



Advancing women Advancing transportation

> Heart of Texas

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear WTS Members, Supporters and Friends,

I hope this letter finds you all well and enjoying the holiday season.

What a year 2020 has been! And while I know we are all looking forward to the new beginnings and a renewed sense of hope that a new year brings, before we head into 2021,

we would like to share with you some highlights from the WTS Heart of Texas (HOT) Chapter over the past couple of months.

In September, we received our 501c3 IRS exemption status for the WTS Heart of Texas Foundation, marking a milestone for our chapter which will afford us additional opportunities to fundraise for our local Friends of WTS HOT Chapter Scholarships and our WTS Transportation Policy Fellowship program.

In September, we also held our 16th Annual Gala for the first time in a virtual setting to award some very deserving scholarships and recognize some shining stars in the transportation industry. And while we certainly missed seeing everyone in person, we had a great turnout and another record setting year of fundraising for our scholarship programs.

October brought another first, with our Professional Development Seminar day in a virtual format. We had some great speakers volunteer their time and share their expertise as we looked at current and future implications from COVID-19 on our industry.

As you may recall, we continued our virtual luncheons for September, October, and November. And we have summarized those within this newsletter.

We also continued our WTS Heart of Texas Transportation Policy Fellowship with Mayor Adler's office at the City of Austin. A bio for our newest fellow, Alyssa Hedge, is also featured in this issue.

As my Presidency draws to a close, I would like to give thanks to the many groups and individuals who each played an integral role in the success of our chapter over the past two years.

President's Letter continued on the next page...

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

COMMUNICATIONS Brianna Frey

Associate Planner Asakura Robinson

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP Caitlin D'Alton

Transit Enhancement Program Manager, City of Austin

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Manager of Geotechnical Engineering, Raba Kistner

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Mobility and Innovation Strategist Milligan Partners LLC

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Supervising Traffic Manager WSP USA

REGIONAL COUNCIL Melanie Norrell

Director of Business Development AECOM

SCHOLARSHIP CHAIRS Adeliza Ramirez, PE

Engineer Volkert, Inc

STUDENT LIAISON CHAIR Natalia Zuniga-Garcia

Graduate Student UT Austin

TRANSPORTATION YOU CHAIR Mary Jo Galindo

Senior Archaeologist Galindo Environmental Consulting, LLC







President's Letter continued...

To our Membership – thank you for the sincere privilege of allowing me the opportunity to serve you and the chapter as your President for the past two years. It has truly been an honor and changed my life in ways I never imagined.

To our sister chapters in the Southwest Region and across the country – I am so blessed to have collaborated with you all and gained so many new friends.

To our Corporate Partners, Agency Affiliates, and donors – thank you for your generosity and support! Without you, we would not be able to fulfill all the networking, programming, scholarships and mentoring opportunities we offer. You are truly making impacts in the lives of young women and in our industry.

To Past Presidents Lindsay Wood, Odette Tan, Lisa-Loftus Otway, Melinda Clary-Jensen, and Mitzi Ellison – thank you for your leadership, mentorship, and stewardship in service of the organization and creating a strong foundation from which our chapter can stand as we weather COVID-19.

And to the HOT Chapter Executive Board, Committee Chairs, and volunteers – your grit, tenacity, flexibility, and innovation over the past year has been inspiring. I am so proud of each and every single one of you for turning on a dime and finding new ways to continue providing valuable programs and benefits for our members and industry during these unprecedented times. The success of a leader is inherently attributable to the people they surround themselves with and depend upon – and I cannot imagine a finer group of people to have had in my corner!

As we move into 2021, we will officially transition to our new WTS HOT Chapter Board of Directors for 2021-2022 during our Annual Business meeting on January 20th in a virtual setting. Congratulations to our incoming Executive Board: President Ashley Williams with the Center for Transportation Research at UT, Vice President Tonia Norman with TxDOT Legislative Affairs Division, Secretary Laura Friello with Garver and Treasurer Hong-Ting Chen with Atkins. I know the chapter is in fantastic hands and I am looking forward to seeing what our new Board of Directors has in store for you all!

Wishing you all good health, peace, joy and prosperity in the New Year and I look forward to seeing you in person soon during 2021!

All the best,

Jackie



CORPORATE SPONSOR HIGHLIGHT









Get to know a few of LJA Engineering's local moms in transportation.

