

## 2010 Annual Report - Women in Transportation Seminar, DC Chapter (WTS-DC)

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

#### **Dear WTS-DC Members,**

2010 was an exceptionally busy year for those in transportation here in DC. A new president and new federal programs were initiated including the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants providing \$288 billion in tax cuts and benefits for millions of families and businesses and making \$275 billion available for federal contracts, grants and loans. Looking on the ground, we saw not only maintenance but new construction throughout Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Maryland. Even as the WMATA board enacted fare increases and dealt with the operational needs of the 40+-year old system, ridership on Metro continues to be vital for many commuters in the area. Finally, jurisdictions across the region continued to identify innovative ways to provide access and mobility to their residents, even with declining resources available to make new capital investments.

Locally, 2010 brought the WTS-International Conference to DC in May. At that event, Secretary Ray LaHood signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to encourage women to complete undergraduate and graduate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) – while pursuing careers in transportation.

Looking back on the activities of the WTS-DC Chapter for 2010, I'm pleased to identify the significant accomplishments of the WTS-DC board and our volunteers, particularly in regard to our program offerings, and enhancing our scholarship fund.

**Programs:** continuing on the efforts of previous years, of expanding the diversity of our program offerings to provide more value to our members. The report below describes over a dozen programs, held during the year, including luncheon programs, breakfast programs, receptions, tours, and networking happy hours. We addressed a range of topics, including planning, funding, construction, and maintenance of bikeways, livable communities, the status of federal funding; provided briefings on the Federal Railroad Administration, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit, and the Gulf Coast Oil Spill and Cleanup effort; hosted a reception for the women appointees at USDOT; and held our annual diversity event with the topic of women on the move embracing and supporting diversity in our communities.

WTS members got up close and personal with some of the region's top leaders, including the Secretary of USDOT, the Deputy Administrator of FRA, the General Manager of WMATA, and the Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board.

It is a testament to the high regard that our leaders have for WTS, and in particular, the members of the WTS-DC chapter, that they participate so actively in our programs and events.

**Scholarship Fund:** 2010 was a difficult year for the economy and because of that it was difficult for our Scholarship Fund. But, even with the economic downturn of the past couple of years we raised over \$4,000 for our WTS-DC Scholarship Fund during our annual holiday party and silent auction. As described below, we instituted a 50/50 raffle at three events this year which raised approximately \$400. These funds will allow us to assist outstanding young women as they pursue their educations.

As WTS-DC looks forward, we have a number of things to be excited about in 2011 and beyond. We're pleased many new volunteers have joined us in board and committee positions, which

helps us to provide even more services to our members. This year we will be revitalizing our mentoring program and will continue to provide amazing programs for our membership some of the best of which will be provided free or low-cost to members as a benefit of membership. We can look forward to the dynamic changes that come about in DC every two years with every election cycle, including new opportunities to support political appointments for women to key administration positions.

Thank you for your support in 2010 and your continued support of WTS-DC in the coming years!

**Susan Gygi**  
**WTS-DC 2010 President**

## PROGRAMS

In keeping with the WTS Vision of *transforming the transportation industry through the advancement of women*, the WTS-DC Chapter successfully held a wide array of programs and events in 2010. WTS-DC provided new and existing members, including friends and students, with opportunities to network and socialize at happy hour events, hear the latest from leaders in the transportation industry through the “A Conversation With ...” speaker series and participation in small brown-bag group settings that focused on local and national transportation issues.

Thought out the year many of these programs were brought forward through the generous support provided by sponsors and volunteers and could not have been made possible without the participation from the panel of distinguished speakers that were featured monthly.

The following is a summary of the 2010 WTS events:

### **May**

#### *The Role of Bikeways in a National Transportation System*

On Friday May 7, the same day that the first bicycle lane on Pennsylvania Avenue was painted, members of the WTS-DC chapter met for a discussion of the role of bicycles and bikeways in the national transportation system. With speakers representing the District Department of Transportation, the League of American Bicyclists, the Congressional Bike Caucus and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the discussion ranged from ways to increase bicycle use to the economic and social effects of bicycling.

