



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



Dear WTS Charlotte Metro Community,

As we celebrate Women’s History Month in March we must pause and reflect on what the past year of the COVID-19 pandemic has meant for the transportation industry and, in particular, the hand it has dealt women working within it. COVID-19 has resulted in a disproportionate impact on women. Reduced working hours or leaving the workforce altogether have been decisions made by many as they are faced

with the added pressure of being a teacher, a full-time caregiver, maintaining a household, and spending quality time with family all while continuing to be a productive employee.

WTS International’s Executive Director recently released a statement that truly defines the breadth of our industry and the impact it has on change:

Our industry is not an insular one; its outcomes influence the everyday lives of parents, commuters, students, entrepreneurs, and everyone in between. An industry that touches all aspects of life must meet those responsibilities with certain values. It is therefore important to increase diversity so that more voices are heard, maintain inclusivity so that those voices are valued, and attain equity so that those voices have power. (Sarah Stickler, Feb. 2020)

Women and caregivers of all types are an important part of the foundation for this industry and the Charlotte region’s continued success. After this past year, WTS and its community has an added emphasis to sustain women in the workforce and attract women back as we move forward and out of this pandemic.

WTS’ Mission is to attract, sustain, connect, and advance women’s careers, thus strengthening the transportation industry. The need for this focus is evident with regions, such as Charlotte, where booming economies are relying on a diverse workforce in order to thrive and grow prospering communities. Grasping the complexities and needs of these communities and fostering the development of a transportation system that benefits individuals within these communities by connecting different aspects of their lives, takes a diversity of understanding that comes from gender, ethnicity, and culture variances.

We hope that WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter will continue to be a resource for you, whether working or in-between jobs and looking for the next opportunity. We want to continue to bring people together for meaningful conversations and connections around a variety of topics. If you are a member, check out the WTS Career Center, MyWTS Communities, and the Mentor Match program.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone in person when we are able to resume face-to-face meetings. Until then, I wish you all well and stay safe! I’m looking forward to seeing where this year takes us.

Sincerely,

Samantha Schober
Chapter President

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UPCOMING EVENTS

WTS CHARLOTTE METRO 2021 ANNUAL MEETING ▶ March 15, 2021, 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm



The WTS Charlotte Chapter is pleased to host **Julie White**, NCDOT Deputy for Multimodal Transportation, on Monday, March 15, 2021 for our virtual 2021 Annual Meeting. As the Chapter kicks off this year, please join us in hearing from Ms. White speak to her goal, and the mission of WTS, in advancing women in transportation through diversity and inclusion efforts; provoking thoughts on how we as members of the industry can accomplish this and how WTS can help facilitate this effort moving forward. **Registration is FREE for members! Register here.** All proceeds from the event will go to the WTS Charlotte Metro Scholarship Fund.

Thank you to our Annual Meeting Sponsor



SOUTHEAST RAIL FORUM 2021 ▶ March 24-26, 2021

We are passing along an excellent professional development and networking opportunity in March from the [WTS Triangle Chapter](#). A virtual regional forum on rail issues focused on seven Southeastern states will take place March 24-26, 2021 and will feature 3.5 days of live sessions, over 8+ hours for PE or AICP credits, access to pre-recorded sessions on-demand, free video tours and more. More info and registration at <https://southeast-rail-forum.constantcontactsites.com/>.

WTS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ▶ May 10-14, 2021

Registration is now open for the WTS 2021 Annual Conference, and will be held virtually May 10-14, 2021. Early bird pricing is now available for a limited time! More information [here](#).

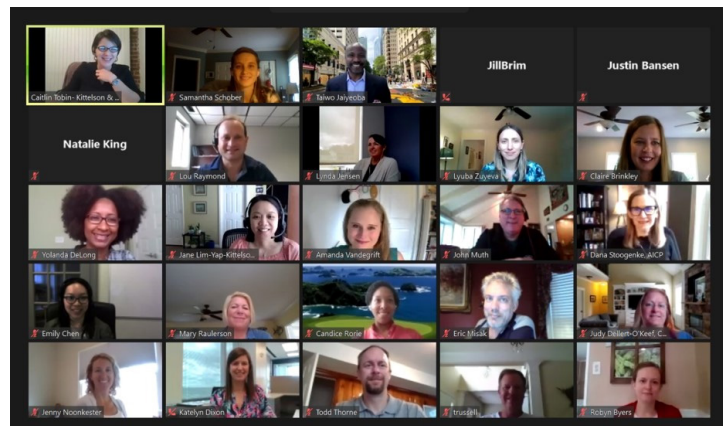
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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Conversation with Taiwo Jaiyeoba

Assistant City Manager and Director of Planning, Design, and Development, City of Charlotte

The WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter hosted over 50 attendees on **October 29, 2020** for a virtual presentation by Taiwo Jaiyeoba, focused on Equity and Upward Mobility in Transportation.



Taiwo spoke to elements of Charlotte 2040 Comprehensive Plan that are meant to encourage neighborhoods to be more welcoming to all, tactical urbanism projects implemented in the City of Charlotte during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the importance of creating an equitable mobility network.