ALONDRA QUEZADA, EIT

Graduate Engineer

Age: 34

Children: 1, 13 months

Superpower: Entertaining baby during virtual work meetings and having

dinner ready by 6pm

I am a high-spirited Latina with 12 years' experience in transportation. Graduated in 2008 with a Bachelors in Civil Engineering. I am the first college graduate in my family. I enjoy teaching teenagers that they can accomplish their goals if they work hard and never give up. I enjoy traveling and snowboarding.

Why become an engineer?

I took several career assessments in high school and they all had engineering as the #1 career choice since I was really good at math and critical thinking. I did some research and I saw it as a challenge especially since I couldn't find many women that were engineers (at the time). I decided to give it a try and enrolled as a Civil Engineer. I enjoyed it a lot, especially my surveying class, so I decided to stick with it. The next 4 years flew by and before I knew it I was graduating as a Civil Engineer.

How does working at LJA make your work/life balance better?

LJA really respects work/life balance and is very flexible. I am not scared to ask for things that I feel will help me be a mom and more productive at work. For example, I asked for a laptop to work from home a few days a week, before the pandemic, and LJA was very positive and gave me a laptop to work remotely.

What is your best mom tip for working moms?

Surround yourself with positive people. Be honest and open with your boss.

CASEY HOCHSCHILD, PE

Project Manager

Age: 35

Children: 3 kids, 4 and 3 years, 3 months, and our 7 year old dog Superpower: Nursing! After 3 kids, I am finally enjoying the journey and have even been able to donate extra milk to a hospital milk bank.

I am an 8-year professional engineer, currently 3 months into maternity leave with my 3rd baby. I have worked in the civil engineering field in one aspect or another for more than 15 years. I work at LJA Engineering as a project engineer with a focus on Drainage Design and Hydraulic Studies. My hobbies include, spending as much time outside with the kids as possible, cooking and listening to podcasts.

Why become an engineer?

My parents work in the industry as a Registered Professional Land Surveyor (RPLS) and Draftsman. They enjoyed their work and I got to help/work with them and grew to enjoy it as well.

How does working at LJA make your work/life balance better?

FLEXIBILITY! LJA has been so understanding and flexible with me. They have made my journey into parenthood part of my career path. From allowing me extended maternity leaves (I took my second maternity leave 9 months after returning to work from my first 6-month maternity leave) as well as, helping me transfer office locations and providing me with a comfortable place to pump at work.

What is your best mom tip for working moms?

You have to be clear with what you need out of your role/company so you can be both a good employee and mother. It is very VERY easy to get overwhelmed, but I've found if you ask for what you need, more often than not, your supervisor (or spouse) will work for and with you.

GRETCHEN ZUVANICH, PE

Project Engineer

Age: 36

Children: 1, 13 months

Superpower: Getting the vegetables eaten; overpacking/uber-boyscout levels of preparedness

I am a Professional Engineer who likes to run, write, do yoga, and rock climb. I have one baby girl, 13 months old, who is slowly letting me do all those things again! As a Project Engineer at LJA Engineering, I specialize in Transportation and Drainage Engineering Design.

Why become an engineer?

I wanted to be an engineer so I could have a positive physical effect on the world around me.

How does working at LJA make your work/life balance better?

LJA offered me flexibility in my schedule and my workplace so I could continue doing my job and still be there when my daughter as she started crawling, or needed comfort after falling down.

What is your best mom tip for working moms?

Look into baby-led feeding! When you make your food with the intent to share it with the baby, it means you're spending some quality time with her, and also eating well instead of grabbing a fast, not-so-healthy bite in your fleeting free time.



LJA.COM









SHARE THE NEWS! APPLY HERE!



2021 PROGRAMS SCHEDULE

Until it is safe to return to in-person events, the WTS HOT Chapter monthly luncheons will remain virtual.

- 1/20/2021
- 7/21/2021
- 2/17/2021
- 8/18/2021
- 3/17/2021
- 9/15/2021
- 4/21/20215
- 10/20/2021
- 5/19/2021
- 11/17/2021
- 6/16/2021

Thank you for your dedication and

feedback as we continue to enhance our

luncheon schedule, speakers, and topics.

FALL 2020 WTS TRANSPORTATION POLICY FELLOW



ALYSSA HEDGE

WTS HOT Chapter desires to lift strong women up, and give praise when it's due! Alyssa Hedge is our Fall 2020 WTS Transportation Policy Fellow. In the short time she has served in the City of Austin Mayor's office, Alyssa has covered many policy and program issues, and contributed to research, meetings, and presentations. Below is a summary of her work thus far:

- CAMPO: Alyssa has gained an understanding of transportation planning and funding, and now understands their jurisdiction.
- 1-35 Capitol Expressway Project: Alyssa is coordinating with various jurisdictions and agencies while the public comment period remains open.
- Street Impact Fee: Alyssa has followed the updated program through City Council and the public process.
- Transit Oriented Development: Alyssa has begun drafting resolutions regarding future development around transit stations.
- Transit Planning in general: Alyssa has seen the intersection of departments, agencies, and stakeholders working on transit challenges and solutions.
- Local politics: Alyssa has been navigating political waters.