### **June**

#### *A Conversation with Rich Sarles, Interim General Manager – WMATA*

One June 16, WTS-DC hosted, then, newly appointed interim general manager for the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority, Rich Sarles as its featured guest speaker. Mr. Sarles identified *Safety, Reliability, and Financial Stability* as his top priorities for the organization and went on to discuss the various opportunities and challenges that lay ahead for WMATA.

### **July**

#### *Tour of Washington Dulles International Airport*

On July 28 WTS-DC presented a members-only tour of the Washington Dulles International Airport, one of the fastest growing airports in the country. WTS-DC members had the

opportunity to meet with airport officials and tour the airport facility. Tour highlights included the AeroTrain exhibit, the airport's new screening checkpoint locations, the operations center, the ramp control tower and a K-9 security demonstration.

### **August**

#### *A Conversation with Rear Admiral Neffenger, US Coast Guard*

WTS member Rear Admiral Peter Neffenger of the US Coast Guard, the deputy incident commander for the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, spoke on August 17 about the implications of the spill on the national transportation network and the efforts of the Federal government to contain and clean up the spill. Rear Admiral Neffenger spoke about the causes of the spill and why the containment of the leak was so difficult- namely because of the broken pipe for which a custom cap had to be fabricated.

#### *WTS Joint Event with Transportation Research Board and Young Professionals in Transportation: Happy Hour and Discussion with Sam Staley, Director of Urban Growth and Land Use Policy, Reason Foundation*

Members of the three organizations had a chance to meet, mingle and discuss transportation at this informal gathering where Mr. Staley briefly discussed and took questions about his recent book, *Mobility First: A New Vision for Transportation in a Globally Competitive Twenty-first Century*.

### **September**

#### *A Conversation with Thelma Drake, Director – Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation*

On September 2 WTS-DC hosted the director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Thelma Drake. Ms. Drake touched on DRPT's three primary areas of activity — Rail, Public Transportation, and Commuter Services.

### **October**

#### *A Conversation with Deborah A.P. Hersman, Chair – National Transportation Safety Board*

On October 5 WTS-DC hosted Deborah A.P. Hersman the Chair of the National Transportation Safety Board. As chairman of the NTSB she was in a unique position to ask thoughtful yet provocative questions and offered observations about women's current and future place in the transportation sector.

#### *Women on the Move Embracing and Supporting Diversity in our Communities*

On October 20 WTS-DC hosted its annual diversity luncheon entitled "Women on the Move Embracing and Supporting Diversity in Our Communities". The luncheon featured Cheryl Hershey, Director of Civil Rights/Chief Equal Employment Opportunity for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA); Lisa Gregory, Director of Civil Rights DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) and Valarie Santos, DC Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development. The speakers showcased the dimensions of diversity in the planning and policy-making process. They were charged with explaining how their work influences economic development and also supports community planning and diversity as a whole. They also described how the theme of diversity was fostered as part of the implementation of major transit investments, local transportation projects and economic development project that encourage livability.

## **November**

### *Livability Agenda and Transportation*

On November 9th, the WTS DC Chapter hosted its “Livability Agenda and Transportation” luncheon. Attendees were treated to presentations by representatives from the Department of Transportation (USDOT), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Collectively, the heads of these three government agencies have signed the Partnership for Sustainable Communities agreement, a sweeping interagency initiative focused on smart growth, of which transit is a central component.

## **December**

### *2010 Holiday Party, Annual Awards, and Silent Auction Scholarship Fundraiser*

The annual WTS-DC Holiday Party, Annual Awards Ceremony, and Silent Auction Scholarship Fundraiser was held on December 8th at the City Club at Franklin Square in Washington, DC. Members of WTS-DC, the WTS-DC Board, WTS International, and many guests throughout the transportation industry – government agencies, private business, trade associations, special interest groups, etc. – were in attendance to honor our award winners.

