



> Washington DC

Advancing women  
Advancing transportation

# 2020 Annual Report WTS Washington, D.C. Chapter

\*\*\*BOARD VOTE VERSION\*\*\*

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## Chapter Board and Advisors

### Officers

<p><b>President</b> Neela Babu, <i>WSP USA</i></p>	<p><b>Vice President</b> Katie Kraft, <i>WMATA</i></p>	<p><b>Treasurer</b> Rachel Roberts, <i>British Embassy</i></p>	<p><b>Secretary</b> Christine Sherman Baker, <i>Arlington County</i></p>	<p><b>Immediate Past President</b> Adrienne Ameal, <i>Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.</i></p>
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### Committee Chairs, Deputy Chairs, and Volunteers

<p><b>Communications, Newsletter and Social Media</b> Chair: Jennifer Flanery, <i>Stratacomm</i> Deputy Chair: Amber Garnett, <i>Stratacomm</i></p>	<p><b>Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship</b> Chair: Cherie Gibson, <i>HNTB</i> Deputy Chair: Shelley Johnson, <i>Sharp and Company</i> Anita Beier, Retired</p>	<p><b>Diversity</b> Chair: Sahar Nabaee, <i>DDOT</i> Deputy Chair: Rebecca Moser, <i>Arlington County</i> Deputy Chair: Anita Beier, <i>Retired</i> Alyssa Saleh, <i>HNTB</i></p>
<p><b>Holiday Party</b> Chair: Audra Bandy, <i>Fairfax County DOT</i> Deputy Chair: Sofie Rhoads, <i>Foursquare ITP</i> Sara Haley, <i>Sullivan Strategies</i></p>	<p><b>Legislative</b> Chair: Jennifer Covino, <i>Simon and Company, Inc.</i> Deputy Chair: Kerry O'Hare, <i>O'Hare Infrastructure Strategies LLC</i> Kate Roetzer, <i>WMATA</i></p>	<p><b>Membership</b> Chair: Bailey Lozner, <i>Kittelson and Associates</i> Deputy Chair: Lezlie Rupert, <i>DDOT</i> Danielle McCray, <i>Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.</i></p>
<p><b>Mentoring</b> Co-Chair: Jacqueline Lavalleye, <i>HDR, Inc.</i> Co-Chair: Roxanne Feige, <i>Atkins Global</i> Sara Henly-Thomas, <i>HDR, Inc.</i></p>	<p><b>Professional Development</b> Chair: Cerasela Cristei, <i>EXP</i> Deputy Chair: Khatereh Vaghefi, <i>WSP USA</i> Maha El-Metwally, <i>JMT</i></p>	<p><b>Program Logistics</b> Chair: Katie Masetti, <i>Mead and Hunt</i> Deputy Chair: Sophie Guiny, <i>InfraStrategies LLC</i> Elizabeth Patel, <i>FHWA</i> Ellie McCurdy, <i>VHB</i></p>
<p><b>Recognitions</b> Chair: Haley Peckett, <i>DDOT</i> Deputy Chair: Jamie Rosen, <i>Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.</i></p>	<p><b>Scholarship and Fundraising</b> Chair: Shelley Wynne, <i>Dewberry</i> Deputy Chair: Alanna McKeeman, <i>Foursquare ITP</i> Ruby Lee, <i>WSP USA</i></p>	<p><b>Transportation YOU</b> Chair: Jasmy Methipara, <i>US DOT</i> Deputy Chair: Britton Hammit, <i>Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.</i> Margaret Akofio-Sowah, <i>WSP USA</i> Kyla D'Sa, <i>Kimley-Horn of DC</i> Laura MacNeil, <i>DDOT</i> Barbara Moreno, <i>goDCgo</i> Brandon Buckner, <i>FHWA</i></p>

### Advisors

<p>Margaret Ballard, <i>Retired</i></p> <p>Avital Barnea, <i>California State Transportation Agency</i></p>	<p>Cathy Connor, <i>WSP USA</i></p> <p>Brittney Gick, <i>Texas A&amp;M Transportation Institute</i></p>	<p>Anne Stubbs, <i>Retired</i></p>
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## WTS-DC 2020-2021 Corporate Members

Thank you to the WTS-DC 2020-2021 Corporate Members! This support helps sustain our chapter, including the programming and scholarships we offer!

**2020-2021 WTS Washington, DC Chapter  
Corporate Members**

**THANK YOU**

**GOLD LEVEL**


**SILVER LEVEL**


**BRONZE LEVEL**


**W/MDBE/SWaM**




A special thank you to our Transportation Rock Star sponsors: Foursquare ITP, ITS America and T3 Design. Their scholarship donations will support young women in the Washington, DC area who are pursuing a degree in transportation.

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## President's Message

Dear WTS-DC Chapter Members and Friends,

The year 2020 provided WTS-DC with an opportunity to stretch ourselves and reexamine our priorities. As always, we are here to support the professional growth of our members and community. We also reminded ourselves how vital it is to embrace inclusion and promote equity, which are part of the [WTS vision and core values](#).

While the year started strong, the COVID-19 pandemic quickly altered how we conduct ourselves. Our typically in-person events changed to virtual events, and the same was true for our board meetings. Still, as a chapter, we hosted 16 events, all but two of which were virtual. I appreciate the agility of our board to switch event formats from being in-person to being virtual seamlessly! We persevered through these challenging times and sustained hosting valuable events for the benefit of our community.

