

## Congratulations to Shelly Quan, 2020 WTS-LA Myra Frank Memorial Scholarship Winner



*Shelly Quan (2020 WTS-LA Myra Frank Memorial Scholarship), 2020*

Transportation planning has taught 2020 WTS-LA Myra Frank Memorial Scholarship winner Shelly Quan something extremely important: when it comes to transportation planning all roads lead to finance. “Can you call yourself a transportation planner if you are not working on parking, roads, buses, and trains? After nearly six years working as a transportation planner with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), I can say yes.

Transportation planning is greater than individual modes and infrastructure. It requires finance to fund construction, operations, and maintenance, and policy to ensure that investments result in equitable outcomes that provide a broad range of mobility options. Because of my role in the State Legislative Analysis and Discretionary Grants section at Metro, I experienced firsthand the dynamics between finance and policy...

“As I enter my second and last year at UCLA, I am interested in focusing my research on exploring the nexus between finance and policy through an equity lens. After graduation, I hope to apply what I learned at school to my work at Metro to advance a diverse and high-quality transportation system that supports the well-being and dignity of all who live, work, and play in the Los Angeles region.”

A master’s degree candidate in Urban and Regional Planning—with a concentration in Transportation Policy and Planning—at UCLA, Quan is extremely accomplished with a 3.968 grade point average and numerous awards, plaudits, and outstanding work experience. She’s also a member of the WTS@UCLA student chapter. Though Quan will graduate in June, she has pretty much worked as a professional throughout her academic career.

“Shelly has worked in my department for six years in progressively responsible positions, starting as an entry-level trainee and advancing to her current role as a Senior Transportation Planner,” explains Metro Senior Director Patricia Chen. “Shelly is bright, positive, responsible and resourceful, consistently delivering exceptional work and developing thoughtful approaches to resolving complex issues. Shelly’s professionalism has resulted in heightened responsibilities, including representing Metro publicly at statewide workshops and forums, and coordinating funding and programming processes to make important projects possible.

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After detailing her comprehensive planning work, Chen then shifts focus to some of Quan's other contributions.

"She has been invaluable to our agency through contributions to a number of more concrete endeavors. Over the last six years, Shelly has become more and more key in managing and overseeing our grant seeking activities. Last year, she procured and now continues to manage a grantwriting consultant team, which supports several Metro departments and local agencies. She coordinated the development of 50 grant applications requesting \$2.7 billion. \$1.8 billion in transportation funds has been secured to date. Key to the outcomes that Shelly helped Metro realize were her efforts in identifying projects for application, and coordinating and participating in the review of the draft applications."

Chen doesn't stop there, but Quan's accomplishments are too long to list. So, Chen sums up Quan's unique talents this way.

"Shelly is equally at home reading statutes and draft guidelines, talking through alternative approaches with staff and executives, writing up the recommended approach for Board adoption, and working directly with cities on the details of their local projects to ensure they are successfully implemented."

Expertise in finance is not always a part of an urban planner's toolkit. But perhaps it should be. It is for Shelly Quan. Through her extraordinary education and work experience, she has learned profoundly that when it comes to transportation planning all roads lead to finance.