This festive annual event gives WTS an opportunity to recognize and honor outstanding contributions to our community by the Member of the Year, Woman of the Year, Employer of the Year, and Diversity Leadership Award recipient. More information about the award winners is listed in the Recognitions section of this report. These individuals and organizations made extraordinary contributions to the transportation industry as leaders, role models, mentors, and benefactors, and they generously support WTS in a variety of ways.

In addition to honoring our award winners, WTS-DC also recognized three talented and deserving students as recipients of WTS-DC Scholarship Fund endowments. Funded through the annual WTS-DC Scholarship Fund Silent Auction, direct contributions, and programs whose proceeds go to the fund these awards are a way to support our industry’s future. More information about the winners is in the Scholarship section of this report.

The following companies contributed to the event as Holiday Party Sponsors:

#### Level 3

Amtrak

#### Level 4

AECOM

AAR

Parsons Brinckerhoff

#### Level 5

RSI

Sharp & Company

The Silent Auction celebrated its seventh consecutive year as a part of the Holiday Party. Approximately \$4,210 was raised for the Chapter’s Scholarship Fund. WTS-DC would like to thank the organizations and individuals for their contributions of gifts and direct monetary donations. Although the economy was tough this year, the auction featured new bid items

which included a discovery flight from the Washington International Flight Academy, Arthur Murray dance lessons, AirTran Airline tickets, and a photography session from Labor of Love Photography to name a few. In addition to the new donations, popular items such as a weekend in Ocean City, a week in Hilton Head, SC., and WMATA and VRE memorabilia motivated bidders to dig deep for the scholarship fund. Your generosity in supplying the auction items and monetary donations directly supports the motto of our organization “advancing women in transportation.”

We especially thank everyone that generously bid on the wonderful auction items. Because of your support, we can continue to provide scholarships to deserving female students in transportation related disciplines at area universities and colleges.

Note to Holiday Party and Silent Auction Chair for next year, (1) start soliciting auction items earlier in the year and (2) be sure to include Washington Capitals Tickets (there were lots of requests at the party).

We especially thank everyone that generously bid on the wonderful auction items. Because of your support, we can continue to provide scholarships to deserving female students in transportation related disciplines at area universities and colleges.

#### LEGISLATIVE

In early 2010, WTS-DC sent introductory letters to the Washington federal transportation community, including members and key staff of the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress and political appointees at U.S. DOT. Over 120 letters were mailed to introduce transportation policymakers to the vital role WTS-DC plays in educating decision-makers on transportation trends and legislative and regulatory developments. The letter also promoted the benefits of the WTS Annual Conference in Washington, DC, May 19-21, 2010.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## CORPORATE RELATIONS

Corporate support from public and private institutions plays a key role in enabling WTS-DC to present successful and informative programs and events. The local transportation community benefits from the support provided by our generous corporate partners, which allows WTS-DC to minimize program fees to registrants while presenting quality events.

Corporate partners benefit from their association with the DC Chapter of WTS. There are three main ways in which corporate partners support WTS-DC: through Corporate Membership, WTS-DC Program Sponsorship and sponsorship of the annual Holiday Party, Awards Ceremony and Silent Auction supporting the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund.

To open up additional opportunities for corporate involvement, Corporate Membership and Program Sponsorship levels were expanded in 2010. Of special note was the addition of a DBE-level program sponsorship that enables the sponsoring firm to sit at the head table at an event. This is the first time that WTS-DC has reached out in this manner to disadvantaged firms.

### **Corporate Members**

In 2010, in spite of the challenging economic environment, WTS-DC increased its membership from 9 to 10 Corporate Members. These Corporate Members received two membership rate attendances for their employees at each WTS-DC program and event. Each event also prominently displayed signage throughout the year, thanking and acknowledging our Corporate Members' support. This acknowledgment and recognition also appears on the web site and in any blast emails sent to chapter membership. Additionally, Corporate Members benefit from a featured article in the WTS-DC chapter newsletter on a rotating basis.

