

## 2020 WTS-LA Member of the Year – Heather Anderson, PE



*Heather Anderson, PE (2020 WTS-LA Member of the Year), Photo © John Livzey*

### **When the going gets tough, Heather Anderson handles what they can't...**

People notice. When someone stays late, people notice. When someone goes the extra mile, people notice. And when someone repeatedly volunteers for tasks, people notice. When it's always the same person, WTS-LA notices and acknowledges her or him with a singular award. The WTS-LA Member of the Year recognizes an individual whose commitment to the goals and growth of the chapter are extraordinary. The award recognizes one who promotes, revitalizes, and expands the chapter. And it recognizes one who does it selflessly and relentlessly. This year, WTS-LA recognizes Heather Anderson as the 2020 WTS-LA Member of the Year.

A licensed civil engineer with HNTB, Heather currently serves on the WTS-LA board as Vice President of Recognition and Student Outreach but will soon become the First Vice President. Heather gives all and excels in those positions, and while those responsibilities alone are considerable enough, Heather is an accomplished, well-respected project manager who is always in high demand. Although Heather is often stretched to the limit, she views all such roles as opportunities to work harder, particularly at advancing women in transportation. Heather doesn't just work harder; she also works smarter. Port of Los Angeles Senior Civil Engineer and WTS-LA Secretary Mahsa Pan observes that, "Heather brings a creative approach to problem solving and works towards streamlining existing processes whenever possible." But when pressed for her views on the amount of work such titles entail—again above and beyond her day job—Heather displays characteristic focus and modesty.

She often expresses, "I just want to emphasize what a great organization WTS is and how thankful I am for all of the relationships I've gained through the chapter. I'm glad I have a network of strong women who I can collaborate with as I continue my professional journey."

But that's not all.

Heather also sees the important role WTS-LA plays for the future of transportation. She believes, "There is such a need for more students pursuing careers in transportation and we want to continue to encourage women entering this field and to be part of an organization that actively reaches out and educates students about the vast array of opportunities in transportation. And as a result, I really enjoy being among a group of exceptional professionals who value the work that we do and strive to positively impact the industry as it continues to evolve."

Heather knows the value of scholarships, and the encouragement and inspiration they provide for young people. While in college, she won a scholarship from WTS Orange County. After earning her degree and beginning her career at CH2M, she joined WTS-LA and immediately got deeply involved in the chapter. That would certainly become her hallmark. In addition, rather than focus on her numerous achievements through the chapter, Heather acknowledges HNTB for their extraordinary support to WTS.

A firm believer in equity at all levels, HNTB is both a Trailblazer Corporate Sponsor on the international level and a Platinum Corporate Sponsor for WTS-LA. In addition, HNTB has more than 350 WTS members, including 15 senior executives and 30 employees who are current or former national and chapter-level women in leadership. Internationally, HNTB's Susan Martinovich is the newly elected WTS International Board Treasurer and Yvonne Lopez-Diaz recently became a WTS International Foundation Board Member. HNTB also holds the values WTS represents dearly, ensuring equity within the company in a multitude of ways. And Heather perfectly represents the firm.

People notice. When someone consistently goes the extra mile, people notice. For WTS-LA, that person is Heather Anderson. And that is why she richly deserves to be named the 2020 WTS-LA Member of the Year.