

2018 \$5,000 Louise Garside WTS-LA Scholarship Winner: Lynnete Guzman



Lynnete Guzman (2018 \$5,000 Louise Garside WTS-LA Undergraduate Scholarship Recipient)

Earning her master's degree in planning at the University of Southern California (USC), Lynnete Guzman is not your typical student of transportation. For her, transportation is a vital element in an overall planning perspective, one where she has grand plans. "Urban planning is a tool to preserve cultures and empower underrepresented communities to remain, reclaim, and thrive in their own neighborhoods. I envision taking leadership in projects that support the well-being of marginalized communities in my hometown, Santa Ana, CA. My long-term goal is to serve as the Executive Director of the City of Santa Ana Planning Department... This motivated me to be a co-founder of Santa Ana Active Streets, a coalition comprised of community-based organizations working together to promote inclusive planning for transit-oriented development. I met with local advocates in public health, affordable housing, and bicycle safety to unite advocacy efforts for community engagement in Santa Ana's transportation plans. Together we formed a coalition, and unlike most bicycle groups, we are predominantly working class, people of color, passionate about transportation equity, and bringing community together." And that sounds strikingly like the philosophy of both Ms. Garside and Simons. But they're not the only ones to recognize Ms. Guzman's ethos and work ethic.

"I first met Lynnete when we were recruiting her to our Master of Planning program at USC," explains USC professor and Urban Planning and Spatial Analysis chair Marlon G. Boarnet. "Her self-statement, background, academic accomplishments, and demonstrated record in social justice made her stand out. We awarded her our most competitive diversity scholarship award, and we were all pleased when she accepted our offer of admission." Detailing her exceptional academic achievements in her classes, Professor Boarnet also cites her profound "commitment to increase diversity and promote inclusion in transportation planning." He adds, "Without reservation, I believe that Lynnete's academic, professional, and community service demonstrate that she is an exceptionally talented professional who will be a leader in urban planning in California."

But that's not all. Latino Health Access Director of Community Engagement and Advocacy Programs Nancy Mejía knows Ms. Guzman through their work together on several projects. And she's also impressed. "Over the last four years, Lynnete has been instrumental in making Santa Ana a safer city to walk and bike. She is demonstrating that she has the qualities and drive necessary to be a successful graduate student and the passion and experience necessary to become an effective urban planner. She is part of a new generation of leadership much needed in urban planning – one that has grown up and experienced first-hand the pressing challenges facing contemporary cities like Santa Ana..."

"...Lynnete exhibits a great balance between being a thinker and a doer. She is a great listener and critical thinker, and is great at turning thoughts and ideas into action, which make her an effective collaborator and implementer. She has refined interpersonal skills, and works well with diverse groups of

people – from youth to city and county planners to elected officials. She also understands the importance of multi-pronged approaches to maximize planning efforts while improving public health and equity.” Once again, this virtually mirrors the commitment of Ms. Garside and Simons. So, for these reasons and many more, WTS-LA is proud to name Lynnete Guzman winner of the 2018 \$5,000 Louise Garside WTS-LA Undergraduate Scholarship.