During 2007, the WTS-DC Board revised its Corporate Membership benefits to include one registration to WTS International for a corporate representative, as well as chapter membership benefits for a second representative. The chapter benefits can be shared among any corporate representative throughout the year. This allows companies to receive the full benefit of WTS International, as well as chapter benefits such as reduced program fees. The Chapter board continues to review corporate member benefits, particularly the link between WTS corporate membership at the chapter level and WTS International. This review is on-going and continued in 2010.

### **Program Sponsors**

Corporate partners who wish to be closely identified with a program or presenter have the opportunity to sponsor a program at various tier levels (\$500, \$1,500, and \$3,000). One of the most popular aspects of the higher levels of Program Sponsorship is the opportunity to have staff sit at the speaker's table; the number of speaker's table seats available to the sponsor varies with the sponsorship tier level. Program Sponsors are acknowledged on program flyer advertisements and e-mail notices, on programs and signs at the event and during the program introduction.

Program Sponsors are also acknowledged in summary articles published in the chapter newsletter, as well as on the WTS-DC "News and Events" website pages with the sponsor's

logo linking to their company website. All of these acknowledgements provided a wide range of positive exposure for our sponsors.

### MEMBERSHIP

At the close of 2010, the Chapter gained 42 new Members and held a retention rate of 63 percent, bringing the total membership to 222 members. Throughout the year, membership efforts focused on retention and recruitment activities. Invitations were sent by e-mail to non-members who had shown an interest in the organization and to those who had been members previously. Additionally, emails were sent to members whose membership was expiring that month as a reminder. Further, WTS-International held their first Membership Drive. A letter and tri-fold denoting the benefits of membership were provided to the chapter for dispersion to our membership and friends list. Almost 400 letters/tri-folds were mailed. For those renewing or joining the chapter, a raffle will be held for a free membership to the WTS-DC 2011 International Conference to be held in San Francisco in May 2011. The campaign will continue through March 2011 and include electronic follow-up items.

Throughout the year, the chair participated in the WTS International quarterly membership calls. The reason for these calls was to promote interaction among the various Chapters' membership chairs on best practices as well as to share ideas for retaining and recruiting members. The Membership Committee's goal in the coming year is to continue increasing membership numbers focusing on providing exceptional programs and increasing recruitment and retention goals. At least one event in 2011 will focus on membership.

### NEWSLETTER AND COMMUNICATIONS

This year the Newsletter and Communications Chair continued to coordinate all communications to the members of the chapter. The newsletter and all chapter communications continued to take advantage of Constant Contact. The newsletter is broadcast to the WTS-DC Chapter members, and WTS-DC friends. In 2010, three issues of the WTS-DC newsletter were distributed to the members via e-mail. These newsletter editions were made available on the WTS-DC's newsletter webpage.

Frequent broadcast e-mails were sent to Chapter members to advertise WTS-DC sponsored events and activities in 2010. E-mail broadcasts have become the primary and most direct source of communication with our members. Program flyers for WTS-DC events were developed and distributed via e-mail broadcast to members and nonmembers. Information on the Chapter's events was regularly posted and updated on the WTS-DC website.

The website continues to be a secondary source of communication for our members. The WTS International primary website has dedicated sections for each of its 41 Chapters in the U.S., Canada and United Kingdom. The chair maintained WTS-DC pages including "News and Events" and "Newsletter" pages.

### SCHOLARSHIP

## DIVERSITY

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, WTS-DC hosted “Women on the Move Embracing and Supporting Diversity in Our Communities”, a program focused on diversity in the planning and policy-making process, including community planning, implementation of major transit investments, economic development and livability. Speakers included Cheryl Hersey, Director of Civil Rights/Chief Equal Employment Opportunity for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Lisa Gregory, Director of Civil Rights at the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT), and Valarie Santos, DC Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development.

