

University Professor Selected as White House ‘Champion of Change’

(Nov. 28, 2011) Last week, the US Department of Transportation called upon WTS International to nominate a candidate for the White House “Champion of Change” program in the category of standout individuals working toward engaging and supporting girls and women in STEM (the science, technology, engineering and math fields). WTS, the association for the advancement of women in the transportation industry, quickly nominated member Jennifer Harper Ogle, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Civil Engineering at Clemson University in South Carolina. Dr. Ogle was selected as the Champion of Change almost immediately, helping to further President Barak Obama’s *Winning the Future* initiative that highlights individuals who help the U.S. to “out-innovate, out-educate and out-build the rest of the world.”

In addition to being featured on the White House web site, Dr. Ogle will be a participant in a roundtable discussion on the advancement of girls and young women in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math). “We are just thrilled about Jennifer’s appointment as a Champion of change. She’s been a stand-out leader at WTS with her efforts to elevate the importance of STEM studies for local young women and she’s on the forefront of civil engineering and professional knowledge, which is just what the U.S.—and the world—need to continue growing in the right direction economically.” said Marcia Ferranto, WTS International’s President and CEO. At the round table event taking place on December 9, 2011, agency representatives and White House policy offices will participate and host several small group discussions around engaging and supporting girls and women in STEM. These breakouts will be followed immediately by a larger event focused on amplifying best practices learned in each area.

The highlight of Ogle’s work with WTS will culminate this coming spring with the “DC Summit,” the first meeting of young girls who’ve been partnered with WTS members for mentorship and hands-on programs to solidify their interest in STEM studies and future careers in the transportation industry. This effort, called *Transportation YOU*, is the joint initiative of WTS International and the U.S. DOT that launched with the 2010 signing of a memorandum of understanding by US Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood.

As the first tenured female faculty member in the history of the Glenn Department of Civil Engineering at Clemson, Dr. Ogle is committed to increasing the diversity of the Department and STEM activities; roughly half of the students whom she has advised for MS and PhD programs have been female. She’s a member of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women at Clemson University, and the Chair of the Diversity Outreach Committee in the Glenn Department of Civil Engineering. Each year, Dr. Ogle participates in leadership opportunities with young females in STEM activities through the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE), Girl Scouts in Engineering Day, Society of Women Engineers (SWE), and is currently faculty advisor for a Creative Inquiry class focused on Women’s Leadership in Transportation.

In total, she has more than 15 years of experience in transportation engineering in the areas of highway safety, crash data collection and analysis, instrumented vehicle studies, and geometric design. Dr. Ogle has also been a Research Associate at TTI/Texas A&M University and a Research Engineer I/II at Georgia Institute of Technology. During this time, she’s been the PI/Co-PI on 26 research projects with budgets totaling over \$8.5 Million.

Information on the White House *Champion of Change* can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/champions>.

WTS International and **WTS Foundation**, headquartered in Washington, DC, have provided more than \$1,000,000 in scholarships to deserving women throughout the transportation industry, supporting the next generation of transportation professionals and advancing the principles of WTS. WTS is committed to *Advancing Women in Transportation* through expanding existing scholarship opportunities to women pursuing transportation related degrees, providing and promoting more educational opportunities and career development to advance women in transportation, and initiating, sponsoring and publishing research related to advancing women in transportation. More information can be found at www.WTSInternational.org

Transportation YOU is a hands-on, interactive, mentoring program that offers young girls ages 13-18 an introduction to a wide variety of transportation careers. Through the program, WTS chapters work to make a difference in the lives of young girls by offering programs and activities that will spark their interest in all modes of transportation and encourage them to take courses in math, science, and technology, which are the stepping stones to exciting careers that can change the face of the transportation industry. For more information, contact Marcia Ferranto at 202-955-5085.