“Minority and low income communities usually endure an inequitable mobility system in their quest to secure well-paying jobs, quality health care or a more affordable housing. Equity in mobility policies, practices and investments matters.” - Taiwo Jaiyeoba

SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

The WTS Foundation awards scholarships to women who are pursuing careers in transportation through undergraduate and graduate programs. The scholarships are competitive and based on the applicant's specific transportation goals, academic record and transportation-related activities or job skills. The WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter solicits applications from across the region, nominates local women to complete on the national level, and also provides local scholarships to top scoring applicants. **We are pleased to provide \$1,500 in local scholarships for 2021.**



Sarvani Duvvuri has been nominated for the **Maggie Walsh Leadership Legacy Scholarship** and the **Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship**, and is the recipient of the **Mary N. Clayton Honorary Scholarship** from the WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter. Sarvani is a Ph.D student at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, in the Philosophy department, with a concentration in transportation engineering. Her previous degrees include a masters degree in Civil Engineering with a concentration in transportation engineering and an undergraduate degree in technology. The judges were impressed with her research in traffic simulation and traffic safety, comparing outcomes from the regional travel demand model with real-world travel time data and identifying risk factors resulting wrong-way crashes.



Arpita Chatterjee is receiving a special Scholarship recognition from the WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter. Arpita is a graduate student at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in the Geography, Urban, and Regional Analysis program, pursuing a masters in Geography with a concentration in urban and regional analysis and sustainable transportation. Her previous degrees include a master or Urban Planning and Environmental Policy, a master of Business Administration, and an undergraduate degree in business administration. The judges were impressed with her 4.0 GPA, her research on electric vehicle curbside charging, her understanding of the community and economic context of micro-mobility options and how these options pair with transit use, and her work on a megaregion freight model in Texas.

WTS CHARLOTTE METRO CHAPTER LEADERSHIP UPDATE

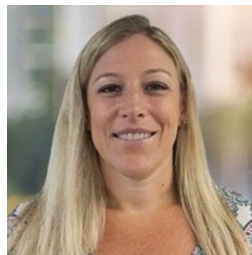
WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter is happy to welcome our new Board of Directors for the coming year:



Chapter President
Samantha Schober



Chapter Vice President
Lyuba Zuyeva, AICP



Chapter Secretary
Erin Musiol, AICP



Chapter Treasurer
Amanda Vandegrift



Immediate Past-President
Caitlin Tobin, PE

THANK YOU TO THE OUTGOING CHAPTER OFFICERS

A huge thank you to the outgoing 2019-2020 WTS Charlotte Chapter Metro officers, including our Chapter President Caitlin Tobin, Vice President Samantha Schober, Secretary Susan Paschal, Treasurer Katelyn Dixon and Immediate Past President Edith Peters for their tireless work in advancing the Chapter mission and goals. We know they will remain closely involved with the Chapter activities and we look forward to seeing them thrive in their new endeavors within WTS.

THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS!

PLATINUM LEVEL



GOLD LEVEL



SILVER LEVEL



CONSIDER BECOMING A MEMBER OF WTS

Are you thinking of joining our chapter? Do you need to renew your membership? During the month of March, members that **renew or join** can have a **15% discount** applied to their annual membership with the code **WHM2021**. Discounted memberships are also always available for public sector employees. Did you know if you are a full-time student, your membership is FREE? Women as well as men are invited to join! To keep the conversation going, members who post in the **MyWTS Communities** discussion telling us why they joined WTS will be entered to win a WTS Branded Prize. Have questions or want to know more about why you need WTS in your life? Reach out to our Membership Chair, Mackenzie Nowacki (mackenzie.zimmerman@charlottenc.gov) for more information.

If you have a suggestion, announcement, or idea for this newsletter, please contact a member of the newsletter committee. We would love to hear from you!

Newsletter Committee:

Elizabeth Harris – eaharris@HNTB.com

Lyuba Zuyeva - lzuyeva@vhb.com

Sherri Dawson - sdawson@vhb.com

2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS
(Chairpersons are on the Board of Directors)

PRESIDENT

Samantha Schober - RS&H

VICE PRESIDENT

Lyuba Zuyeva, AICP - VHB

TREASURER

Amanda Vandegrift - InfraStrategies

SECRETARY

Erin Musiol, AICP - RS&H

MEMBERS AT-LARGE

Mary Clayton, PE - HNTB

Taiwo Jaiyeoba - City of Charlotte

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Mackenzie Nowacki, PE - City of Charlotte

CORPORATE RELATIONS/SPONSORSHIP CHAIR

Mariate Echeverry - AECOM

SCHOLARSHIP AND STUDENT OUTREACH CHAIR

Michelle Nance, AICP - Centralina Council of Governments

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHAIR

Claire Brinkley, PE, AICP - WSP

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Katelyn Dixon, PE, PTOE - WSP

COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING CHAIR

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TRANSPORTATION YOU CHAIR

Samantha Schober - RS&H