Our event speakers included Delaware DOT Secretary Jennifer Cohan, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Director Jennifer Mitchell (a former WTS-DC President), and FAA's Acting Assistant Administrator for NextGen (ANG) Pamela Whitley. We had a panel event to discuss Vision Zero in the DMV in which we had the Program Coordinators from each respective jurisdiction: Christine Mayeur from Alexandria, Christine Baker from Arlington, Emily Dalphy from DC, Wade Holland from Montgomery County, and Andrea Lasker from Prince George's County. We also hosted multiple panels with local agencies to discuss how they were handling the pandemic. From VDOT, we were joined by Northern Virginia District Engineer Helen Cuervo, Mega Projects Director and Design-Build Program Manager Susan Shaw, Assistant District Administrator for Planning and Investment Maria Sinner, Acting Deputy District Administrator and Assistant District Administrator of Business Monica Bhatia, and Multimodal Transportation Planner Halie Mitchell. Our annual WMATA event was also pandemic-themed this year, and we were fortunate to be joined by WMATA General Manager and CEO Paul Wiedefeld, Executive Vice President and Chief Safety Officer (CSO) Theresa Impastato, and Vice President of Government Relations Regina Sullivan.

In addition to these impressive speakers, we held events that helped our audience improve their professional development skills, socialize, and relax. In February, we had an event discussing how to present yourself professionally. In August, we had our annual joint event with YPT-DC and TRF during which we discussed the aviation industry. In October, we spoke with two pollsters, one Republican and one Democrat, to discuss polling in the upcoming election. For fun and to virtually network, we held a transportation trivia night in June. And to help our audience destress, we held a breathwork event where participants were guided through a meditative breathwork journey set to music to breathe, feel, heal, and thrive.

No event was more of an undertaking in a virtual environment than our largest event each year—the WTS-DC Holiday Party. With a revised one-hour virtual format, we spent time highlighting important chapter activities and our commitment to positively impacting our community, promoting equity and inclusion, and supporting the next generation of transportation professionals. The evening featured the Transportation YOU program, which works with girls from three DC high schools and introduces them to the opportunities for careers in STEM fields, as well as our mentoring program, which pairs professionals with similar interests and facilitates events and discussions for them to grow in their careers. Recognition



Award winners and our scholarship recipients were also recognized. This year, we awarded \$15,500 in scholarships, which is the highest amount WTS-DC has ever distributed! I want to thank our Scholarship and Fundraising Committee for all of their work to revamp our scholarship solicitation process, which helped us receive applications from exceptional young women in the DC area who are pursuing degrees in transportation. I also want to thank the committee and the rest of the board for all of the effort to raise scholarship funds, and a big thank you to the WTS-DC community, who graciously donated money to our scholarship fund. Scholarships are a vital part of our WTS mission and provide us with an opportunity to promote diversity, equality, and inclusion among our awardees. I want to recognize Audra Bandy for leading the Holiday Party Committee and for all of the hard work she did to transition the party to be virtual, working with multiple committees to come up with an hour's worth of virtual content, and organizing the event to run so smoothly. Thank you, Audra!

Additionally, 2020 was a big year for WTS-I as a revamped brand and organizational systems rolled out. The most obvious change to many people was that we refreshed our logo and website. The new WTS logo design “echoes the forward-thinking, inspiring, inclusive nature of WTS.” The WTS tagline—“Advancing Women, Advancing Transportation”—“underscores the dual goals of the WTS mission of serving women transportation professionals and the transportation industry as a whole.” Aside from the outward-facing changes, WTS-I also changed the internal association management systems, impacting the membership database, chapter communications, event registration, and more. I am grateful to our board members who helped our chapter implement changes to all these processes and systems!

As 2020 comes to a close, I want to say a big THANK YOU to the entire WTS-DC community! The WTS-DC board and advisors have been exceptional this year, and I am so grateful to them. Everything we accomplished in 2020 is because of their dedication to the organization and their willingness to donate their free time to support our chapter's success. I also want to thank WTS-DC's corporate members, who have sustained our organization through their generous donations. Last but certainly not least, I extend my gratitude to our members and others in the WTS-DC community who choose to engage with us.

WTS-DC has embraced the changes we faced in 2020, and we look forward to supporting the DC transportation industry in 2021!

Sincerely,

Neela Babu, Ph.D.

2020-2021 WTS-DC Chapter President

## Treasurer's Report

Table 1 – Operations Budget as of December 31, 2020

Revenues	Actual 2020
Holiday Party Revenues*	\$0.00
Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship: Corp. Membership dues**	\$24,211.40
Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship: Program Sponsorship*	\$3,000.00
Diversity Committee Revenues	\$0.00
Legislative Committee Revenues	\$190.90
Membership Committee Revenues	\$11,440.00
Professional Development Committee Revenues	\$531.87
Mentoring Committee Revenues	\$0.00
Other Programs Revenues	\$3,703.27
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$43,077.44</b>

