

The How Jones Tutorial: Stacey Jones Remembers Lessons Earned

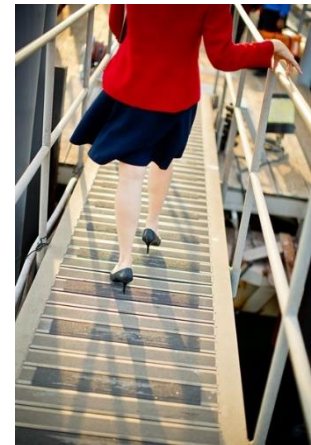
PRESIDENTS 30TH ANNIVERSARY SERIES



Stacey Jones (CH2M Hill Vice President), Photos © John Livzey, 2016

CH2M Hill vice president Stacey Jones believes that serving as WTS-LA president provides the best on-the-job leadership training anyone can have.

“The single greatest advantage to being WTS-LA president is embracing the opportunity to serve in a leadership position. And that was a lesson I learned very quickly. I had served in other board positions prior to accepting the vice presidency in 1993. But two months into her term, the then-president took a job back East. So everyone turned to me. I had a choice to make; I chose to embrace the opportunity. And at that point in my career, that experience was absolutely pivotal. I was able to make a positive contribution and work with a really talented, results-driven board. But seizing the opportunity was key. You don’t have to be afraid. You don’t have to know everything. You just have to embrace the opportunity, empower those around you and go for it.” Embrace it she did. But the first year of her presidency was anything but standard. That year, WTS-LA hosted the 1993 WTS national conference in downtown Los Angeles, a serious test for a veteran leader. And the challenges were even greater than she expected. But for her, the crucible provided the perfect professional training ground.



“As president, you have the luxury of turning to your board to do much of the planning. In fact, I did much more groundwork when WTS-LA hosted the 2001 national conference in Long Beach, when I was programs chair. But when I was president, I was ultimately responsible for the 1993 conference. So I made the tough decisions when I had to and delegated when I thought it was best. And what I learned through that experience I can boil down to two quotes. Jack Welch said, ‘Control your own destiny or someone else will.’ And Sheryl Sandberg said, ‘The more women help one another, the more we help ourselves. Acting like a coalition truly does produce results.’ Those two concepts are exactly what WTS-LA stands for at its heart. That really resonated with me and guided me in my decision making.”

Today Jones applies those lessons in her role at CH2M Hill. A recognized maritime expert—she served for 24 years at the Port of Los Angeles in numerous roles including Deputy Director of Development and Chief Harbor Engineer—Jones combines her depth and breadth of port knowledge with her exemplary

leadership and management skills to help make CH2M Hill a leader in the field. But in addition to her expertise, there is a passion.



“It was really important for me in my profession that I became known as someone to be counted on, someone who was results oriented. Being WTS-LA president gave me exposure in how to do that and exposure as someone who had done it. From introducing VIP speakers to handling meetings to making popular and unpopular decisions, the aggregate of experiences gave me that exposure. But if there was any one thing I would highlight, it is my belief in advancing the careers of women in transportation by starting with students, particularly high school students. So I really focused on the Adopt-A-School program and taking it to a much higher level than it was before I got there.

“For example, I strongly encouraged Cabrillo High School in Long Beach to participate and be ‘adopted.’ We set up tours. We participated in their career days. And later, when Carol Rowen, then Commissioner at the Port of Los Angeles, started the International Trade Education Program (ITEP) at Banning High School, I got involved there, too. And I still am involved; I was chair of ITEP last year. They’re growing by leaps and bounds. So even though there was quite a bit going on when I was president, I think people will remember that I was most passionate about educating young women and making them aware of the opportunities in transportation. But that also speaks to the benefits of being WTS-LA president. I was able to find and act on my passion while learning and practicing leadership.