



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



Dear WTS Community,

On behalf of the WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter, I hope this message from our chapter finds you well and navigating the middle of a year unlike one many of us have ever seen in our lifetime. As we move through uncharted waters, it is a humbling and important time to be a part of the transportation community in North Carolina. WTS has been a small but mighty part of the transportation community in the Charlotte region since 2007. And this year, more than ever, we feel the responsibility to support our members

and guide the industry. Our communities are facing changing and challenging times around the COVID-19 pandemic and agencies are learning how to push critical projects ahead via a virtual world, while also adapting how transportation will look in the future. The adaptability and innovation of professionals and agencies in Charlotte and around North Carolina has been nothing short of impressive in the face of this challenge. We are very proud to be part of this community of leaders!

I would also like to recognize that our community has entered a new era and conversation around race, and, like many of you, we have been disappointed and disheartened by the current events taking place in our nation that highlight racial injustice. As we continue to watch the division across the Country with sadness and pain, we recognize the impact felt is not isolated to just one situation, but is a widespread problem of systemic racism in our country, and by default, our industry. With a desire for progress and the knowledge that there is no place for racism or any form of inequities, WTS Charlotte supports the efforts of agencies, companies and organizations that have embraced and implemented policies to improve their environment. The WTS Charlotte chapter also stands with the statement made by WTS International, condemning racial injustice. That statement can be found [here](#).

Our Board leaders have been working hard to continue to provide value to our members and give them the tools they need to address the pressing issues of the day. I would like to express my deepest and sincerest thank you to our sponsors for supporting us in our efforts to do this. It is now, more than ever, that we understand your support and partnerships enables all of us to engage in a focused conversation around some of the most challenging, controversial and pressing issues in the region. We could not accomplish what we do for our members and this industry without you.

Finally, to all of our members, we are excited to engage with you all this year through a series of virtual programs we will be hosting and cannot wait till we can be engaging in person again with you all as well. Thank you for all you do to make our Chapter the talented, diverse and outstanding group of professionals it is.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Tobin
WTS Chapter President

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

WTS Charlotte Metro Programs for Calendar Year 2020

WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter leadership team has been reviewing the developing situation with COVID-19 social distancing measures. In our tracking of the infection rates, we are still seeing a lot of room for concern with larger public gatherings. As a result, we have made the decision to postpone our September Mini-Series signature event to the fall of 2021. Sponsors for the 2020 September Mini-Series will have their benefits applied to the 2021 event.

In January, we hosted Iona Thomas for a conversation about gender issues in the workplace (“The Last Woman in the Room”) as part of our Annual Members Meeting. The meeting was held at the Charlotte Trolley Powerhouse and we had great attendance. On February 12th, we hosted a social at Connolly’s Loft in Uptown to coincide with the WTS International Board meeting that was taking place in Charlotte that same week, to give our local chapter members an opportunity to meet and mingle with high-profile WTS leaders from across the country.

Around twenty members and WTS supporters were able to come out to take advantage of the opportunity to socialize.



Iona Thomas spoke on gender issues in the workplace during the Annual Members Meeting on January 30, 2020.

Through the rest of 2020, we are still committed to bringing to you programming on topics relevant to the transportation community. However our events will be in virtual format, with social and in-person events postponed for now. Please join us on July 16th for a webinar event with John Lewis, the Chief Executive Officer of the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS). Since his start with CATS in 2015, John Lewis has been leading the transit agency through a significant stage of growth including construction of the LYNX Blue Line Extension, expanding existing light rail platforms, and advancing the CityLYNX Gold Line Phase 2 (streetcar) through final design to construction. During the July program he will discuss CATS' response to COVID-19. See this [link](#) to register or see more info.



John M. Lewis

Also stay tuned for a fall webinar with Geraldine Gardner of Centralina Council of Governments. Geraldine will provide an update regarding the latest planning initiatives and how the region is able to

respond and position itself in the aftermath of COVID-19.

For our webinar events, we will still charge an attendance fee. We appreciate your support provided by registering for WTS events. This allows us to keep our scholarship program going strong! WTS national conference will be coming to Richmond, Virginia in the spring of 2021. We are excited to have this conference a little closer to home this year and will be sharing additional info closer to the date. If a friend forwarded you this newsletter and you would like to sign up for WTS notices about future events, please sign up [here](#)



Geraldine Ide Gardner started as the Executive Director of Centralina COG in January 2019. Image courtesy of Centralina COG.

INTERNATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

WTS International (WTS) unveiled its new brand identity on May 21, 2020. The re-branding effort was a two-year process led by WTS International Board of Directors under the leadership of Maggie Walsh, Chair of the International Board. During this process, members, chapter leaders, and stakeholders were engaged to identify brand attributes that they felt were important to WTS.

As part of the re-branding, a new tagline was created that emphasizes the goals of the WTS mission of serving women transportation professionals and the transportation industry as a whole; *Advancing Women. Advancing Transportation.* In addition to the modernized identity and brand refresh, other changes have been made to enhance member experience. A new Association Management System (AMS), website, and updated community forum have been launched to provide new benefits and expand member resources. Visit: [here](#)

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

WTS INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP NOMINEES

At our recent Annual Meeting, our Scholarship Chair, Michelle Nance, presented our Chapter’s nominees for the WTS International Foundation Scholarships.

Adalie Harrison, a Senior at East Rowan High School, was nominated for the TRANSPORTATION YOU High School Scholarship. She is captain of the basketball team, Rowan County runner of the year, and has an interest in how active living supports health.



Juliann Lloyd, an undergraduate at Clemson University in Civil Engineering, was nominated for the Molitoris Leadership Scholarship and Sharon D. Banks Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship. She is the founding chair of the civil engineering student advisory council and helped launch a departmental mentoring event. She’s done extensive research on roundabout conversions and plans to pursue a Ph.D. in transportation engineering.



Zijong Lin, a Ph.D. student at UNC Charlotte, was nominated for the Maggie Walsh Leadership Legacy Scholarship. She conducts traffic safety research, publishing in the areas of bicyclist injuries and modeling bicycle volumes, and is a leader in the American Society of Civil Engineers and Institute of Transportation Engineers.

MARY N. CLAYTON HONORARY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Wen Zhang, a Ph.D. student at UNC Charlotte, was presented with our Chapter’s local scholarship award, the Mary N. Clayton Honorary Scholarship, by WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter Board member Mary N. Clayton. Wen was also nominated for the WTS International Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship. She studies philosophy and mechanical engineering to supplement her undergraduate degrees in transportation engineering and applied mathematics. She’s worked with the NC Motorsports and Automotive Research Center linking biology and animal behavior to driver behavior, and conducted research into how to evaluate driver spontaneity during a crash as a means towards improving autonomous driving algorithms.



CORPORATE PARTNERS

WTS Charlotte Metro would like to thank our Corporate Partners and members for their continued support. Through this support, we have made great strides in achieving our goal of advancing women in transportation. Charlotte Metro's Corporate Partners have enabled our chapter to award thousands of dollars in scholarships, as well as provide workshops and conferences each year.

This year we are proud to announce the addition of Small Business & Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) sponsorship levels.

As a Corporate Partner, you receive many exclusive member-only benefits. For more information on sponsorship benefits and opportunities, please visit our website or contact Yolanda DeLong at yolanda.delong@translinkconsult.com.

2020 Corporate Sponsors

Platinum Level



Gold Level



Silver Level



Thank you for your continued support!

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

Marie Sugar – marie.sugar@kimley-horn.com

Lyuba Zuyeva - lzuyeva@vhb.com

WTS Charlotte Metro Board Elections will be held in November 2020. More information will be posted on the chapter website in the Fall.

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS/ COMMITTEE CHAIRS

(Chairpersons are on the Board of Directors)

PRESIDENT

Caitlin Tobin, PE - Kittelson & Associates

VICE PRESIDENT

Samantha Schober - RS&H

TREASURER

Katelyn Dixon, PE, PTOE - WSP

SECRETARY

Susan Paschal, AICP - WSP

MEMBER AT - LARGE

Mary Clayton, PE – Gresham Smith & Partners

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Mackenzie Nowacki, PE – City of Charlotte

CORPORATE RELATIONS/SPONSORSHIP CHAIR

Yolanda DeLong, AICP – TransLink Consulting, LLC

SCHOLARSHIP AND STUDENT OUTREACH CHAIR

Michelle Nance, AICP – Centralina Council of Governments

SCHOLARSHIP AND STUDENT OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Walta Blackmon, PE – Charlotte Department of Transportation

Sierra Haynes, PE – WSP

Mackenzie Nowacki, PE – City of Charlotte

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHAIR

Claire Brinkley, PE, AICP - WSP

COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING CHAIR

Elizabeth Harris – PhD, PE - HNTB

COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Marie Sugar, PE – Kimley-Horn

Lyuba Zuyeva - VHB

PROGRAMS CHAIR

Brooke Parker – PE - HDR

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sadhana Chukkala, EI - RK&K