



Advancing women
Advancing transportation

Quarterly Newsletter

Q3 2020

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

During a recent Zoom meeting with fellow WTS members, I looked around at the smiling faces on my screen and realized just how much our organization has changed in such a short timeframe. It's clear as I talk to our corporate sponsors and small business partners that there is a shift in our industry toward remote working, virtual gatherings, and digital collaboration. No matter what happens moving forward, there is no going back to the workplace as we know it. Rather than feeling anxious about this change, I see an exciting opportunity! We have the chance to engage and network with leaders across the country now that the commute is only as long as it takes our internet to connect. We recently hosted a book club meeting to discuss our latest book selection, "Street Smart: The Rise of Cities and the Fall of Cars," by Samuel Schwartz, who attended from his home on the east coast. Before COVID-19 pandemic, having him participate in our small group discussion would not have been considered as an option. We are experiencing innovations that redefine where and how we can make an impact. Innovation and change are happening at so many levels as we rethink and remake our WTS chapter. Many of us are experiencing new flexibility in our workplaces and adopting digital culture to drive change in ways we have never seen before. Our recent LinkedIn workshop, facilitated by Krystn Macomber, highlighted the ways we can make the digital social media platform work for us as our face-to-face networking opportunities have evaporated. We held our mid-year board retreat completely virtually (including a virtual yoga session!). Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of this shift was our successful pivot toward a groundbreaking virtual gala and scholarships fundraiser this year. Despite everything, we managed to award our largest scholarship amount ever (\$30,000!). This shift has not been easy, but it has revealed the creativity and talent we have in abundance. I am so proud of how we have proven our ability to adapt.

Faced with monumental changes, including a pandemic and renewed call for social justice, we have not stopped. We have moved our meetings and events online and found new ways to serve our membership, always drawing upon our mission to attract, sustain, connect, and advance women's careers to strengthen the transportation industry. In more recent times, we have begun to broaden our efforts to include diverse and underrepresented groups within our organization. We want to grow our membership without a doubt, but sometimes we can get caught up in the numbers game and lose sight of the bigger picture. After all, an increase in membership is meaningless if next year those new members leave, or if we can't provide the high-quality programming and benefits our chapter members have come to expect from us. Our executive board held a strategy meeting recently to hold up a mirror to ourselves and honestly answer some tough questions including whether we are doing all we can for our members and if our chapter reflects the community we serve and the values we profess. This led to initiation of our strategic realignment process to align our vision, mission, and core values with WTS International. We are in the process of refining our key strategies, goals, and metrics to help us stay focused and streamline our chapter activities in order to take our chapter to the next level and engage our members and volunteers in new ways.

With innovation and change also comes the responsibility to reflect and honor our history. August marked the 100th anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, granting women the right to vote. Thanks to principled and courageous trailblazers like Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt and others, women's equality and right to vote was secured. We honor their leadership by supporting the advancement of women in the industry, mentoring others, and championing a diverse and inclusive workforce in transportation. We also celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Seeking to eradicate discrimination from work environments and transportation systems, the ADA has made our lives and our world more inclusive and equitable. These legacy achievements remind us of our responsibility to continue advancing equity and access for all and putting in the work to ensure these rights and opportunities are fulfilled by our public and private institutions.



WTS is as driven as ever to respond to challenge and change with creative and fresh solutions. Join us as we get to work!

Brianna Pilkinton
 WTS San Diego County Chapter President
 Burns & McDonnell

2020 WTS San Diego Chapter Board

President	Brianna Pilkinton	Recognition	Julie Froelich
Vice President	Lima Saft	Scholarship	Mimi Morisaki
Secretary	Bethany Dawa		Marissa Thomas
Treasurer	Cecily Taylor		(co-chair)
Immediate Past President	Mary Holland	Transportation You	Jim Starling
Director At Large	Tueré Fa'aola	Corporate Sponsorship	Chris Wahl
Director At Large	Sunnie House	Membership	Amy Jackson
Director At Large	Eleanor Gonzalez	Professional Development	Lisa Madsen
Annual Awards &	Seana Urquhart	Communications	Precious Nicanor
Scholarship	Les Hopper (Co-Chair)	Regional Council Vice Chair	Nensi Lakrori

Student Scholarship Fundraiser

By: Mimi Morisaki
 Scholarships Chair
 Rick Engineering

The WTS San Diego Scholarship Committee held another online fundraiser event in July. WTS partnered with Gorjana, a jewelry retailer, from July 9 through July 16 where 19% of proceeds went to our WTS Scholarship Foundation. We are very happy to share that this fundraiser added another \$256.29 to our scholarship fund!



gorjana

Summer Programs

LinkedIn Workshop

By: Lisa Madsen

Professional Development Chair

SANDAG

On July 14, 2020, Krystn Macomber presented a LinkedIn Workshop to our Chapter. She discussed the importance of Social Media, provided tips on setting up a profile (including using professional photos and email addresses), and also provided information on advanced tools (including LinkedIn Elevate, LinkedIn Sales Navigator, and smartlink). Additionally, Krystn discussed using digital advertising to you and your firm's advantage. Thank you Krystn for taking the time to speak to our Chapter!



