

WTS Central Region News

Issue 8



WTS SW Ohio hosts Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority

The WTS SW Ohio Chapter kicked 2018 off with a jam packed program at McCormick & Schmick's in downtown Cincinnati. Brandy Jones, Director of External Affairs at the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority/Metro, presented the Reinventing Metro Conceptual Plan outlining concepts for transit improvements that are possible if new sales tax funding is secured through Hamilton County. The objectives of the plan are financial sustainability, more frequent service, longer hours of operation and shorter trip times. Brandy discussed current challenges, demographics of ridership, and long range goals of better connecting people to jobs, including four potential BRT routes.

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Greetings from the WTS Central Region!

As you'll see in this newsletter, the WTS Central Region Chapters are off to a busy 2018. Between honoring scholarship and award recipients, Transportation YOU programs, and luncheons and professional development events, the Central Region Chapters are truly providing equity and access for all women in the transportation industry.

The Central Region has much to celebrate in 2018. Two of our chapters, Columbus and Northeast Ohio, are celebrating milestone anniversaries this year of 35 and 10 years, respectively. On September 17-18, Minneapolis will host the 2018 Central Region Conference. We're currently looking for speakers and sponsor firms. Please let Nikki Farrington know if you're interested!

We're always looking for new ways to connect members across the Central Region. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please feel free to reach out to me or your chapter representative.

Happy Spring!




Feel free to contact any member of the WTS Central Region Council with any questions or to learn more.

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Cook County Shares Details of their Successful *Invest in Cook* grant program with WTS Chicago

On January 31, 2018 the Greater Chicago Chapter hosted a robust discussion with a distinguished panel of Cook County's Department of Transportation and Highways leadership. Jennifer (Sis) Killen, María Choca Urban and Tomohiko (Tomo) Music presented on their new [Invest in Cook program](#). It is an \$8.5 million grant program to provide gap funding for the advancement of planning and feasibility studies, engineering, and construction work associated with transportation improvements sponsored by local and regional governments and private partners. The excitement surrounding this event was evident by the participation from the audience. It was the Chicago chapter's largest lunch program to date with more than 120 attendees.



Northeast Ohio Celebrates 10 Years!

The Northeast Ohio Chapter is celebrating 10 years in 2018. The Chapter was ratified on March 1, 2008 at the WTSI board Meeting in Orlando, FL. Kirsten Bowen and Amilyn Cedergreen attended the meeting. While the chapter experienced slow growth its first few years, its membership doubled after the first Ohio Department of Transportation District Deputy Director event and continued to grow with the support of corporate sponsors and public partners.

2018 Central Region Conference - Call for Abstracts



The WTS Central Region Council is accepting abstracts for panel sessions, individual presentations, roundtable discussions, and mobile tours for the Central Region Conference on September 17-18, 2018 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Central Region Conference will provide opportunities to develop skills, hear from leaders on transportation issues pertinent to the region, and network with other industry professionals across modes, disciplines, and from both the public and private sectors.

Submit your ideas [here](#).

Interested in event sponsor opportunities? Click [here](#) to learn more about the benefits and sponsorship levels.

WTS Columbus Chapter Hosts Annual Awards Event

The WTS Columbus Chapter hosted its Annual Chapter Recognition Awards event on February 8th to present chapter awards, recognize scholarship recipients, and announce new board members.

City of Gahanna and Carpenter Marty won the Innovative Transportation Solutions award for the West Side Intersection Improvement Safety Study and Alternatives Analysis project led by Gina Balsamo. WSP, with 35% of its workforce made up of women and 26% minority, was recognized as Employer of the Year. Steve Thieken has been a great supporter of WTS over the

years and was recognized as the Honorable Ray LaHood (BroMember of the Year). Julie Walcoff serves as Ohio's Active Transportation Program Manager at ODOT's Headquarters in Columbus and was recognized as the Woman of the Year. **Frances Rubio-Rourke was instrumental in establishing the Southwest Ohio Chapter, is currently assisting efforts to establish a Northwest Ohio Chapter, and has been a member of the WTS Central Region Council since its pilot stages and received the Member of the Year honor.**

Undergraduates Madeline Dummermuth, attending The Ohio State University, was presented the Molitoris Leadership Scholarship and Angelica Suma, also attending The Ohio State University, was presented the Sharon D. Banks Memorial Scholarship. Graduates students Shichao Cui, attending The Ohio State University, was presented the Beverley Swain Staley Leadership, and Yujin Park, also attending The Ohio State University, was presented the Helen M. Overly Memorial Scholarship.



WTS-KC Talks Missouri Transportation Funding

Missouri State Representative Kevin Corlew discussed the overall condition of Missouri's transportation system and its funding at a WTS-KC luncheon in February. Rep. Corlew is the Chairman of Missouri's 21st Century Transportation System Task Force, which has been tasked with making recommendations to the state legislature regarding how to pay for repairing Missouri's aging transportation infrastructure. Missouri's system is the seventh largest in the country, with nearly 34,000 miles of highways. Rep. Corlew shared the task group's findings and recommendations, including a proposal to increase the state's gas tax, one of the lowest in the country. The program was a part of WTS-KC's Learn from a Leader luncheon series.



WTS Wisconsin Recognizes Scholarship and Award Winners

Transportation professionals and supporters from across Wisconsin attended WTS Wisconsin's 2018 Scholarship and Recognition Award dinner Thursday, February 22 at Thunder Bay in Pewaukee.

Scholarship recipients include:

- Transportation YOU Scholarships: **Abigail Last** and **Serene Sorenson**
- Sharon D. Banks Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship: **Mary Sizemore**
- Molitoris Leadership Scholarships: **Marta Larson, Elizabeth Kotoski**

Chapter Recognition awards were presented to:

- Woman of the Year: **Sharon Bremser**
- Member of the Year: **Alexandria Motl**
- Employer of the Year: **raSmith**
- Project of the Year: **Lakefront Gateway I-794 Ramps at Lincoln Memorial Drive**



Following the award ceremony, Brian Roper (WisDOT) emceed a panel discussion with Mary Beth Pettit (Graef USA), Heather Sackman (WisDOT), Karen Dettmer (City of Milwaukee), and Carolynn Gellings (Daar Corp) about the Lakefront Gateway I-794 Ramps at Lincoln Memorial Drive. The panel discussed their experience working with one another and on the project, which involved many challenges, including ramp relocations, maintaining vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and stakeholder coordination. The \$29 million project was a unique collaboration between the State, City and County to realign the I-794 ramps to improve access for vehicles and pedestrians and mass transit operations.

Greater Indy Holds Inaugural Scholarship Fundraiser at Topgolf

WTS Greater Indianapolis made it a priority to begin fundraising in 2018 to be able to begin granting scholarships. The event was held April 11 at TOPGOLF and the timing was perfect to help kick off golf outing season! The turnout was higher than expected for the first year—70 participants! Overall, everyone had a great time and WTS Greater Indianapolis ended up raising \$4,000 to go towards their scholarship fund. Hoping to build on this next year!