We look forward to seeing where Alyssa takes this experience and leverages the new skills she's learned!





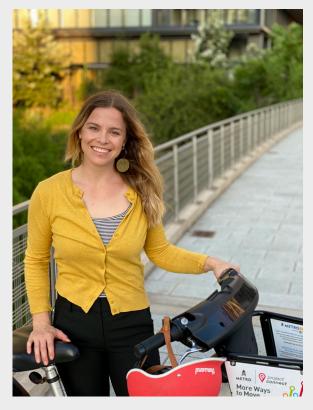


SAVE THE DATE: JANUARY 20, 2020 WTS HOT Chapter Annual Business Meeting

Our board will provide a virtual presentation on our Year in Review for 2020, as well as a look ahead to 2021. If you are not yet a member of the Heart of Texas Chapter, this is a great opportunity to get a glimpse of our organization! If you are a member, this is a chance to meet our 2021 honorary members, the 2021 board members and committee chairs, and see what's in store for the coming year!

Stay tuned for our Honorary Members announcement, coming soon!

CORPORATE SPONSOR SPOTLIGHTS



Kimmy Feldbauer

Lara Poloni

WTS HOT Chapter Member Kimmy Feldbauer is a passionate transit planner in AECOM's Austin office who works with Capital Metro as well as other major transit agencies in Arizona and Utah. As the Deputy Project Manager on Project Connect's Orange Line light rail, Kimmy manages technical deliverables and serves as a key liaison for stakeholder engagement connected to project funding and implementation. She is very excited to continue her work on this transformational project for the City of Austin as it moves into future design and construction. Kimmy also supported a pilot mentorship program for South Central Light Rail in Phoenix, where high school students from the project's community worked with planning and design teams, exposing them to STEM careers in the public and private sector. She is working with other transit clients to implement similar programs into their projects.

On a global scale, AECOM named Lara Poloni as its new President in June of 2020. Lara is passionate about AECOM's equity, diversity & inclusion strategy, and she supports leadership development initiatives that aim to cultivate more female talent inside the company's management pipeline. The company sponsors an AECOM Steering Committee for Inclusion & Diversity, on which Kimmy proudly serves as a member, representing AECOM's local female voices here in Texas. AECOM's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion enables us to better anticipate our client's needs, understand the challenges facing the communities we serve, drive innovation that propels our industry forward and realize our purpose of delivering a better world. Learn more on how we thrive at www. aecom.com/equity-diversity-inclusion.









SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON

Coping with COVID-19 Tips for Combating Anxiety During Uncertain Times

During our September virtual luncheon we had an excellent presentation by Melissa Bentley on coping with anxiety. Melissa left us with good tips and tools on how to cope with pandemic anxiety issues being faced by so many of us.

Melissa Bentley, LPC, PMH-C



OCTOBER LUNCHEON

Communicate Effectively in a Virtual World Tips for Virtual Shortlist Presentations

In October we had a very dynamic luncheon event by Joey Asher from Speechworks. The audience had an opportunity to learn keys to delivering a message well in a virtual world and how to answer questions well in a virtual world.

Joey Asher



NOVEMBER LUNCHEON

A Legislative Forecast for Transportation

We had an excellent November virtual luncheon with Texas House Representative Celia Israel. The audience got an update on the transportation budget and how the state can bring in more money for transportation projects.

Texas House Representative Celia Israel



DECEMBER HAPPY HOUR

Virtual Happy Hour encourages charity giving

Our annual December Ugly Sweater Holiday Party was held virtually this year. Although not the same as an in-person festive fiesta, our Membership Chair, Yvonne Garica, encouraged participation with two contests:

- Ugly Holiday Sweater Contest
- Most Festive Holiday Beverage

Participants were also encouraged to donate to the following charitable organizations. It's not too late to spread holiday cheer to those in need!

- Toy for Tots
- Brown Santa
- Blue Santa
- Coats for Kids
- Jack Brown Cleaners- drop off your coat(s)!







WTS HOT CHAPTER 16TH ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS GALA

The virtual event raised over \$40,000! Thanks all!

