

Elenna Salcido Plans to Advance Her Career through WTS-LA



Elenna Salcido (STV, Inc., planner and WTS-LA webmaster), Photos © John Livzey, 2017

STV, Inc., planner and WTS-LA webmaster Elenna Salcido developed her love of planning through very practical experience.

“When I was around 20 years old and an undergrad, I got into a car accident. So, I didn’t have a car for a few months and I was trying to get around. Well, it wasn’t necessarily easy. And it made me realize how much a transportation system affects everyday life in an urban, suburban, and even rural environment—*every* environment. I’ve always been interested in transportation, in general, but that experience really perked my interest in planning. I also took a class on local government and learned that planning was a formal field, a department in government. So, I knew it was a career. Today, my interests lean heavily toward transit and outreach education. I do a lot of transit work. But I also have my extracurricular passions. Outside of work, I actively pursue pedestrian and transit safety and other types of activism as well.”



For STV, Salcido uses her planning skills in a variety of ways including conducting data and GIS analysis, and writing transportation and environmental planning reports. She also coordinates tasks with consultants and agencies for a variety of significant transit-related and multimodal projects. With STV since graduating in 2014, Salcido earned her master’s degree in planning (with a concentration in transportation and infrastructure) from USC. And it was during school that she first learned about WTS.

“One of my professors at USC, (USDOT Maritime Administration officer and WTS-LA director at large) Eric Shen, talked to me about WTS. At that time, he was the director of the Transportation Planning Division at the Port of Long Beach, where I interned. And USC would push out to various WTS events and sponsor them. So, I’d go to these events and I got to know people. I continued to go to events when I started working at STV. One of my co-workers, (HDR civil engineer and WTS-LA Professional Development/Leadership chair) Lucy Terrell-Lewis, was also very involved. She was on the WTS-LA board at the time. So, I credit Eric for getting me initially interested in the chapter and Lucy for getting me more actively involved. I’ve always been a big advocate for women, so WTS was a natural fit for me.”

In addition to the more noble aspects of the chapter, Salcido appreciates the practical benefits of membership as well.

“It’s great to volunteer at events. You get to see all of the different faces and meet so many people. And if you participate, you know you’ll work with virtually everyone in the future. You really get to know a lot of people and what they do. You learn so much about the different types of projects that other people do. You learn about other firms and agencies. And you learn about areas and disciplines that you don’t necessarily have much experience with. You also get great experience and exposure by performing tasks you excel at and attempting ones you may have no experience with. For example, I’m very computer literate, so I serve as the primary webmaster for the WTS-LA website. And there are great benefits to that. I get to learn about a lot of things before they get pushed out to the public, because I have to post them. But I’m also learning a lot about how communications works as well. Being involved is a great education. WTS-LA provides a fantastic environment to learn about what’s happening in transportation in the LA region and to meet transportation professionals at every level.”