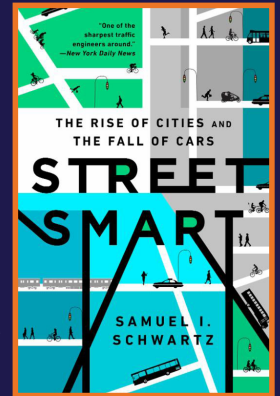
Summer Virtual Book Club

By: Mary E Holland

CDM Smith

Special guest, and author of Street Smart, Samuel I Schwartz inspired attendees at the August book club by sharing his wealth of knowledge and life experience as a transportation engineer. His message? It's time for active transportation to seize the day! And not mess up the opportunity to put people first in the long term as communities look at slow streets and community health in reaction to the pandemic. Fun fact: Sam Schwartz coined the term "gridlock" while working as a traffic engineer in New York City in the 1970s.

Sam talked about the history of transportation starting with the streetcar in its first implementation as a private enterprise to present day. He emphasized the importance of information to empower people to have a true choice in travel mode. Too often people are intimidated by take the bus or a bike because of questions like "how to I pay my fare, and how do I know when my stop is coming up?" or "what's the safest bike route to my destination, and will I be able to secure my bike when I get there?" In this age of technology, we have the ability to inform the travelling public regarding their travel mode choices.



SDSU Student Chapter Retreat

By: Dakota Adelpia

On a warm summer day in mid-July, the San Diego State University WTS officers checked into their Airbnb. Some officers, with their negative COVID tests in hand, carried in suitcases and groceries, while others began to rearrange the furniture so they could all sit together in the living room. A full agenda was prepared, and officers had high hopes for getting to know their future teammates. Although some of them had been involved as officers in the previous academic year, they were celebrating new positions, as well as welcoming newly elected officers. I was proud to be among them.

We knew that fall 2020 would be unlike any other semester that WTS SDSU had ever seen, and we were excited to put our brains together to come up with creative solutions to recruit new students, create quality content, and put on successful virtual events. Although some of us had never met in person before, by the end of that first night, we felt like we had known each other for years. Our first item on the agenda was an icebreaker of about 50 statements. If the statement was true, you would raise your hand. This included statements like "I have siblings," "I am from California," "I speak more than one language," and "My parents are still married." Originally we thought it would only take an hour, but we ended up talking, asking questions, and telling stories about almost every answer. We got through less than 20 questions, and talked for four hours! This set the tone for the rest of the weekend. Free time was spent chatting at the kitchen table over a cup of coffee, or an impromptu walk to the beach. Girls that had never met before this weekend were suddenly close friends, discussing their family lives and dreams for the future.

On Saturday our productivity surged as we planned out the topic of every event for fall 2020. We worked on our [website](#), and came up with virtual recruitment ideas. We talked about what we can do to better serve the needs of the transportation student body, and some of the proffered suggestions are currently being implemented. Our retreat, so far, has paid dividends, and we have started out the semester a lot stronger for it. We are now working to recruit lowerclassmen, and have already advertised our club directly to over twenty classes. Having done all this legwork, it wasn't much of a surprise that our first two virtual events have both been resounding successes. Our first event was about bridge design, from the perspective of two professional engineers that work in the industry. Our first guest speaker gave an overview of the different types of bridges, design processes, and construction methods used. Our second guest speaker spoke about a challenging project she managed, and discussed how to deal with unforeseen conditions and difficult constraints. Our most recent event was a Resume, Cover Letter, and Interview Skills workshop, with professionals from the City of San Diego, Fehr & Peers, Rick Engineering Company, Chen Ryan, and more. We are happy to report that participants enjoyed the workshop, with many staying afterwards to receive additional tips, ask questions about our chapter, and get more information on how to get involved with the SDSU Women's Transportation Seminar Student Chapter.

The SDSU WTS Student Chapter would like to thank the WTS San Diego County Chapter for their support and willingness to fund our officer retreat!