WTS hosted the 16th Annual Scholarship and Awards Gala virtually on September 24, 2020 with more than 200 members and nonmembers in attendance! The event celebrated the HOT chapter's scholarship recipients and chapter award winners. It also featured a keynote speech by Mayor Adler and the inaugural WTS HOT Chapter Fellows, followed by a live DJ set for a virtual dance party. An online silent auction boasted more than 60 items. The event and silent auction raised nearly \$40,000 for local scholarships. Huge thank you once again to those who attended or contributed to the event!









THANK YOU, BRITTANI KAIM, FOR ORGANIZING A WELL RUN AND SUCCESSFUL EVENT!



WTS HOT STUDENT CHAPTER UPDATE

The student members caught up at a socially distanced picnic!



- Date: Sunday, November 15th, 2020
- Time: 5 PM 7 PM
- Location: Eastwood Park
- Food provided: Tacos from Taco Deli
- **Number of attendees**: About 20 students and 3 professors (Dr. Kara Kockelman, Dr. Stephen Boyles, and Dr. Randy Machemehl)
- All the safety protocols were followed including social distancing and masks!!



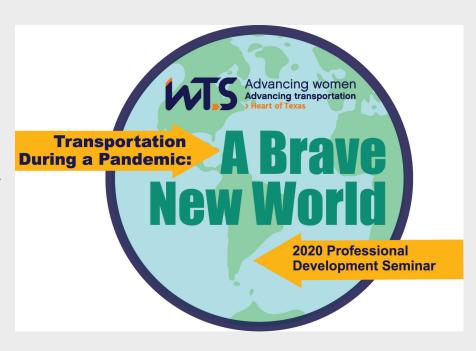






PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR

The 13th Annual Professional Development
Seminar was held on October 23, 2020 as a half
day virtual event, and featured two panels and
a keynote address from Senior Vice President of
Global Technology & Innovation at the Greater
Austin Chamber, Leigh Christie. The Heart of Texas
Chapter President, Jackie Sartor, moderated the first
half of the seminar, discussing how public agencies
prioritize projects and programs with limited
resources as a result of the pandemic. FHWA's Al
Alonzi facilitated discussions during the second half
of the seminar around how COVID-19 and social
justice profests forced rapid policy shifts in order



to move forward with our "new normal." Thank you to our speakers from CapMetro,TxDOT, Williamson County, Austin Chamber of Commerce, Metropolitan Council in MN, City of Austin, and HEB!

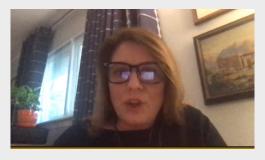
KEYNOTE

Title: Lessons Learned in Crisis

Management

Speaker: Leigh Christie (Greater Austin

Chamber)



MODERATOR

Thank you for moderating!

Name: Al Alonzi (FHWA)

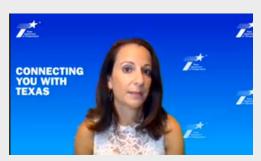


PANEL 1

Title: Moving Forward with Transportation: Bracing for Impact



Dottie Watkins (Capital Metro)



Marisabel Ramthun (TxDOT)



Bob Daigh (Williamson County)

PANEL 2

Title: Transportation Opportunities in a Crisis

Speakers:



Gerri Sutton (Metropolitan Council - Twin Cities MPO)



Council Member Ann Kitchen (City of Austin)



Bill Purvis (HEB)







HELP US WELCOME OUR NEW BOARD CHAIRS!



KAT STREFF



JANELLE CAREY



HONG-TING CHEN

RECOGNITIONS CHAIR

Kat Streff serves as an Assistant Project Manager for Construction Materials, Geotechnical, and **Environmental Engineering** services in Kleinfelder's Austin office. Kat attended her first WTS meeting in January 2020 and immediately became a member, jumping into volunteering with preparations and WTS' #GirlDayUT event. Kat is excited to serve in her new role as Recognitions Chair and for the opportunity to help elevate those working towards advancing the transportation industry.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

Janelle Carey has joined HNTB Corporation, enhancing the firm's transportation planning expertise in Central and South Texas. Ms. Carey has over 11 years of industry experience, working with planning, transit, and community engagement, through supporting critical processes for successful project delivery, including municipal interdepartmental decision making, key stakeholder buyin, and strategic community involvement implementation. Most recently serving as a transportation planner for the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System. As a member of HNTB's Transit and Rail Group, Ms. Carey works across the country with transit agencies, and locally with Texas Department of Transportation, Capital Metro and the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

TREASURER

Ms. Chen is a tolls project analyst within Atkins' national tolls division. She has nine years of experience in project oversight, coordination, scheduling, risk management, project financial cost analysis, and project management support for various projects/ clients including Florida's Next Generation Statewide Traveler Information Service (FLATIS) - FL511, and the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA). Her additional experiences also include quality control/quality assurance, configuration management, and the review of contract document deliverable.

