



Jenelle Saunders, WTS-LA 2021-22 President

A Moving Test for Transportation Professionals

As the 2021-22 WTS-LA President, I'd first like to acknowledge outgoing President Lisa Karwoski and the outgoing board. I take the reins with tremendous respect, gratitude, and admiration for the exceptional job they have done for the past two years, arguably the most difficult time a WTS-LA president and board have ever faced. To them I offer thanks, kudos, and appreciation for guiding the chapter so magnificently through the pandemic, the election, and the host of tests 2020 forced us all to encounter. I'd also like to welcome the new faces on the board and thank those returning for their dedication and efforts to advance women in transportation.

Like most incoming presidents, I want to expand the chapter. And I'd like to start by acknowledging WTS International for their outstanding work in engaging and supporting chapters on a new level. Their four-themed initiative of attract, sustain, connect, and advance is highly effective and deserves our attention and support as they seek to connect us all beyond the individual chapter level.

In the Wizard of Oz, Dorothy declared, "There's no place like home." I don't think she knew she was foretelling our current work-from-home situation. If so, then the screenwriters should have won the Oscar that year (they didn't!). Working from home is not new, but it has certainly taken on a different dimension and scope. Still, we have all adjusted very well; consider WTS-LA.

From board meetings to events to professional development, WTS-LA members have adapted brilliantly to the new formats that now shape our reality. For me, while working in San Pedro, virtual participation in board meetings has been a bonus. I suspect some aspect of virtual participation will outlast the pandemic and become the norm as well. I see this as an opportunity to expand our members' network, be present at more events, and make connections across the nation and, perhaps, overseas. As you may know, outgoing president Lisa Karwoski will soon be relocating to Australia with Mott MacDonald on what looks to be a great professional and personal adventure. I wish her the best and say, "Congrats on the big move!" I want to hear from our members – what new adventures or changes have you experienced recently? Connect with us via social media ([Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#)), email, or the website and let us know!

Expanding our chapter includes incorporation of diversity, equity, and inclusion through all facets of our programs and goals. This is not new to WTS-LA – it's in our DNA. But we can do more. I also want to expand into transportation modes where we lack representation. From freight rail to drone pilots to the

hyperloop, transportation is everchanging. We must change with it. It's all transportation, and we must be everywhere to ensure that WTS-LA's mission serves the entire transportation industry.

Finally, I, too, want to formally thank and acknowledge frontline transportation workers for their indelible contribution during the pandemic. They have literally put their lives and the lives of their families on the line to ensure that our society functions—that we have food to eat, fuel to move, and equipment to save lives. Without them, everything stops; society does not function. Though we may never know their names, their contribution will never be forgotten.

We have all faced many tests recently. I'm sure there are more to come, but we're ready, and they will not hinder our collective efforts to advance women in transportation. Once again, I thank Lisa Karwoski and the outgoing board. Together, we go forward to make our chapter and the transportation industry a better place and a resilient, long-term backbone for society. As transportation professionals, we help keep civilization going, whether we're on the frontline or in the back office. So, keep up the good work. Please stay safe and healthy. I look forward to seeing you all on Zoom!

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For a list of the 2021-2022 Board of Directors, click [here](#).