Imposter Syndrome

By: Lisa Madsen

Professional Development Chair
SANDAG

On August 26, 2020, Kirstin Skadberg conducted a presentation on Imposter Syndrome to our Chapter. Kirstin explained that Imposter Syndrome is about Mindset; commonly, at times we may feel that we don't deserve to be where we are (in career, in life, etc.). Kirstin then discussed milestones for overcoming these feelings: finding your area of focus, developing mastery practices, finding your audience, developing an action plan, and understanding your value. Thank you Kirstin for taking the time to speak to our Chapter!



SUBMIT A WOW!

Know an amazing woman co-worker, industry friend, or WTS member and think she deserves recognition? Well we do too!

- 1 Download our brief WOW nomination form at http://bit.ly/WTSSD_WOW
- 2 Fill out the nomination form
- 3 Email the form to wtssd.communications@gmail.com

Transportation YOU

By: Shannon Gonzales
Transportation You Mentor
PGH Wong Engineering Inc.

Every spring, the WTS San Diego chapter pairs one female young transportation professional and a high school female with an interest in transportation together as mentor and mentee. The two meet and chat regularly up until the multi-day summit in Washington, D.C. over the summer.

This year's San Diego mentee is Jennifer Overklift. She applied in her senior year of high school, passionate and excited about her future. We met for the first time over a video call. She talked about the colleges she was considering, and I shared information about the Mid-Coast Trolley Extension project I am working on. We immediately established an easy rapport.

When the Transportation YOU DC Summit came to a screeching halt due to COVID, we had to get a bit creative with the mentorship program. Jim Starling, Paula Ring, and I did what the transit community does best: we kept things moving. I did not want Jennifer to lose both her opportunity to visit Washington, D.C. as well as her relationship with a mentor. I know I personally would have valued the opportunity to connect with and learn from professionals in the industry while I was still in school. In this spirit, we decided that while she could not tour Capitol Hill, she could tour the Mid-Coast project. After all, the objective of Transportation YOU is two-fold: to introduce young women to careers in transportation and also to connect like-minded individuals to the resources and information they may need for a career in transportation. How many young adults can say they have witnessed a huge transit project in the making?

Since that first virtual meeting, Jennifer has started college (remotely) at UC Santa Cruz with a major in Environmental Science. She and I regularly email and video chat about what she hopes to learn and experience in school. We are both bibliophiles and are about to begin reading a historical fiction book together about a traveling library. I am excited to discuss the role transit plays within the book, and how these concepts may apply to today's reality. Over time, I strive to enlighten Jennifer about the vast learning and career opportunities within the transportation industry, and foster her potential as a bright young woman in this profession.



WTS Lunch and Learn

By: Mary E Westrum
Dokken Engineering

The first WTS Lunch & Learn program of 2020 was held VIRTUALLY on Tuesday, September 22nd. The Lunch & Learn series offers public sector employees and students opportunities to learn about best practices in the field from WTS San Diego's Corporate Sponsors. Attendees were treated to presentations from Julia Fruithandler from IBI Group who presented "Parametric Design for Better Decision-Making," Alison Townsend and Lillian Hames from CDM Smith discussed "Municipal Corridor Planning," and Karen Cormier and Dan Heller from T.Y. Lin International review "Lessons Learned in CM/GC Project Delivery."

Julia Fruithandler from IBI Group began her presentation by reviewing the definition of Parametric Design and an Algorithm. The development of transportation plans requires individuals to look at different components and data sources for guiding decision-making and helping address the travel needs of commuters and residents of a given area. IBI Group has developed a unique tool, the parametric algorithm, which allows planners to look at multiple parameters simultaneously, thus speeding up the analytic process and helping look at the interaction of these parameters with one another. Julia presented a few case studies to the Lunch and Learn attendees. The first case study investigated locations to place first responder stations to reach crash locations most efficiently. Another case study, completed for LA Metro, analyzed optimum electric bus charging stations utilizing existing parcels and reviewed the current transit connectivity/gaps for prioritizing corridors for development. Finally, Julia reviewed a project completed for Pharrall, which analyzed the wavelength of his music to develop architectural features for his building.