CORPORATE SPONSOR HIGHLIGHTS







Our Voice Is Our Future



"A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves." - Lao Tzu



SARAH **CALFEE**

"Leadership is not about being in charge. Leadership is about taking care of those in your charge." - Simon Sinek



MARIA CASTANON

"Leadership to me means supporting others to make them more effective, taking ownership of something, and not being afraid to make the wrong decision."



DIPPEL

"Blaze trails but always shine a light and hold out a hand for those who are following."



CHRISTEN ESCHBERGER

"My favorite aspect of leadership is coaching and developing others, encouraging them to reach their full potential."



CRYSTAL **HANSEN**

"A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others." - Douglas MacArthur



HEATH

"The greatest gift of being a leader is the ability to guide and empower other women to soar in whatever they do. Lead by example, not just words."



HEJL

"Accept challenging assignments, even if you are scared. Look at them as an opportunity to shine."



SUMMER LAWTON

"Find the courage to create your own happiness and share it with others. The light of your joy will be reflected and burn even brighter."



REAVEY

"I value the privilege and opportunity to champion, support, challenge and elevate others to achieve their highest potential and take great enjoyment in recognizing their successes."



SCHIETINGER

"When I started at HNTB, my mentors were all men (and all fantastic). 30 years later, I'm proud that young professionals have both men and women as mentors in our organization's leadership."



SHANDRIAN **UGWUOKE**

"It means a lot be able to develop others and to help shape the future of our industry."



KATE WILDER

"Leadership is a combination of contributing to and celebrating the success of my fellow women in leadership roles as well as doing my part to help develop our future leaders."



LINDSAY WOOD

"At a time when the pressures of working, parenting (in some cases, homeschooling), and running a household intersect and overlap more than ever, it is critical to have leaders that understand the challenges many people are facing."



The HNTB Companies Infrastructure Solutions

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HNTB's Austin Women in Leadership: Delivering Extraordinary Value







UPCOMING: JANUARY

Chapter Recognitions Awards

It's that time of year again! Voting for individuals and organizations for the following categories will take place in January:

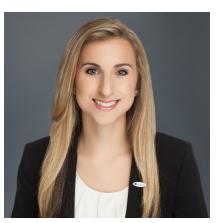
- Woman of the Year
- Member of the Year
- Man of the Year
- Employer of the Year
- Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership
- Innovative Transportation Solutions

MEMBER UPDATE

Member	Employer
Renee Jackman	HDR
Sharon Hamilton	Atlas Design Services
Liz Grindstaff	Freese & Nichols, Inc.
Ashley Inman	Spire Consulting Group, LLC
Karen Kalter	University of Texas at Austin
Leela Sushitha	Chinnakotla
Alondra Quezada	UA Engineering, Inc.
Heidi Corcoran	Milligan Partners

CORPORATE SPONSOR SPOTLIGHTS





Ms. Julia Colman, P.E., has five years of experience leading a variety of projects involving major and minor roadway corridors. Julia has extensive experience in the development of corridor analyses, traffic impact analyses, circulation plans, signal warrant studies, intersection and transportation system operation analyses, bicycle and pedestrian assessments, and roadway schematics as required by the projects.

Julia has performed Vissim microsimulation on multiple major highway corridors including I-35 (Austin), I-410 (San Antonio), SH 71 (Austin), I-35E (Dallas), and US 59/69 (Houston). She has developed traffic

projections for these analyses using a variety of data and methodologies. Julia is knowledgeable in the development of traffic projections in accordance with TPP's Standard Operating Procedures and is experienced in data analysis including review and application of historical traffic data, demographic data, travel demand models, and local knowledge of the facilities. Additionally, Julia has experience working with agencies and stakeholders to meet project's needs. She has also developed innovative solutions using a variety of tools such as Vissim, Synchro, SIDRA, HCS, TransModeler, and FHWA CAP-X.

As a WTS mentee, Julia was paired with a senior transportation manager. Julia met with her mentor monthly and gained insight on the transportation industry. Julia also participated in WTS group events including leadership, business, and networking training.



2020 CORPORATE & AGENCY PARTNERS





















LOCHNER Jacobs



























































DBE =























=Agency Affiliates=







