

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Dear Charlotte Metro Members and Friends of WTS:

Happy summer everyone! As usual, summer is flying by, and fall is just around the corner! I hope you all have enjoyed the dynamic and



informative speakers at WTS Charlotte Metro events so far this year. One of the highlights was our April dinner reception for NC Secretary of Transportation Eugene Conti, who spoke about the challenging times ahead for the transportation industry and for the state. In addition to looking to the future, we also learned from the past with historian Walter Turner, who gave a very interesting presentation about

the NC interstate system. On the national level, the WTS International Annual Conference was held in Seattle in May. WTS Charlotte Metro Board member Mary Clayton represented our chapter at this event. She shares her insights from the meeting on page 3.

Our Board members have been busy planning programs and developing new initiatives. One of the most exciting new developments for this year is the start of our local scholarship program. Our chapter will offer a \$500 undergraduate scholarship to encourage and support women to enter the transportation field. Our recent bowling social was a fun way to raise money for this great cause! Thanks to Celia Gray and Edith Peters for putting on such a fun and creative event! I look forward to the next one!

In this difficult economic environment, thank you for your continued participation and support of WTS Charlotte Metro. I hope you will continue take advantage of all WTS Charlotte Metro offers. If you have ideas for future programs, please let me know. Hope to see you soon!

*- Kelly Goforth*

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## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

### *Welcome Reception for Gene Conti (April 2009)*

The WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter hosted a reception honoring Eugene A. Conti, Jr., Ph.D the newly appointed Secretary of Transportation for the North Carolina DOT. Cocktails and a dinner buffet were held at Byron's South End on Thursday, April 23, and guests were treated to remarks from Dr. Conti following dinner.

The Secretary was appointed by Governor Beverly Perdue because of his experience as a professional transportation expert. He has served as the Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy at the United States DOT, the Chief Deputy Secretary for the North Carolina DOT, and he most recently led business development and community relations for PBS&J's Mid-South District.



Secretary Conti indicated that the state is actively applying for stimulus money to plan and construct several high priority projects in the State and the Charlotte area. He also discussed the local efforts to plan for a rail transit system between Charlotte and the municipalities of northern Mecklenburg County, and commended CATS for all of their accomplishments in working with the various jurisdictions to meet the needs of commuters.

This was an exciting event for the Charlotte Metro Chapter, and it serves as an indication of the important programs and people



that WTS is able to attract. We thank Secretary Conti for his support of WTS, and his commitment to improving the state's infrastructure.

## Walter Turner Shares the Interstate History of North Carolina (May 2009)

Walter R. Turner, historian at the NC Transportation Museum and fifth-generation North Carolinian, shared with us the past, present and future of North Carolina's interstate history. His passion for North Carolina's transportation history was evident in his presentation.

Interstate Highway System Designated in 1956



In 1956, there were four interstates in North Carolina, totally 714 interstate miles. In 1957, President Eisenhower added Interstate 77 to North Carolina's map. Today North Carolina has 1,120 interstate miles and another 200+ miles under construction. For six decades, North Carolina had the largest state maintained highway system. Then North Carolina was surpassed by Texas' state maintained highway system.

Current Interstate Highway System



Turner has written articles for Our State magazine, Business North Carolina, and the state's major newspapers. His book, *Paving Tobacco Road - A Century of Progress* by the North Carolina Department of Transportation, was

published in 2003. This richly detailed and masterfully researched book captures the decade by decade drama of one of North Carolina's great untold stories: the "Good Roads State."

## Bowling Scholarship Fundraiser (August 2009)

On Tuesday, August 18, the WTS Scholarship Committee hosted a bowling fundraiser event for the first local chapter scholarship to be presented this spring. Eleven ladies attended the event and enjoyed a night of "crazy bowling" (see photo), traditional bowling, and lots of prizes.

The winning team for crazy bowling included Eliza Rodriguez, Michelle Podeszwa, Judy Dellert-O'Keef, Linda O'Keef, and Donna Clayton. There were also prizes awarded to individuals:



- Most strikes: tie between Linda O'Keef and Donna Clayton
- High game score: Celia Gray
- Best technique: Alicia Mooney
- Most gutter balls: Eliza Rodriguez

Everyone ended up with at least one prize because PBS&J, PB, STV, and



CATS generously donated great prizes for the event! The total raised for the local scholarship that night was over \$150.00. The Scholarship Committee looks forward to hosting another event soon.

## CHAPTER EVENTS:

Fall 2009 - Professional Development Program on Leadership, Jointly Sponsored by WTS Charlotte Metro, SWE-Metrolina Section and WIN (Women in Nuclear) - Details Coming Soon!