Expenses	Actual 2020
Holiday Party Expenses	\$6,397.58
Communications/Outreach Expenses	\$583.00
Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee Expenses	\$0.00
Corporate Membership Expenses (to WTS International)	\$2,907.69
Diversity Committee Expenses	\$0.00
Legislative Committee Expenses	\$42.24
Membership Committee Expenses	\$0.00
Professional Development Committee Expenses	\$605.40
Mentoring Committee Expenses**	\$573.64
Recognitions Committee Expenses**	\$969.60
Scholarship and Fundraising Committee Expenses**	\$190.00

Expenses	Actual 2020
Transportation YOU Committee Expenses	\$499.10
Other Program Expenses	\$3,354.45
Administrative Expenses***	\$2,881.70
2020 WTS International Conference(s)/Travel Expenses****	\$2,768.16
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$21,772.56</b>

\* All revenue from the 2020 Holiday Party went to the WTS-DC Scholarship fund  
 \*\* Does not include accounts receivable of \$25,500 as of 12/31/2020  
 \*\*\* Pending accounts payable as of 12/31/2020  
 \*\*\*\* Includes payments for 2019 travel

Table 2 – 2020 Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet	January 1, 2020	December 31, 2020
Cash Balance:	\$68,668.03	\$103,441.37
Other Assets:		
Cash Reserve Account	\$98,985.00	\$98,985.00
Paypal	\$19,432.68	\$6,150.38
Accounts Receivables:	\$10,410.00	\$25,500.00
Accounts Payable:	\$6,650.86	\$263.58
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$190,864.85</b>	<b>\$233,813.17</b>

Table 3 – 2020 WTS-DC Scholarship Fund

Scholarship Fund	Balance
<b>Starting Balance</b>	<b>\$43,859.25</b>
<b>Total Amount Raised*</b>	<b>\$22,986.48</b>
2020 Corporate Member 10% Allocation*	\$2,500.00
2020 Transportation Rock Stars*, ****	\$2,000.00
2020 Sponsored Scholarships***	\$8,000.00
Career Panel Event	\$146.68
Vision Zero Event	\$316.30



Scholarship Fund	Balance
<i>WMATA Event</i>	\$1,853.50
<i>2020 Holiday Party Scholarship Donations (Paypal)</i>	\$2,120.00
<i>2020 Holiday Party Revenue and Donations (Eventbrite)</i>	\$2,450.00
<i>Individual Contributions</i>	\$3,600.00
<b>Total Amount Distributed**</b>	<b>\$15,500.00</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$51,345.73</b>

\* Pending accounts receivable as of 12/31/2020

\*\* Pending accounts payable as of 12/31/2020

\*\*\*Includes an additional \$2,000 donation from 2019 that was received in January 2020

\*\*\*\*Includes a \$500 donation from 2019 that was received in January 2020

## Executive Board

The WTS-DC Executive Board is comprised of five members: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Immediate Past President. In 2020, the officers serving on the board were:

- President: Neela Babu
- Vice President: Katie Kraft
- Treasurer: Rachel Roberts
- Secretary: Christine Sherman Baker
- Immediate Past President: Adrienne Ameal

As President, Neela Babu guided and led the organization. She set goals and objectives for the organization in conjunction with the Executive Board and the members. Neela was also responsible for presiding at meetings and events, and for communicating with the board and the membership. In general, the president provides leadership and direction for WTS-DC and has the authority to sign official documents on behalf of the organization.



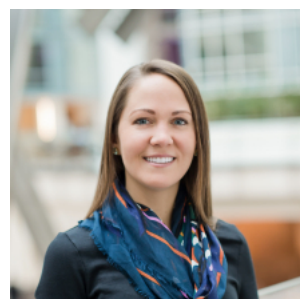
Neela Babu, WTS-DC President



Katie Kraft, WTS-DC Vice President

As Vice President, Katie Kraft supported the President. She was also responsible for organizing meeting invitations and sending out the agenda prior to board meetings and the annual meeting. The Vice President oversees programming for the chapter, which includes coordinating with other committees on topics, dates, times, and locations for events.

As Treasurer, Rachel Roberts had charge and custody of the WTS-DC accounts, both for the chapter and for the scholarship account. She was responsible for coordinating the budget, preparing monthly financial reports, preparing the annual financial reports, handling all donations, and maintaining financial records. In addition to the President, the Treasurer has the authority to sign contracts and invoices on behalf of the chapter.



Christine Sherman Baker, WTS-DC Secretary

As Secretary, Christine Sherman Baker served as the guardian of all WTS-DC Corporate records. She was responsible for keeping the minutes of all meetings and for maintaining the website. In 2020, Christine also managed the officer election process and transitioning the chapter website content to the new WTS-I system.

As Immediate Past President, Adrienne Ameal served as an advisor to the Executive Board and a historian of previous chapter activities. She was also the chapter representative to the WTS Northeast Region Council.

The Executive Board collectively works to make decisions pertaining to running the chapter. All five officers work together to check in with committees, recruit volunteers for the Board, engage with members, and act as ambassadors for WTS-DC.

