

## Congratulations to Elise Adreon, 2020 WTS-LA Ava Doner Memorial Scholarship Winner



*Elise Adreon (2020 WTS-LA Ava Doner Memorial Scholarship Recipient)*

For some, transportation is an entire world unto itself. For much of the rest of the world, though, it's an invisible given, something that's always there, but no one notices. However, when that world is opened up to a young eager mind, it can be pretty powerful. For 2020 WTS-LA \$7,500 Ava Doner Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship winner Elise Adreon, that's exactly what happened.

"My time at the University of Southern California (USC) has opened my eyes to an entire world of engineering that I never knew existed, that of transportation. Specifically, the department of Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE) has exposed me to the endless opportunities related to transportation that exist for a female student like myself...I was pleasantly surprised to recognize my genuine interest and passion for the transportation industry whenever it was a topic during class. Whether it was during Supply Chain Design, Deterministic Modeling, or Discrete Systems Simulation, my ISE courses always offered me insight into the transportation world."

A senior majoring in ISE at USC, Adreon is new to Los Angeles and Southern California. Born in Chicago, but raised in the mountains of Colorado, her outsider background gives her a sense of objectivity about both transportation and Southern California. And that's helped fuel her fascination with both. It's also helped her excel in her studies. Graduating in May 2021, Adreon routinely makes the Viterbi School of Engineering's Dean's List and has accumulated very impressive work experience. Ultimately, though, Adreon knows that for her all roads lead to transportation. And many of those roads begin at USC with Professor James E. Moore, II, the Director of USC's Transportation Engineering Program, particularly as he is her coach for her Senior Design Project, a year-long capstone course giving USC engineering students an opportunity to perform a client-based, field-related ISE project.

"Elise has shown impressive leadership and organizational skills through this course, serving very effectively as a leader of her team. Her professionalism with the client (Los Angeles County Department of Health Services) and ability to work with accomplished, experienced professionals makes it obvious to me that she will very likely succeed in any career path she takes after college, which I of course hope will be transportation."

Professor Moore's hopes are not misplaced. Adreon repeatedly displays not only a passion and a knack for transportation, but also a drive to make things happen. Moore relates a story that illustrates all three qualities perfectly.

"Part way through this spring semester, Elise reached out to me to discuss the opportunity to perform research in our department this summer. Given the COVID-19 uncertainties around students, Elise took matters into her own hands and found an alternative option to continue her education this summer and improve her skills...Elise has been working under my research supervision for eight weeks now and has made an exceptional impact on my work. Elise is always eager to learn new things and expand her knowledge into areas she never before explored. Her open-mindedness and willingness to learn are inspiring."

Moore adds, "She is an exceptional student who has shown substantial interest in the transportation field, specifically in Southern California. Her Industrial Engineering background gives her a solid methodological foundation from which to contribute to the transportation problem domain."

For some, transportation is a world unto itself. For most, it's an invisible assumption that they count on every day. But for certain people, like Elise Adreon, it becomes a tireless passion that provides both great challenge and reward.