

## CalSTA: Equal Opportunity Employer of the Year



Through the Employer of the Year award, WTS-LA recognizes a Southern California organization that not only advances women in transportation, but also has virtually institutionalized a level playing field into its structure. In addition, that organization must provide professional education and development opportunities for women and minorities to help ensure equity. In short, WTS-LA wants to honor an organization that delivers on fairness. The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) virtually defines the criteria for this award.

CalSTA is big. And the fact that it oversees eight state-government entities sounds big. But consider what those entities are. They include the Board of Pilot Commissioners, the California Highway Patrol (CHP), the California Transportation Commission (CTC), Caltrans, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), the California High-Speed Rail Authority, the Office of Traffic Safety, and the New Motor Vehicle Board. Even if you don't know what each of those agencies does, you know their mandate covers thousands in California's vast transportation network. So, its influence is outsized as well. Fortunately, CalSTA uses its powers for good.

A national leader in closing the gender pay gap, CalSTA adheres rigorously to the Equal Pay Act, offering gender-neutral salaries, regular raises, and protections related to gender, race, age, and sexual identification. Of course, CalSTA does more than just meet the letter of the law. Consider their numbers. Within CalSTA itself, seven of its 17 senior staff members are women, including the undersecretary, chief counsel, CIO, and the deputy secretaries of Legislation, Communications, Budget, and Policy. Thirteen of the agency's 22 employees are women. Additionally, two new female deputy secretaries were recently appointed in August.

In looking at its elements, the numbers tell much the same story. For example, within Caltrans, 13 of 35 executives are women. Women in Caltrans also hold 137 of 463 (30%) of senior management positions, including the leads on various signature projects and initiatives. The CHP boasts 30 women in leadership roles, including an assistant commissioner, 21 commanders, five assistant chiefs, the communications director, and the information security officer. The CTC has four women in leadership roles, including the commission chair, executive director, and two deputy directors. And down the line, from department to department, the same is true for others under the CalSTA umbrella. And that is no accident.

CalSTA creates and fosters an environment of equality, which in turn its elemental departments follow. In addition, CalSTA is a staunch supporter of WTS-LA's mission. It encourages its people to join professional organizations, particularly WTS-LA. And CalSTA contributes regularly to the chapter, our events, and our fundraising efforts as well. For these reasons and many more, WTS-LA proudly names CalSTA the 2019 WTS-LA Employer of the Year.