## Board Meetings

In 2020, WTS-DC board meetings were held on the following dates:

- Monday, February 10
- Monday, March 9
- Monday, April 6
- Monday, May 11
- Monday, June 8
- Monday, July 13
- Monday, August 10
- Monday, September 14
- Monday, October 12
- Monday, November 9
- Monday, December 7

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chapter held the majority of its 2020 meetings virtually, via Zoom. The Executive Board and representatives from each committee were expected to attend at least eight of the 11 board meetings. For a quorum to be established, at least three of the five executive board members needed to be present and at least six of the committees needed to be represented. Committees submitted monthly committee reports before each meeting. The Treasurer also submitted the monthly report detailing the Chapter's finances. These reports were compiled along with the board meeting agenda and distributed by email prior to the meeting.

## 2020 Annual Meeting

The WTS-DC 2020 annual meeting was held at the start of our August 10th board meeting. The primary business of the annual meeting was to vote on the WTS-DC 2019 Annual Report and the meeting minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting. All members were invited to attend by Zoom (due to the COVID-19 pandemic); members also had the option to vote in advance or by proxy. Once a quorum was established, the membership voted to approve the annual report. Members were invited to comment on any other business and then the meeting adjourned. The WTS-DC 2019 Annual Report can be found on the chapter website [here](#).

## 2020 Officer Elections

Every year, WTS-DC elects four officers for the following calendar year: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. In the fall of 2020, the Executive Board presented a slate of candidates for those four positions for 2021. To facilitate anonymous voting, the election was held using an online system called Election Runner, which emailed each chapter member (who had been a member in good standing for at least 30 days prior to the election) a unique link to their ballot. The ballot listed the candidate slate and, for each position, presented the option for a write-in. Members voted for one person for each position. Per the WTS-DC bylaws, at least 10 percent of the membership must vote to establish a quorum. The response rate in the election exceeded that threshold, and the membership voted on the following officers to lead WTS-DC in 2021:

- President: Neela Babu
- Vice President: Katie Kraft
- Treasurer: Shelley Wynne
- Secretary: Katie Masetti

Adrienne Ameel will serve as Immediate Past President in 2021.

## Committee Reports

WTS-DC has 12 committees that contribute to the overall functioning of the chapter. The responsibilities of each committee are described below along with a summary of their accomplishments in 2020.

The year started with an enthusiastic Strategic Planning meeting in late January. The committees assembled and set goals for the year. With the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic in March, the committees reevaluated their goals and approaches to match the new virtual environment.

### Communications, Newsletter and Social Media Committee

*The Communications, Newsletter and Social Media Committee works with the Executive Board and the Chapter committees to provide regular communications to chapter members and friends. The committee has an active presence on social media as they curate content for the chapter’s social media channels, including Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. The committee is also responsible for publishing a bi-monthly newsletter, which includes a president’s message, summaries of recent events, corporate member spotlights, and other articles written by members.*

In 2020, Jennifer Flanery (Stratacomm), as Chair, and Amber Garnett (Stratacomm), as Deputy Chair, led the Communications, Newsletter and Social Media Committee. The committee continued to support ongoing e-blast and e-newsletter development. This included completing the reconciliation and migration of the chapter’s Constant Contact email contact lists to a new association management system (AMS) rolled out by WTS-I in Q2 and updating branding across Constant Contact email templates as WTS-DC awaited the availability of the email function in the new AMS. The committee also updated branding across the Chapter’s social media platforms.



Screenshot of WTS-DC webpage

With the new AMS, the committee transitioned to hosting e-newsletter news/articles within the chapter’s new [website](#). A total of five e-newsletters were sent in 2020. (We paused publishing content on the March/April newsletter with the onset of Covid-19.) The newsletters in 2020 contained a wide range of transportation-related topics, summaries of Chapter member-wide or invitation-only events, recognition of various national issues (e.g., International Day of Women and Girls in Science, and the 100th Anniversary of the Women’s Vote in the United States), and recognition of members, scholarship recipients and award winners. The website above opens with the most recent articles and provides access to prior articles (since May 2020).



Lastly, the Communications Committee continued to manage and curate content for the chapter's social media channels, including [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#), ensuring more consistent use of social media best practices. Analytics for these efforts are as follows:

*(as of December 31, 2020)*

Emails:

- Total E-blasts sent: 39
- Total E-newsletters sent: 5
- Average open rate: 21% (*industry average 21%*)
- Average click-through-rate: 11% (*industry average 7%*)
- Opens by device: 17% mobile; 83% desktop

Social Media:

Twitter

- Total tweets: 86
- Total impressions: 31,377
- Engagements: 365
- New followers: 12 (438 total followers)

Facebook

- Total posts: 73
- Engagements: 385
- New followers: 3 (148 total followers)

LinkedIn

- Total posts: 74
- Total impressions: 24,329
- Engagements: 1,555
- Followers: 168 followers

## Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee

*The Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee's responsibilities for corporate membership include: developing and updating the corporate membership benefits brochure; maintaining the list of corporate members; profiling corporate members in the newsletter; recruiting new corporate members; and ensuring that the corporate membership logos and banner are up to date. Additionally, the committee is responsible for managing program sponsorships, which are donations for specific programs run by WTS-DC.*

The Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee was led by Cherie Gibson (HNTB) as Chair and Shelley Johnson (Sharp and Company) as Deputy Chair. Anita Beier supported the committee as a volunteer.

