

This Book Gives a Good Read on the Future



*Todd Nguyen (Caltrans, WTS-LA TRB Committee Chair) and Amanda Heinke (Fehr & Peers, WTS-LA President)
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A good book can make you look at the world differently. A great book can make the world look differently at you. The WTS-LA Transportation Résumé Book (TRB) produced by WTS-LA TRB Committee chair Todd Nguyen of Caltrans connects graduating transportation students with prospective employers who are WTS-LA corporate partners. And by every account, the TRB makes these employers look seriously at these emerging transportation professionals.

Distributed exclusively to WTS-LA corporate partners, the TRB contains résumés from top graduating undergraduate and graduate students in Southern California colleges and universities. This year, the TRB featured 120 résumés—a record number from a diverse pool of schools including Cal Poly Pomona, CSUN, UCLA, USC, CSUF, Pitzer College, CSULB, and CSULA. Gaining an invaluable first look at tomorrow's transportation professionals before anyone else, WTS-LA corporate partners prize the TRB as much as its student participants do.

"I know how valuable the TRB is for firms," explains AECOM planning manager and WTS-LA Mentorship chair Veronica Siranosian. "We at AECOM have hired talented transportation planners from the TRB. And they have been a great addition to our team."

"The TRB is one of the most important benefits of being a WTS-LA corporate partner," adds WTS-LA Corporate Partner chair Dan Beal. "Firms and agencies have access to graduating students and emerging professionals just entering their transportation careers. And the transportation experts of tomorrow gain access to dozens of potential employers. It's a win-win for everyone."



Nguyen found a way to make a great book even better. He organized the TRB Mixer, an April 21 event that brought together 37 students from the TRB and WTS-LA corporate partners including Access Services (right), AECOM, Michael Baker International, Caltrans, CH2M, Fehr & Peers, HDR, ICF, Iteris,



Jacobs, Metro, Morgner Construction, Myers & Sons, STV, and WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff. Students and WTS-LA corporate partners were welcomed by WTS-LA president and Fehr & Peers transportation planner Amanda Heinke. Sharing her experience about the student-to-employee transition, she also encouraged students to “own” the networking and professional experiences afforded them, like the mixer. But the mixer was more than a simple networking get together. In many ways it was a comprehensive extension of the TRB.

“The mixer provided a great opportunity to speak one-on-one with potential candidates, answer their questions, and learn more about their long-term goals,” adds Siranosian. “Networking can be challenging for many recent graduates. The TRB mixer provided an intimate and fun environment to meet transportation students, share experiences, and learn more about potential candidates.”



“The TRB mixer was a well-organized, very interactive event,” explains Jacobs project manager Charlene Palmer. “The caliber of top college candidates was really impressive. The face-to-face discussions with students allowed us, as potential employers, to gain an early glimpse into their academic accomplishments, work experience, career plans, and goals.” Iteris assistant transportation planner Fred Chang thought “it was a very successful event and everyone I met at the mixer was professional and well-prepared. I personally enjoyed it, as I was able to share my experience with students; I was in their shoes this time last year. And in representing Iteris, we were very glad to be able to meet these highly qualified candidates and hopefully hire some of them to be part of our team.”

But corporate partners were not the only parties that viewed the mixer was a tremendous success.

Cal State Northridge’s Dynasty Machado understood the networking value the event presented. “The WTS mixer was very enlightening and beneficial. It was great being able to actually see and talk to people that represent potential corporate employers. Many of their representatives were helpful and willing to inform students about specific internships and jobs.”

WTS-UCLA student chapter president Jewel DeGuzman agrees. “The TRB mixer was very well organized. The intimate atmosphere made interacting with employers more inviting and personal. It was a great event!”

Cal Poly Pomona’s Anupama Doravi adds, “I enjoyed interacting with transportation professionals. Their knowledge and insight into the current market was very helpful.”

In addition to providing extraordinary networking, the TRB mixer also provided tangible benefits as well. WTS-LA corporate partners donated fourteen auction items including 4 WTS-LA student memberships, one-on-one mentoring, 4 in-office visit/tours, a Levenger L-Tech pen, and a professional photograph. Nguyen states, “These items were something new this year as I wanted to take networking



to another level and make it more fun. I'm grateful to the corporate partners contributions and excited for all the students who won".

A good book can make you look at the world differently. A great book can make the world look differently at you. The WTS-LA Transportation Résumé Book and the TRB mixer achieve both. Connecting WTS-LA corporate partners with the best young transportation talent on paper and in person, the TRB and the TRB mixer are two of WTS-LA's most effective, mutually beneficial programs for connecting students with the transportation industry. So, if you are a student and would like to participate in the TRB next

year, contact [Todd Nguyen](#). To become a WTS-LA corporate partner and enjoy exclusive, first-look access to the TRB, please contact WTS-LA Corporate Partner chair [Dan Beal](#).