Advancing Women in Transportation  
Charlotte Metro Chapter

# In Motion

Summer 2009

## LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS:

### Recognitions Program

WTS Charlotte Metro is starting a new local recognitions program. This is a way to recognize other members, employers, and projects for going above and beyond for WTS Metro. We are going to recognize in the following categories this year:

- **Member of the Year:** To recognize a WTS member who has made extraordinary contributions to the success of the organization.
- **Employer of the Year:** To recognize a business for its support of the goals and purpose of WTS.
- **Innovative Transportation Solutions Award:** To honors an innovative transportation project or service that improves the quality of life for its users and the community.

We will be sending out applications to members for nominations on November 2, 2009. They will be due back by December 31, 2009. The local board will determine the selections, and the winners will be sent on for consideration for the International selection. There will be an awards banquet next year, and the winner of the member of the year will be given free participation at some of the events next year. Don't miss this opportunity!

### Local Scholarship Program

WTS Charlotte Metro Chapter to reach out to students at local universities and offer our 1st local WTS Scholarship.

- The local scholarship is a onetime scholarship for undergraduates.
- The local scholarship will run concurrently with applications for the National Scholarships and will follow the WTSS International criteria.
- The local scholarship winner will receive \$500, a t-shirt, and one year membership to WTS.

The Scholarship Committee will send a letter to the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Clemson, and the University of South Carolina requesting applicants. Board members plan to visit to each of these Universities to introduce WTS and personally invite students to undertake careers in the area of transportation.

### Assistance Needed

Are you looking for a way to get more involved in WTS? The WTS Charlotte Metro chapter needs a volunteer to serve as Program Committee Chair. Program Committee Members are already in place. The Program Committee is responsible for coordinating our monthly programs and speakers, with the assistance and support of our Board and the rest of the Program Committee. Please contact Kelly Goforth at [kgoforth@ci.charlotte.nc.us](mailto:kgoforth@ci.charlotte.nc.us) if you are interested.

## NATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:

### *Transportation . . . Bringing Cities to Life*

WTS Annual Conference, Seattle, WA – May 20 – 22, 2009

We would like to thank Mary Clayton for attending the WTS Annual Conference and representing the Charlotte Metro Chapter. The following is a brief recap from Mary's trip.

After a rather "exhilarating" plane ride into Seattle (a first-ever thunder storm, I was told), and circling for almost an hour so as to miss the lightning strikes, I made it into the airport and a late night catch-up with friends and coworkers at the Seattle Sheraton.

The next morning, and as part of the WTS Chapter Leadership meeting, there was a part of WTS' "special responsibilities" being immediately outlined, as the nearly 310+ women were there to share much of their corporate and various civic responsibilities in transportation and related responsibilities. One theme that echoed was how we can "make a difference" through the work that we are actually doing . . .

Even in the face of these economic times, many representatives discussed how to create more "member value" and to work to create improved policy impact in transportation.

Several key points from various presentations included:

- Significant work of the WTS Foundation and the award of \$900,000 thus far.
- Agreement about our "functionality" and that the members are "owners" and want to do even more.
- We exist to achieve a common vision/mission that members cannot individually achieve.





- Strategic plan provides focus for our policy/programs, key responsibilities, organization and focus, leadership.

Diane James, WTS Executive Director, led a discussion about leadership and governance, and described many aspects of what we might hope to be through the work that we do. I found this most helpful, since I am always looking for ways to better myself.

Some of the key points, included:

- Leaders must be diligent in our support, trust and cooperation with each other, and the desire should be a desire for teamwork.
- Being diligent in preparing for meetings and attending them.
- There should be robust dialogue which will lead to accomplishment of organizational goals (not personal ones).
- Set collaborative agenda.
- Communicate a positive board culture.
- Consider the experience we are trying to develop as one of “board service.”
- Facilitate solutions.
- Step out of the solutions so that they can be found.
- Have a fresh perspective.
- Contribute to diversity.
- Represent your membership.
- Possess leadership qualities in everything that you do.
- Illustrate credibility and prestige.
- Have contacts and a depth of knowledge.
- Have succession planning and succession thinking.