Alison, a Senior Planner, and Lillian, a Passenger Trail Program Manager, with CDM Smith shared a presentation on Corridor Planning and Design with the End in Mind. COVID-19 has upended the planning process. Questions such as is the long-range plan developed pre-pandemic still valid, what will be the long-term impacts of working from home, and when will traffic volumes and transit ridership return to a normal level are being asked across the nation. Alison and Lillian provided ways to shift, adapt, and move forward to meet the region's goals. The first step in the process is to regroup and move forward by reaching out to local employers and continuing to monitor traffic volumes and transit ridership. The next step is to develop a strategic approach by being adaptive, thinking big, and preparing for economic stimulus funds. Alison and Lillian provided project examples across the nation for completing corridor studies. Finally, they described steps for moving forward, which included revising the project criteria for implementation, reevaluating the current list of projects, prioritizing major projects, and evaluating smaller scale projects with the potential for rapid implementation.

The third and final presentation of the Lunch and Learn was from Karen and Dan of T.Y.Lin International. They discussed Lessons Learned in CM/GC Project Delivery. CM/GC stands for Construction Manager/General Contractor. To start the presentation, Dan reviewed the various project delivery methods, such as Design-Bid-Build, Design-Build, PPP, and CM@R and CM/GC. He reviewed the schedule, early cost precision, cost control, risk allocation, and owner input/involvement/control of utilizing these project delivery methods. Based on T.Y.Lin's experience working on the following CM/GC projects, Mid-Coast, I-5 North Coast, and the City of LA's Sixth Street Bridge, they were able to identify lessons learned when implementing this project delivery method: A CM/GC contract must be well-written, a Constructability Review should be completed, clear specifications are required, and the Independent Cost Estimate should evaluate subcontractor costs. For example, one should not assume a historical price based on quantities and take for granted a subcontractor can perform the work for that price. SBEs and DBEs need assistance to perform and it must be considered in the cost and schedule assumptions. Finally, time and budget should be allocated for the risk register creation and maintenance.

Thank you to our speakers! The next Lunch and Learn program will continue in fall 2020.

2020 ANNUAL AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIP DINNER

Thursday, September 17, 2020
(Virtual Event)
By: Annie Merritt
WTS Communications Volunteer
Jacobs

As transportation professionals, we at WTS actively participate in our community's transportation systems. Our mission is to promote women to strive for their career goals and provide them with the tools to achieve it, and most importantly, we promote diversity in the transportation industry by making sure our transportation system works for everyone. "It is our philosophy that despite challenges and especially during times of divisiveness, we must come together and continue to celebrate excellence, hard work, collaboration, and innovation," said Brianna Pilkinton, WTS SD County Chapter President. To resonate with our Chapter President's vision, in this year's WTS San Diego's Annual Awards and Scholarship event, we offer a virtual watch party to allow us to come together to recognize and celebrate the achievements, and to do so safely in our own homes.

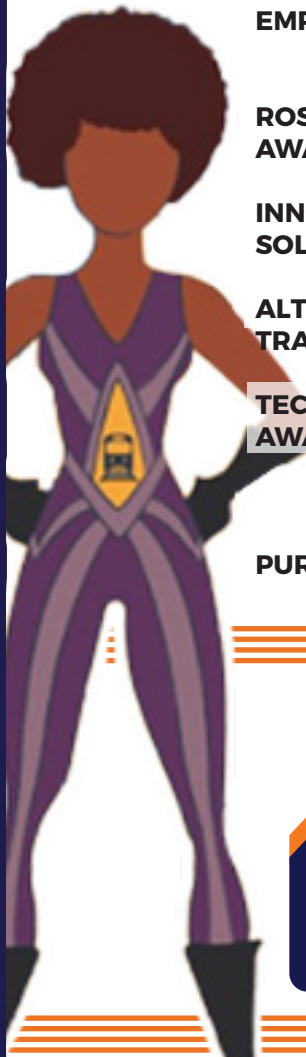
2020 WTS San Diego Award Recipients

WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD	COLEEN CLEMENTSON SANDAG
MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD	SEANA URQUHART CALTRANS, DISTRICT 11
HONORABLE RAY LAHOOD AWARD	CLARK FERNON T.Y. LIN INTERNATIONAL
EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD	SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM (MTS)
ROSA PARKS DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP AWARD	TUERE FA'AOLA SANDAG
INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS AWARD	MILITARY MULTIMODAL ACCESS STRATEGY PROJECT
ALTERNATIVE MODES & ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AWARD	COSTAL RAIL TRAIL PROJECT IN ENCINITAS
TECHNOLOGY FOR TRANSPORTATION AWARD	IMPACTS OF A NARROW-AUTOMATED VEHICLE EXCLUSION LANE ON AN EXISTING SMART FREEWAY: A TRAFFIC SIMULATION APPROACH
PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE AWARD	LISA MADSEN SANDAG

SHINING THROUGH



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Featured Woman Engineer: Annie Aguilar

By: Annie Merritt

WTS Communications Volunteer
Jacobs

We at WTS SD are honored to have the opportunity to feature Annie Aguilar of San Dieguito Engineering (SDE) in our Quarter 3 Newsletter.

