid reputation as an innovative problem solver, a force for safety and a strong advocate for effective use of taxpayer dollars. As Secretary of Transportation, she intends to use these same skills to tackle today’s most pressing challenges including fighting congestion across all modes of transportation, improving safety and addressing strains on traditional sources of transportation funding.

She is responsible for maintaining a safe, reliable and efficient transportation system, while leading an agency with almost 60,000 employees and a $61.6 billion budget that oversees air, maritime and surface transportation missions.

Prior to joining President Bush’s Cabinet, Peters worked in Phoenix, AZ, as the national director for transportation policy and consulting at HDR, Inc., a major engineering firm. She was responsible for building a management consulting practice and formulating public policy initiatives for the firm’s transportation program.

From 1985 to 2001, she served in the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). During her tenure, Peters worked her way up through the ranks as a contract administrator, deputy director for administration, and deputy director. In 1998, then-Governor Jane Hull appointed her director of the agency. While in office, she was recognized as the Most Influential Person in Arizona Transportation by the Arizona Business Journal.

Secretary Peters received the 2004 National Woman of the Year Award from the Women’s Transportation Seminar, a national organization of transportation professionals. She chaired the Standing Committee on Planning and the Asset Management Task Force for the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), and was a member of the AASHTO 2001 Reauthorization Steering Committee.

A fourth-generation Arizonan and an avid motorcyclist, Secretary Peters holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Phoenix and attended Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government Program for State and Local Government Executives. She and her husband, Terry, have three grown children, and five grandchildren.

~from http://www.dot.gov/bios/peters.htm

Interested in becoming more involved in WTS?

Prospective members and current members are always welcome at our monthly board meetings. Please contact any of the board members for more information.

We have three open committee chair positions: Membership, Bylaws, and Scholarship. If you would like to become more involved in the chapter, consider volunteering on one of these committees.
CT Valley Attending Annual Chapter Management Training

On February 22–24th, WTS International is providing chapter management training to chapter leaders from across the country, Canada, and England. The CT Valley Chapter will be represented by Laurel Stegina, WTS CT Valley’s newly appointed Vice President. The three-day event held in Houston, TX will feature training in the following areas:

- Membership Recruitment and Retention
- Communications and Public Relations
- Conducting Programs
- Professional Development and Mentoring
- Scholarships
- Governance
- Budgeting and Financial Responsibilities
- Succession Planning

The session on membership recruitment and retention will focus on strategies for maintaining our loyal base, while attracting and involving new members. The communications and public relations session trains leaders to effectively use available resources to spread the good news about what WTS has to offer. In the session on conducting programs, participants will share event ideas, as well as learn the nuts and bolts of putting programs together. The CT Valley Chapter, like many other chapters, is interested in offering more professional development opportunities, the subject of another session. The participation of young professionals and students in WTS is the focus of the mentoring and scholarship segments of the conference.

In addition to providing programs, professional development opportunities, and scholarships, serving our WTS members requires building strong chapter leadership. Sessions on governance, budgeting and financial responsibilities, and succession planning will provide chapter leaders with the tools they need to provide results this year and well into the future.

Ms. Stegina looks forward to attending this training and returning to share the experience with our chapter. The Board intends to implement some of the new and innovative ideas she brings back...stay tuned!

~Submitted by Lori Long

Welcome

2006 New Members!

Sharon Ewen
Frontier-Kempter Contractors, Inc.

Carolyn Hanson
Purcell Associates

Dean McLear
H.W. Lochner

Kimberlee Morton
CT Transit

Larry Murphy
Camp Dresser & McKee, Inc.

Kari Watkins
Wilbur Smith Associates

**Transportation Fun Fact**

The first road in the U.S. that could be described as an “Interstate Road,” long before there were federally-designated Interstate highways, was the National Road. The original National Road, a.k.a the Cumberland Road, started in Cumberland, Maryland on the Potomac River and ended in Wheeling, Virginia on the Ohio River. President Thomas Jefferson authorized construction in 1806, which began in 1811 and ended in 1818. It was constructed entirely with federal funding. It was also the first road to use macadam road surfacing, a precursor to hot-mix asphalt.

~from Roads and Bridges magazine
Visit WTS Online!

The WTS International website contains a vast supply of information about the WTS mission, goals, and history. You can also join or renew your WTS membership online! Check out WTS online at [www.wtsinternational.org](http://www.wtsinternational.org) with pages on:

- Membership information (including lots of great reasons to join)
- Professional Development (with mentoring, training, and scholarship opportunities)
- News & Events (with announcements on national events, as well as local ones sponsored by the CT Valley)

The WTS online “Career Center” is a valuable asset for the industry, for both employers and employees. Job seekers can post their resume, browse through all of the open positions, or request a weekly report of openings that fit their job search parameters. Employers looking for qualified talent can search resumes, post job openings, or request a weekly report of matches to their staffing needs.

The CT Valley Chapter is seeking more participation in its Job Bank, which qualifies as an Equal Employment Opportunity listing.

The CT Valley Chapter webpages also feature information about our:

- Current Board of Directors and Committee Chairs
- A membership directory
- Quarterly newsletters

The chapter’s webpages are updated frequently. Visit the site often for new announcements! If you have questions or comments, please contact Laurel Stegina, chapter webmaster, at lstegina@fhiplan.com.

~Submitted by Laurel Stegina

In honor of the 2007 National Engineers Week held February 18-24, here are seven ways one engineer can make a difference:

1. Introduce a Girl to Engineering! The official day is Feb. 22nd, but you can “celebrate” it any day of the year.
2. Help kids ages 6-12 ZOOM Into Engineering with a toolkit developed by WGBH television.
3. Contact a middle or high school and offer to have a student shadow you on the job.
4. Host a program at a local Boys & Girls Club.
5. Contact a local speakers bureau and offer to speak before local civic and business groups.
6. Develop and maintain a directory of engineering societies willing to visit schools and let schools know this list is available.
7. Sponsor a workshop to help teachers understand what engineers DO!