Despite the global pandemic, the committee successfully maintained 2019-2020 corporate membership contribution levels, secured three Transportation Rock Stars totaling \$1,500, and recruited three new corporate members. The committee also redesigned the corporate membership brochure to recruit virtually with a focus on scholarships and virtual event benefits due to COVID-19. This year, the Chapter added a new Public Sector Agency category at the \$750 level. This level was specially created for public sector agencies who want to advance women in transportation.

The WTS-DC 2020-2021 Corporate Membership offerings are shown in Table 4 below. The 2020-2021 WTS-DC Corporate Members are listed in Table 5.

*Table 4 – 2020-2021 Corporate Membership Offerings*

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Gold \$3,500</b>	<b>Silver \$2,000</b>	<b>Bronze \$1,000</b>	<b>Public Sector Agency \$750</b>	<b>W/M/ DBE* \$500</b>
Complimentary ticket(s) to the Annual Holiday Party	3	2	1	1	1
Logo prominently displayed at all Chapter events	X	X	X	X	X
Logo to appear in Chapter e-blasts	X	X	X	X	X
Verbal recognition at all Chapter events	X	X	X	X	X
Acknowledgement on Chapter website	X	X	X	X	X
Special name tag designation at all Chapter events	X	X	X	X	X
WTS assigned membership	1	1	1	1	1
WTS floating membership	1				
Corporate spotlight article in Chapter newsletter	X				

*Table 5 - 2020-21 Corporate Members by Membership Type*

Organization	Membership Type	Fee
AASHTO	GOLD	\$3,500
APTA	GOLD	\$3,500
HNTB	GOLD	\$3,500
Jacobs	GOLD	\$3,500
Transurban	GOLD	\$3,500
AECOM	SILVER	\$2,000
Dewberry	SILVER	\$2,000
Mead & Hunt	SILVER	\$2,000
Thompson Coburn LLP	SILVER	\$2,000
VHB, Metro DC, LLC	SILVER	\$2,000
WRA	SILVER	\$2,000
WSP USA	SILVER	\$2,000
Guidehouse	BRONZE	\$1,000
HDR	BRONZE	\$1,000
ITS America*	BRONZE	\$1,000
Railway Supply Institute	BRONZE	\$1,000
RK&K	BRONZE	\$1,000
Stratacomm	BRONZE	\$1,000
Delon Hampton & Associates	W/MDBE/SWaM	\$500
Foursquare ITP*	W/MDBE/SWaM	\$500
Sharp & Company	W/MDBE/SWaM	\$500
T3 Design Corporation*	W/MDBE/SWaM	\$500
Toole Design	W/MDBE/SWaM	\$500
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$40,000</b>

\*denotes a Transportation Rock Star (a Corporate Member who donated an additional \$500 to go towards the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund)

## Diversity Committee

*The Diversity Committee seeks to promote diversity and inclusion in the transportation industry for users and providers alike, regardless of age, ability, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic circumstances. The Diversity Committee's activities and efforts through the year promote the WTS-DC belief that every industry, including transportation, benefits from diversity and embracing diverse backgrounds and points of view will guide us towards more innovative and equitable transportation solutions that work for everyone.*

The Diversity Committee was led by Sahar Nabaee (STV Inc.) as Chair and Rebecca Moser (Arlington County) and Anita Beier as Deputy Chairs. Alyssa Saleh (HNTB) served the committee as a volunteer.

The Diversity Committee began the year by contributing informative and thought-provoking content for the chapter newsletter. The committee prepared an [article](#) to commemorate International Day of Women and Girls in Science (celebrated on February 11), which discussed the historical barriers for women pursuing careers in STEM fields and the role of Title IX in opening new educational opportunities, and highlighted American women accomplishing “firsts” in STEM fields between 1847-2020. In May, the committee submitted an [article](#) to celebrate Asian-American Heritage Month. This article pulled occupation data from the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) for Caucasians, Asian Americans, African Americans, and other races. Briefly, the findings highlighted discrimination towards Asian Americans in the United States, yet in more recent decades a trend towards greater social upward mobility and a gained higher social status. Asian Americans are breaking typical immigrant stereotypes and are greatly contributing to US economic, political, and cultural life.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the committee was not able to host an in-person event. To keep WTS-DC members engaged, the committee partnered with the Professional Development Committee to release a personal feedback survey during May 2020. This survey gathered information about how members were coping with the new day-to-day lifestyles of working remotely, and any financial, emotional, or personal stresses that came about as a result of the pandemic. In collaboration with the Professional Development Committee, the Diversity Committee submitted articles for the chapter newsletter that summarized the results from the survey, titled “[Voices from the COVID-19 Crisis](#)” and “[Voices from the COVID-19 Crisis: Part 2.](#)”

## Holiday Party Committee

*The Holiday Party Committee is responsible for organizing the Chapter's largest event of the year: the Annual Holiday Party in December. The committee coordinates with several other committees to plan the event, including the Scholarship and Fundraising Committee, whose awardees are recognized at the event; the Recognitions Committee, whose awardees also are recognized at the event; the Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee, to identify potential program sponsors and coordinate with corporate sponsors regarding complimentary tickets; and the Program Logistics Committee, on ticket sales.*

In 2020, Audra Bandy (Fairfax County DOT) served as Chair of the Holiday Party Committee and Sofie Rhoads (Foursquare ITP) and Sara Haley (Sullivan Strategies) served as Deputy Chairs.

