

WTS-LA Provides a Girl's Guide to Transportation Futures

COMMITTEE REPORT



Dr. Amy Shimshon-Santo (WTS-LA Adopt-A-School Chair and Claremont Graduate University Professor), Photos © John Livzey, 2015

Infrastructure is invisible to most people. But there is one particular group that knows even less about it. And that is exactly who newly appointed WTS-LA Adopt-A-School Chair and Claremont Graduate University Professor Dr. Amy Shimshon-Santo wants to reach. At the August 6 WTS-LA breakfast for new Metro CEO Phil Washington, Shimshon-Santo spoke about the committee and its vital mission.

“We’re here to build the future of transportation through the global advancement of women. But every woman was once a girl. And many girls are completely unaware of what college or a career in transportation might be like. Most girls in LA County public schools haven’t even met anyone who does what we do for work. Most of them don’t know that transportation is a career, even though they use our services everyday to get around.” That is why the Adopt-A-School program is so important.

“The Adopt-A-School program uplifts the lives of girls and young women through mentorship, job shadowing, internships, site visits, and public speaking. We offer college and career guidance and we provide scholarships for youth and externships for educators.”

Looking to build on the work of previous committees, Shimshon-Santo plans to expand the committee’s reach and offerings in the coming year. Though she doesn’t necessarily see her mission as sacred, it’s pretty close.

“At present, 23 percent of our city residents are 18 or under and approximately half of that group is female. So there is a large population out there we need to reach. And volunteering even just a few hours this year might help us all gain a nuanced understanding of mobility from youth perspectives and help us better serve that group, which in turn helps the transportation industry and society and fulfills WTS-LA’s mission.





“Our members can be the spark that lights the flame of a girl’s imagination. Seeing *is* believing, particularly for these girls. Seeing our members in action will help girls believe that they can do it too. They’ll learn that high school is worth the effort and that college is possible. They’ll learn that they, too, can make a difference through a career in transportation.”

Shimshon-Santo encourages anyone who wants to give a girl a gift of a lifetime to join the Adopt-A-School Committee. “Access to you and your

world *can* change a girl’s life.” For more information about the committee and its events, please contact Shimshon-Santo.

Infrastructure is invisible to most people, but it is particularly difficult for many young women to see it and the career possibilities it engenders. Through her work with the WTS-LA Adopt-A-School Committee, Dr. Amy Shimshon-Santo seeks to change that.