

## Message from the President, April 2017



*Kathy Simons (WTS-LA Chapter President), Photos © John Livzey, 2017*

Vincent Van Gogh said, "If you hear a voice within you say 'you cannot paint,' then by all means paint and that voice will be silenced." That's about the best career advice I can think of, particularly for women. Many of us doubt our abilities and capabilities by listening to an insidious little voice. We shouldn't. We must go out and do what we think we cannot. So, as we enter winter's homestretch, I want to talk about spring and new beginnings, particularly in terms of career advancement.

Careers are funny things. Even though a company or organization may own your job, you own your career. For many people, that can be an uncomfortable concept. Again, this is particularly true for women. Well, we want to change that. WTS-LA wants to help you take charge of your career and its growth and advancement. Treat your career as a project that you must manage daily, weekly, and annually. Make it a point to understand your industry, your discipline, and other disciplines that relate to it, as well as the changing dynamics that affect your professional world financially, politically, and technologically. Take your career as seriously as your boss views your job. And when things change, how do you fit in? Do you fit in? WTS-LA wants to make sure that you do and that you are way ahead of dynamic events. So, here's what we're going to do.

I said at the beginning of my term that I wanted to focus on workforce development and access. Career advancement and growth are a subset of both. So, while we will be working tirelessly to ensure that every program, every event, and every communication incorporates career advancement and growth, we can't do it alone. Everyone's career is different. Naturally, everyone's needs are different. Some people need more training. Some people need more experience. And some people need vital soft skills to be able to analyze where they are and how to move forward. We will provide vital tools. But we also want your input. What do you need? How can the chapter help you advance? What will make a difference in your career?

Let us know, because the odds are extremely good that what will help you will help many others in the chapter. This is just a beginning; there will be more practical tactics and strategies to follow soon.



"If you hear a voice within say, 'you cannot paint,' then by all means paint and that voice will be silenced."  
Many women in transportation squelched that doubting inner voice to go on and achieve remarkable things. They paved the way for us to advance. Now, it is our obligation to them and ourselves to keep moving forward, to silence that voice and do what many others may think impossible.