There were several compelling sessions at this conference, but there are a couple I want to highlight. One of the plenary sessions entitled “Connecting the DOTs: Transportation Projects, Stimulus and Navigating through Challenging Times”, was just unforgettable. It was four incredibly wonderful women (aren’t they all?). They were Gail Achter-

man, Chair of Oregon’s Transportation Commission and the WTS Portland Chapter (2008) Woman of the Year, Paula Hammond, Secretary of Transportation Washington DOT, Luisa Paiewonsky, Commissioner, Massachusetts Highway Department and WTS Woman of the Year, 2009 and Beverley Swaim-Staley, Deputy Sec of Transportation, Maryland DOT. These women talked about how to implement programs effectively and what some of the most difficult tasks were that each of them had faced in their careers. It was a fascinating discussion of how they had “managed expectations,” but also how they had dealt with the fundamental needs. And, these women were terrific speakers and had a sense of balance and understood much of what we all face today in the careers that we are in.

Finally, I have to say that one of the presentations that I enjoyed the most was that of Anne Levinson, Force 10 Hoops, LLC and her perspective about the various roles that she has played in rising to the top of a professional sports team effort via her roles in government. She was funny, but in an under-stated way, but taught us all that as a female owner, who has worked her way through the gay-rights efforts, there was quite a bit to overcome. Seattle loves her, and you could see why. She has done a terrific job.

## **NEW CHAPTER MEMBERS:**

WTS Charlotte Metro welcomes our new members to the organization. Spread the word about the benefits of WTS membership. We encourage all members to become involved in a committee and attend our programs to get the most out of your membership.

**Bridget Nacey, URS Corporation**

**Lisa Podeszwa, HDR Engineering, Inc.**

To become a member of WTS Charlotte Metro, join online at [www.wtsinternational.org](http://www.wtsinternational.org). For more information, please contact our Membership Committee Chair, Brock LaForty, at [brocklaforty@stvinc.com](mailto:brocklaforty@stvinc.com).

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

Eliza Rodriquez, PE of HDR Engineering, Inc. serves as WTS' Chair of the Recognitions and Nominations Committee. We asked Eliza to share some information about her background in transportation.



- 1. Can you provide a brief description about what you do?** I am a Senior Project Bridge Engineer for HDR in our Charlotte office. I design bridges for NCDOT, SCDOT, and many other agencies.
- 2. How long have you worked in the transportation industry?** 11 years.
- 3. What do you like most about your job?** My favorite thing to do is earthquake analysis of bridges. Unlike all the other designs, this is truly unique each time and you get to work out the challenges.
- 4. How long have you been a member of WTS?** 2 years.
- 5. What do you think are some of the challenges facing women in transportation?** With the economy the way it is, women in transportation face the same challenges today that many others do. And in these times, women are going to have a harder time striking a work-life balance in the face of all the cuts around us.
- 6. What are some of the achievements you've seen for women in transportation?** Tremendous Improvements! Today there are women in every level of most of the government agencies, as well as the private firms in ways that even 10 years ago you didn't see. You can do anything you want in this field these days.
- 7. What would you like to share about your personal interests and goals?** My family is my life—I have a three and a half year old boy, Nate, and I'm loving every moment.

## CORPORATE SPONSORS:

WTS Charlotte Metro would like to thank our corporate sponsors for their continued support. Corporate sponsorship has been a key part of our chapter's success! We have recently sent out a letter requesting that companies renew their sponsorship or become a new sponsor. These commitments will allow us to continue bringing meaningful speakers to the transportation community and will support new initiatives for local scholarship and recognition programs. Corporate sponsors for 2009-2010 will be announced in our next newsletter. For more information on sponsorship benefits and opportunities, contact Kelly Goforth at [kgoforth@ci.charlotte.nc.us](mailto:kgoforth@ci.charlotte.nc.us) or Candice Crago at [cheintz@mulkeyinc.com](mailto:cheintz@mulkeyinc.com).

### PLATINUM

HDR Engineering

### GOLD

HNTB Corporation

Parsons Brinckerhoff

Mulkey Engineers & Consultants

URS Corporation

### SILVER

Kimley-Horn Associates

PBS&J

STV / Ralph Whitehead Associates



Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.





*Advancing Women in Transportation*  
Charlotte Metro Chapter

# *In Motion*

Summer 2009

## **Board of Directors/Committee Chairs 2008-2010**

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*Paige Yandle, PBS&J*

### **Scholarship**

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*Judy Dellert-O'Keef, Charlotte Area Transit System*

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### **Web Site**

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### **Corporate Relations**

*Candice Crago, Mulkey Engineers & Consultants*

### **Recognitions**

*Eliza Rodriquez, HDR Engineering*

If you have a suggestion, announcement, or great idea for this newsletter please contact a member of the newsletter committee:

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Thank you to our newsletter contributors for keeping us In Motion this quarter:

Mary Clayton, Judy Dellert-O'Keef, Kelly Goforth, Celia Gray, Susan Paschal, Edith Peters, Eliza Rodriquez, and Paige Yandle