With the overwhelmingly successful event held in December 2019 at the Hotel Monaco, the committee hoped to plan a “repeat” successful, in-person event in 2020. However, a global pandemic forced a complete change in plans and complete change in venue and preparation. The committee transferred its energies to planning a virtual holiday celebration to be hosted on Zoom with a combination of live speaking and pre-recorded content. The change in format required additional effort, especially to bring together the pre-recorded videos and to generally provide content for a full hour for the party. Additional volunteers stepped up to help, including Advisors Brittney Gick and Margaret Ballard. The committee worked with WTS-I to use the WTS-I Zoom account, and we were grateful to the staffers at WTS-I who supported our event. (See the “Holiday Party” section in “Events Throughout 2020” for more information.)

## Legislative Committee

*The Legislative Committee works to inform WTS-DC members about critical legislative issues that affect the transportation industry, and to strengthen the relationships between WTS-DC members and representatives on Capitol Hill. The committee typically hosts at least one event each year and contributes newsletter articles about legislative matters.*

The Legislative Committee was led by Jennifer Covino (Simon and Company) as Chair and Kerry O’Hare (O’Hare Infrastructure Strategies, LLC) as Deputy Chair. Kate Roetzer (Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority) served as a volunteer.

The Committee provided two articles to the WTS-DC Newsletter. In January/February, the Legislative Update [summarized](#) the U.S. Conference of Mayors Winter Meeting, held in the nation’s capital. A bipartisan delegation of U.S. mayors went to the White House to meet with President Donald Trump and other senior officials on Friday, January 24. The president highlighted infrastructure as a top priority for the administration in his remarks on “transforming America’s communities” to the group. The update also addressed upcoming infrastructure proposals expected from both House and Senate committees.

In the summer, the Legislative Update covered pending infrastructure legislation in Congress in the article titled "[Where We Are With a Surface Transportation Bill During COVID-19.](#)" The Moving Forward Act (H.R. 2), which passed the House by a 233-188 vote, would support affordable housing, broadband expansion, schools, clean energy, wastewater and drinking water infrastructure, hospitals, and the U.S. Postal Service. The article explained that authorization of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 would expire on September 30, 2020. (A year-long extension was signed October 1, 2020.)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee did not host an on-the-Hill event in 2020. Instead, the committee organized a virtual webinar focused on the 2020 election. (See the "Election 2020" section in "Events Throughout 2020" for more information.)

## Membership Committee

*The Membership Committee is responsible for maintaining up-to-date membership records, preparing welcome packets for new members, sending renewal emails to chapter members, and answering any membership-related questions. They provide additional support to the Program Logistics Committee by confirming that everyone who purchased a member ticket for one of our events is a WTS member, and they support the Communications Committee to ensure that our membership email lists are up to date.*

The Membership Committee was led by Bailey Lozner (Kittelson and Associates) as Chair and Lezlie Rupert (DDOT) as Deputy Chair. Danielle McCray (Kimley-Horn) provided support as a volunteer.

In 2020, the committee hoped to recreate the Membership Mixer held the prior year. However, the committee was thwarted with the pandemic and social distancing requirements. Volunteers Avital Barnea, Adrienne Ameal, and Margaret Ballard hosted a fun "Transportation Trivia" virtual happy hour in June to engage with members in a fun and social way while still being socially distant. (See "Events Throughout 2020" section below for more details.)

WTS-I offered many member initiatives in 2020. One new WTS-I initiative provides complimentary student memberships, in order to encourage more chapter participation by local colleges and universities.

*Table 6 - Monthly Membership in 2020*

<b>Month</b>	<b>"Paid" Members</b>	<b>Expiring Memberships*</b>	<b>Total Members</b>
January 2020	202	24	226
February 2020	195	30	225
March 2020	191	26	217
April 2020	186	13	199
May 2020	215	9	224
June 2020	211	15	226
July 2020	193	21**	214
August 2020	209	7	216
September 2020	179	34**	213
October 2020	194	20	214
November 2020	134	67***	201
December 2020	151	27	178

\*memberships expiring in the current month unless otherwise noted

\*\*memberships expiring in current month and next month

\*\*\*memberships expiring in current month and next two months

WTS-DC Chapter membership remained relatively constant throughout 2020 with the average member count hovering around 212.

## Mentoring Committee

*The Mentoring Committee is responsible for matching industry leaders with young professionals in a mentor-mentee relationship. The committee facilitates learning experiences around professionalism in a friendly, interactive environment. In addition to the one-on-one matches, there are group events hosted by industry experts and successful professionals in various sectors of transportation to share career lessons learned.*

Jacqueline Lavalleye (HDR, Inc.) and Roxanne Feige (Atkins Global) served as Co-Chairs of the WTS-DC Mentoring Committee in 2020. Sara Henly-Thomas (HDR) provided support as a volunteer.

Sixteen mentor-mentee pairs participated in the 2020 program. Applicants were matched based on their work experience, interests, sector of employment, and personality-communication style. Each pair was encouraged to meet at least once a month on their own and attend group events throughout the program. Monthly check-in surveys were completed by mentors and mentees to ensure the pairs were continuing to build their partnerships and were meeting regularly. Doodle polls were used to select the best available date to host events.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the mentoring events were held virtually. Mentor-mentee pairs attended a kick-off meeting on March 23. The committee hosted a virtual happy hour in May, where participants played several rounds of ice breaker questions using a dice to determine which question each person would answer. Other virtual happy hour events were held in July and September via Zoom. During these events, the group hosted transportation/DC trivia and two rounds of two truths and a lie (one round being professional theme and the other personal).

