

WTS-LA Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award: Los Angeles World Airports



Rosa Brice and Deborah Flint (LAWA), 2017

The 2017 Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award recognizes extraordinary efforts or initiatives that create opportunities for women and minorities. But these efforts must also promote diversity and cultural awareness within an organization, the transportation industry, or a project or activity that supports the goals and mission of WTS. It's a tall order for anyone, let alone an organization. But this year, WTS-LA honored an organization that accomplished exactly that—Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA).



*Los Angeles
World Airports*

Vital to our city, region, and state, LAWA is a self-supporting City of Los Angeles department that owns and operates Los Angeles International (LAX) and Van Nuys general aviation airports. Both play an integral role in helping Southern California meet regional demand for passenger, cargo, and general aviation service. And as the aviation authority for the nation's second largest city as well as the hub for one of the world's most populous metropolitan areas, LAWA faces unique challenges and shoulders equally weighty responsibilities. Consider LAX alone. LAX creates more than 620,000 jobs with labor income near \$40 billion and revenues north of \$126 billion. That's just LAX. But LAWA also provides critical a lifeline during emergencies. So, LAWA's utility is sacrosanct. But LAWA does quite a lot more.

LAWA is a global leader in promoting and facilitating diversity through professional opportunities for women and minorities. First, and most obviously, LAWA CEO is a woman and WTS-LA member, Deborah Flint. But she is in no way the only female executive. Women and minorities hold positions of power throughout LAWA's ranks, many of whom have been with LAWA for decades. But in addition to simply hiring and promoting the best people, they also foster several formal and innovative programs to promote diversity. LAWA serves as a consummate role model for diversity and inclusion. For most organizations, that would be more than enough. But diversity is so ingrained in LAWA culture, that it in no way stops there. From multiple civic engagement programs to its pioneering FirstSource Hiring Program to its Gender Equity Program, LAWA leads the way in promoting and institutionalizing real diversity. LAWA has also always been extremely supportive of WTS-LA. For these reasons and many more, WTS-LA was proud to name Los Angeles World Airports as the winner of the 2017 Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award.