Ms. Hersey used her remarks to highlight the Title VI program, and its evolution from the 1964 Civil Rights Act, as well as the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In her role at the FTA, she explained, she assists federal grant recipients with building transit that is accessible and complies with federal law.

Ms. Gregory addressed community planning for the disabled in the District and her role in policy analysis for compliance with federal laws—including Title VII, Title VI, and the ADA. In addition, she discussed equal opportunities for small and minority-owned business projects with the District, and the cooperative working relationship between the DC Planning Office and DDOT.

Finally, Ms. Santos detailed her responsibility for formulating the District’s overall economic development vision and managing a \$13 billion development pipeline comprised of public/private housing, retail, office, and parks projects. Ms. Santos singled out a few projects for further discussion, including the popular and successful Capital Bikeshare and the DC Circulator programs, the latter of which will complement the DC Streetcar network.

Attendees left the event excited about the federal laws protecting diversity in communities, encouraged about local opportunities for diverse consultant firms working on District transportation projects, and enthusiastic about the growth of diverse urban and regional economic development projects being lead by DC Planning and Economic development Office.

## RECOGNITIONS

The Recognitions Committee is responsible for the submission of our Chapter’s nominees for the WTS International recognitions awards, the solicitation of nominations for the Chapter recognitions awards in the fall, and the evaluation and selection of the award winners, also completed in the fall.

During the fall, work began to solicit nominations for the 2010 recognition awards. The Chairs placed articles and reminders in the Chapter newsletter, made announcements and utilized blast communications technology to get the word out about recognitions. WTS received strong nominations for the following categories: Woman of the Year, Member of the Year, Employer of the Year, Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award, and the Innovative Transportation Project.

The chapter procured etched-glass awards naming each winner. At the annual Holiday Party and Awards Ceremony, the Chapter officially recognized the following Award winners:



1. Member of the year - Jennifer Mitchell
2. Woman of the year - Karen Rae
3. Employer of the year - Sharp & Company
4. Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award - Lorraine Green
5. Innovative Transportation Project – DDOT Capital Bikeshare

Information about the award winners is as follows:

### **Member of the Year**

Jennifer Mitchell is Principal Consultant with Parsons Brinckerhoff, where she specializes in the development of financial and implementation strategies for advancing transit projects through planning, design and construction.

Jennifer has been involved with WTS for over a decade. She has held several positions in the Washington DC Chapter, including Corporate Relations Chair, Programs Chair, Vice President and President from 2006-2008. She recently served as the Co-Chair for the WTS International Annual Conference that was held in DC from May 18-21, 2010. In June, Jennifer was elected to the WTS International Executive Board as Treasurer for 2010 to 2012. Jennifer displays an extraordinary commitment to the growth and success of women in transportation. She serves as a mentor to many professionals in transportation, both men and women, by promoting growth and learning opportunities.

### **Woman of the year**

As Deputy Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration for the past year and a half, Ms. Rae plays a leading role in the FRA's efforts to successfully implement the President's historic commitment to advancing the development of high-speed rail and implementing the Administration's public policy directive to improve intercity passenger rail for users and communities across the US.

Ms. Rae contributes toward the advancement of women and minorities by serving as a leader to her diverse staff, as well as to others in the transportation field. Prior to joining the Federal Railroad Administration, Ms. Rae served as Deputy Commissioner of Policy and Planning at the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), Deputy Secretary for Local and Area Transportation at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), Director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and General Manager of transit systems in Austin, Texas, Glens Falls and Buffalo, New York. Ms. Rae now has almost thirty years of experience as a leader and innovator in the realm of transportation.