In June, the committee hosted a professional development event featuring Sharon Podobnik Peterson, the founder of The Center for Conscious Leadership and The Go Love Yourself Box, a subscription box for personal growth. Sharon prepared a presentation about Communication Styles while working from home. In August, the committee hosted a group event focusing on Difficult Conversations. Chris Vineis, one of the founders of WTS and the President of Capital Partnerships LLC, moderated the conversation.

The last event of the 2020 program was a panel discussion on tips for success in the transportation industry. The panel included speakers from the private and public sectors. It was open to all WTS-DC members and non-members.

## Professional Development Committee

*The Professional Development Committee provides opportunities for members and non-members to advance their careers through educational, informative, and skill-developing events. They collaborate with other committees to organize joint events to support career development.*

In 2020, Cerasela Cristei (EXP) and Khatereh Vaghefi (WSP USA) served as the Chair and Deputy Chair, respectively, of the Professional Development Committee. Maha El-Metwally (JMT) provided support as a volunteer.



The committee started the year strong with plans to organize several Professional Development events and an annual bike tour to raise funds for the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund. In February 2020, the committee organized an in-person professional development event, called “Visual Resume,” featuring professional wardrobe stylist and image consultant Robin Finnell. Ms. Finnell provided invaluable information to our members on creating a personal brand and a wardrobe style appropriate for the corporate ladder.

Following the start of the pandemic, however, the committee adjusted its goals to serve the needs of WTS-DC members. The committee assisted the Diversity Committee in developing a survey to reach out to members and evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on jobs in the transportation industry, on women and on their families. The committee also modified its annual Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) workshop to “go virtual.” The collaboration between the Northern Virginia District of VDOT and the WTS-DC Chapter resulted in another successful event. High-profile speakers discussed the impact of COVID-19 on VDOT’s operation, budget, and staff. VDOT also gave an update on major projects, which maintained their progress during the pandemic and achieved major milestones.

## Program Logistics Committee

*The Program Logistics provides support to other committees and groups who are hosting Chapter events. They support event organizers by helping to identify venues and caterers, and by providing advice on contracts. The committee works with the event planning committees, assists with planning the events and with catering and venue coordination when required for in-person events. The committee arranges registration on Eventbrite before events. For in-person events, the committee handles name-tags, registration, and works with walk-in attendees to purchase tickets at or after the program and assisted with event set-up.*

The Program Logistics Committee was led by Katie Masetti (Mead & Hunt) as Chair, and Sophie Guiny (InfraStrategies, LLC) as Deputy Chair, Ellie McCurdy (VHB), Elizabeth Patel (US FHWA), and Daisy Allman (Alexandria Transit Company/DASH) supported the committee as volunteers.

As with all committees, the Program Logistics Committee had to adjust to the new paradigm of virtual events. While the committee still managed the Eventbrite pages for virtual events, they also worked with the planning committees to ensure Zoom meeting information was e-mailed to registrants before the event. The committee members attended tech run-throughs for applicable virtual events when the WTS-DC Zoom account was used.

The committee worked with the Membership Committee to ensure that those who purchased member tickets are members in good standing of WTS. After an event, the committee reports on event metrics at the following board meeting.

In 2020, the committee supported all WTS-DC events listed in Table 7 below, except those events hosted jointly with other local professional organizations.

Table 7 – WTS-DC 2020 Events (excludes Mentoring Program events and Board meetings)

Date	Event	Description	Format	Number of Registrants
January 26	2020 WTS-DC Strategic Planning Session	Open Event, Snacks	In-person	52*
February 25	"Mobility as a Right" and How We Close the Equity Gap in Transportation: A Conversation with Delaware DOT Secretary Jennifer Cohan	Open Event, Lunch	In-person	56
February 26	Polishing Your Visual Resume	Open Event, Lunch	In-person	11
March 31	Coffee and Conversation: A Chat with DRPT Director Jennifer Mitchell	Open Event	Virtual	19
May 15	Executive Women's Roundtable: Leading Through Times of Uncertainty	Invitation Only	Virtual	27
June 11	Transportation Trivia Night	Open Event	Virtual	11
June 17	Take a Breath: An Evening of Mindfulness with Tanya Saunders	Open Event	Virtual	18
July 21	Coffee Chat with FAA Assistant Administrator for NextGen Pam Whitely	Open Event	Virtual	32
August 5	From Grounded to Take-Off: A Discussion on Domestic and International Aviation <i>Hosted jointly with the Transportation Research Forum and Young Professionals in Transportation</i>	Open Event	Virtual	207
September 10	Coffee Chat with Chris Conklin, Director of Montgomery County Department of Transportation	Open Event	Virtual	29