Annie Aguilar is the CEO of the San Dieguito Engineering, a civil engineering land development company, and has been serving this role since 2011. Miss Aguilar graduated from University of California, San Diego, with a B.S. degree in Structural Engineering, and started her career working at John A. Martin & Associates as a field structural engineer. In 1995, Miss Aguilar joined the Peace Corps and served as a water engineer providing designs for water systems for rural communities in Honduras, Central America, before returning to the States and joined SDE in 2000.

At the beginning of Miss Aguilar's career in SDE, she had the opportunity to learn land development, surveying, and became a licensed Professional Engineer with the emphasis in hydraulics. In 2006, Miss Aguilar decided to take on a challenge in her career. She approached the owner of the company about branching out in the public sector side of business and was given a small budget to start building the network. In 2009, Miss Aguilar started to gain some traction in the airport projects and started her public side of work, including working with Miss Sunnie House to pursue a pipeline project. In 2011, Miss Aguilar became a woman owned business owner, when she became the CEO of the company.

When asked about the most challenging aspect of moving from the technical side to the business side, Miss Aguilar said transitioning amongst her peers was one of her biggest challenges. "At one point you are colleagues, then next thing you know, you're their boss. Gaining respect from your peer as you get promoted can be challenging. As I became a mentor, I feel the most important qualities are listening, sharing experiences, and providing encouragement during periods of growth." Another challenge Miss Aguilar had to overcome was to educate herself as she took on the ownership role. "I felt that I needed to grow and learn, so I took classes. There was an opportunity for me to take the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Business Program and I did." The result was proven beneficial, as SDE was awarded SBA Woman Owned Small Business of the Year in 2014, the APWA Project of the Year in 2016, for its SDG&E Pipeline Safety Enhancement Plan Project, and the Small Business Administration Champion Award in 2020. Miss Aguilar was also the 2016 APWA Award recipient for Outstanding Service in the Private Sector and San Diego Business Journal's Top Woman-Owned Business.

In my interview with Miss Aguilar, I asked Miss Aguilar to provide some words of wisdom, to resonate the theme in this year's WTS San Diego County Annual Awards & Scholarship Event, "Shining Through," Miss Aguilar said "Be the best you can be, and do not be intimidated to speak up. Follow your intuition and act on your instinct." In the midst of coping with the pandemic, Miss Aguilar also offered a very valuable piece of advice, "We have to be flexible, open-minded, and be positive. The government have been changing the way we do business when they feel it's the right way to operate. Instead of letting the negativity set in, when you have doubts, step away from it. I talk to other business owners and surround myself with people that are not doom and gloom, the people that are problem solvers."

Thank you again, Miss Aguilar, for being a woman leader in the Transportation Industry, for continuing to set a stellar example for our future young engineers, and congratulations for winning the Small Business Administration Champion Award! We wish you a continued success in the Transportation Sector!



Progress with resiliency in mind.

Safe, reliable and environmentally sustainable infrastructure is a must for organizations in California and around the globe. See how we're making resiliency a reality at burnsmcd.com/WTSSanDiego20.

We're proud to support WTS San Diego's mission of advancing women in the transportation industry.

BURNS  **MCDONNELL**

CREATE AMAZING.

Offices Worldwide



WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

HOW ARE YOU WORKING FROM HOME?



HOW ARE YOU SOCIAL DISTANCING?



1

On your Instagram or Facebook account, **post a picture** of how you are working from home or social distancing yourself!

2

Tag **@wts_sandiego!**
Use the hashtags **#wtssdwfh** and **#wtssdsocialdistancing**

OR

Submit a picture and caption to **@wts_sandiego** and we will post it for you!



JOIN WTS TODAY!



What is WTS?

Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) is an international organization dedicated to building the future of transportation through the global advancement of women. With nearly 6,000 members, including both women and men, WTS is turning the glass ceiling into a career portal through its professional programs, networking opportunities, and unparalleled access to industry the government leaders.

Sign up [here](#) or download [flier](#) for more details!

Why join WTS?

- Excellent networking opportunities during our programs at lower rates than non-members
- "Members Only" social events throughout the year at no cost
- Access to WTS International's members directory
- Professional development through our programs offered only to members
- Exclusive access to the online WTS Knowledge Lab*
- Become a mentor and/or mentee through our Mentorship Program
- Raffle drawings for members throughout the year