### **Employer of the Year**

Sharp & Company specializes in implementing innovative communication strategies for winning attention, approval and action. The firm captures "the key message" for all their transportation clients. A small powerhouse firm, Sharp & Company believes that fostering a diverse workforce creates a positive, innovative, and productive work environment. Since 1981, Sharp & Company has made it a priority to not only hire a diverse staff, but also hire a diverse group of subcontractors and vendors. Today Sharp & Company's subcontractors are 50% female and vendors are 25% female owned and operated. Both the CEO and President are

women committed to advancing women in transportation by promoting continuing education and growth of its employees. Leadership, management and personal growth are all areas that Sharp & Company believes that their employees are committed to expanding. Attendance at lectures, professional development classes and technical training are not just part of the culture at Sharp & Company, the company underwrites them.

### **Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award**

Lorraine Green has served for the past fourteen years as Vice President of Human Resources, Labor Administration and Diversity Initiatives for Amtrak and is responsible for directing the human capital functions of the 20,000+person corporation. These functions include compensation, employment, benefits administration, labor relations, employee development, labor relations, dispute resolution, diversity initiatives and health services. Lorraine facilitates professional opportunities for women and minorities at Amtrak through the Cross Cultural Council (C3), a diverse team of individuals committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Lorraine has also supported the establishment of a collaborative community outreach campaign to promote Amtrak business opportunities to women-owned, minority-owned and disadvantaged business enterprises (W/M/DBE).

### **Innovative Transportation Project**

Capital Bikeshare is an initiative that provides residents of and visitors to the Metropolitan region an alternative, affordable, healthy and convenient mode of public transportation in the District and Arlington. With 100 stations and more than 1,000 bikes throughout the district, Capital Bikeshare reduces vehicle trips and increases bike commuting. With the District committed to building 80 miles of bike lanes throughout the city, and Washington area bike commuters doubling in the first eight years of the 21st century, Capital Bikeshare will meet the demands of those seeking to traverse the region in a cost-effective, environmentally-friendly and physically healthy manner. Bikeshare provides residents and visitors an easy, cost-effective and accessible way to reach many of the city's premiere downtown destinations, as well as connect District neighborhoods to one another.

TREASURER'S REPORT

**2010 Treasurer's Report - WTS-DC Prepared 1/27/11 MMB**

<b>Income:</b>	<b>2010</b>	
Dues - member rebates		\$9,940.00
Chapter Corp Memberships		\$10,000.00
Program Meeting Registrations		\$7,520.87
Sponsorships -Programs		\$6,300.00
Scholarship (not sent to WTSS & NOT op'g)		\$4,549.00
Unrealized Gain/Loss (Investments)		(\$1,830.95)
Holiday Party 2010 Sponsorships		\$3,000.00
Holiday Party 2010 Attendance		\$4,251.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$43,729.92</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	<b>2010</b>	
Program Meetings		\$11,558.61
Chapter Corp Memberships to In'tl		\$1,550.00
Communications		\$1,094.13
Membership Exp - scholarship winners/conf attendance		\$633.17
Scholarship Winners (WTS-DC)		\$5,500.00
Board/Committe Meetings & supplies		\$802.77
Registrations/Insurance/Certifications		\$880.00
Awards		\$953.00
May 2010 - Int'l Conf in DC		\$679.43
Holiday Party 2010		\$11,189.14
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$34,840.25</b>
<b>Accounts:</b>	<b>1-Jan-10</b>	<b>31-Dec-10</b>
<b>Cash Balance - Checking</b>	\$32,071.58	\$37,692.71
<b>Other Assets: Paypal holding acct</b>	\$2,107.49	\$1,267.00
<b>Cash Reserve Account</b>	\$45,269.00	\$47,307.91
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>		\$1,165.00
<b>Scholarship -Checking &amp; Reserves</b>	\$26,271.03	\$22,053.42
<b>Liabilities:</b>		
<b>Accounts Payable</b>	(\$506.74)	(\$1,874.44)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$105,212.36</b>	<b>\$107,611.60</b>