

2017 Lawrence D. Hazzard Transportation Leadership \$5,000 Scholarship Recipient: Lauren Deaderick



Lauren Deaderick (Lawrence D. Hazzard Transportation Leadership Scholarship Recipient , 2017

Like some burgeoning transportation professionals, USC dual master's degree candidate (Public Policy and Planning) Lauren Deaderick was not born with a preternatural focus on transportation. In fact, she discovered transportation as a career *after* receiving her undergraduate degree. But once she discovered it, she was hooked. "My true interest in transportation planning and policy began at the end of my undergraduate career when I started an internship with the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Volpe Center. In my more than three years at the USDOT Volpe Center working as a Community Planner, I was able to combine my economics background, my passion for the environment, and my ambition to positively impact the communities I serve." But discovering her passion was not the only benefit of her experience at the Volpe Center.

According to Volpe Center Transportation Planning Chief Eric J. Plosky, Deaderick left an indelible impression as an "outstanding employee by any definition and from any perspective." When USC accepted Deaderick into its graduate program, she informed Plosky she would be leaving. Here's what he wrote to her, "I don't look forward to working with you to transition things—and I still can't believe you're leaving!...I haven't quite been able to accept the notion that our team will somehow have to function without you on a day-to-day basis. None of us has. In fact, our team won't actually be 'our team' without you. It will have to become a different team. You cannot be replaced." He notes that she is, "one of the very finest people I've ever worked with," detailing her multiple talents and accomplishments, particularly for one so young, stating that she possesses, "all of the characteristics we in transportation must successfully attract if we are to accomplish anything in our mixed-up, topsy-turvy modern world!" He also talks at length about her unique ability to broker negotiations and deliver results by effectively mixing theoretical, cultural, and practical sensitivities. And that sounds exactly like a page right out of the Larry Hazzard career handbook.