Date	Event	Description	Format	Number of Registrants
September 29	How VDOT Weathers the Challenges of a Global Pandemic	Open Event	Virtual	56
October 7	Career Panel: How to Be Successful in the Transportation Industry	Open Event	Virtual	12
October 14	Election 2020: Mood, Metrics, and Viewpoints from Both Sides of the Aisle	Open Event	Virtual	27
October 21	Vision Zero in the DMV: A Conversation on Transportation Safety	Open Event	Virtual	58
November 13	Executive Women's Roundtable: Communication in the 21st Century Workplace: Is it evolving beyond my capabilities?	Invitation Only	Virtual	33
November 17	WMATA During the Pandemic: Panel Discussion with WMATA Leaders	Open Event	Virtual	92
December 8	WTS-DC Holiday Party	Open Event	Virtual	116 (with 16 additional donations)

\*indicates number of persons invited; registration was not required

## Recognitions Committee

*The Recognitions Committee is responsible for handling the Chapter's solicitation, nomination, evaluation, and certification of its annual awards.*

The 2020 Recognitions Committee was led by Haley Peckett (DDOT) as Chair and Jamie Rosen (Kimley-Horn and Associates) as Deputy Chair.

The Recognitions Committee enabled WTS-DC to recognize six deserving individuals, projects, and companies that have advanced women in transportation. Early in the year, the committee updated its

electronic records of past Recognition Award recipients in the WTS-DC Dropbox files for future institutional knowledge.

In May 2020, the committee developed and posted updated nominations forms using Google Forms and started publicizing the nomination period, which ran through June 30, 2020. After receiving several nominations, the committee recruited six WTS-DC Board Members to serve on an evaluation panel and set up a matrix in Excel to review each panelist according to 2-5 criteria (the criteria vary by award category). The panel reviewed the nomination forms in August and presented their recommendations to the Executive Board and full Board in September.

The Google nomination form, scoring matrix, and some marketing materials created this year can easily be repurposed for future years.

The Recognition Award recipients received their awards virtually at the WTS-DC Holiday Party on December 8, 2020. (See “Recognition Awards” section below for more information on these deserving award recipients.) The Committee arranged for each of the award recipients to record a video to be shared during the virtual award ceremony. The award recipients received their physical awards by mail prior to the Holiday Party.

Each of the six WTS-DC Recognition Award recipients was nominated in their respective award category at the WTS-I level. As a final note, one of the WTS-DC recognition award recipients from 2019 rose above the competition at the international level. Paul Skoutelas, CEO of the American Public Transit Association (APTA), received WTS International's Honorable Ray LaHood Award for 2020. Paul accepted his award virtually during the WTS-I Annual Conference in May 2020.

## Scholarship and Fundraising Committee

*The Scholarship and Fundraising Committee is responsible for both awarding scholarships and raising funds for scholarships. Each year, the committee plans the calendar year for the annual scholarships, seeks out potential applicants, convenes the review panel, seeks Board approval of the scholarship recipients, and notifies the recipients and coordinates with them on the logistics of accepting their awards. The committee is also responsible for coordinating complimentary membership for awardees and for completing the WTS-I scholarship applications.*

In 2020, the Scholarship and Fundraising Committee was chaired by Shelley Wynne (Dewberry). Alanna McKeeman (Foursquare ITP) served as Deputy Chair. Ruby Lee (WSP USA) volunteered as a committee member.

The Scholarship and Fundraising Committee encourages young women to advance their educational and professional career in transportation by providing networking and learning experiences through a one-year free membership. The committee is responsible for both awarding scholarships and raising funds for scholarships. The committee collaborates with almost all the other Board committees to raise funds, create awareness, and retain past recipients as members.

The committee issued a call for scholarship applications to regional colleges and universities in the Washington, DC metropolitan area in early fall 2020. The committee continues to add to its existing contact list of colleges and universities to increase the diversity of the applicant pool of applicants. The committee received impressive applications in 2020. After convening a scholarship review panel, the committee recommended that nine, highly qualified students receive WTS-DC 2020 Scholarship awards ranging in value from \$1,000 to \$2,000. The recommendation was presented to the WTS-DC Board in October, and the nine recipients were confirmed. In all, WTS-DC provided scholarships totaling \$15,500 in 2020, which is the highest amount the chapter has ever distributed.

The 2020 scholarship recipients were recognized virtually at the WTS-DC Holiday Party in December 2020. (See “Scholarship Awards” for more information on these deserving recipients.) The scholarships were awarded after a year’s worth of fundraising events and donations. The committee did not set a specific fundraising goal for 2020 for the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund. Instead, their efforts focused on increasing the number of applicants received in 2020, which involved a thorough update of the college and university contact list. Funds were raised through collaboration with other committees this year. Additionally, the committee obtained three Named Scholarships, valued at \$2,000 each, from corporate sponsors Dewberry, HDR, and WSP USA. Kimley-Horn generously donated \$2,500 and Cardinal Infrastructure provided a \$300 donation to the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund. The fundraising sources are listed in Table 5 below.

*Table 7 – 2020 Scholarship Fundraising Sources*

Source	Supporting Committee	Amount Raised
Transportation Rock Stars*	Corporate Membership	\$2,000
Corporate Membership Dues Allocation	Corporate Membership	\$2,500
Holiday Party Scholarship Donations	Holiday Party	\$4,570
Sponsored Scholarships**	N/A	\$8,000
Other donations	N/A	\$5,916.48
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$22,986.48</b>

\*Includes a \$500 donation from 2019 that was received in January 2020

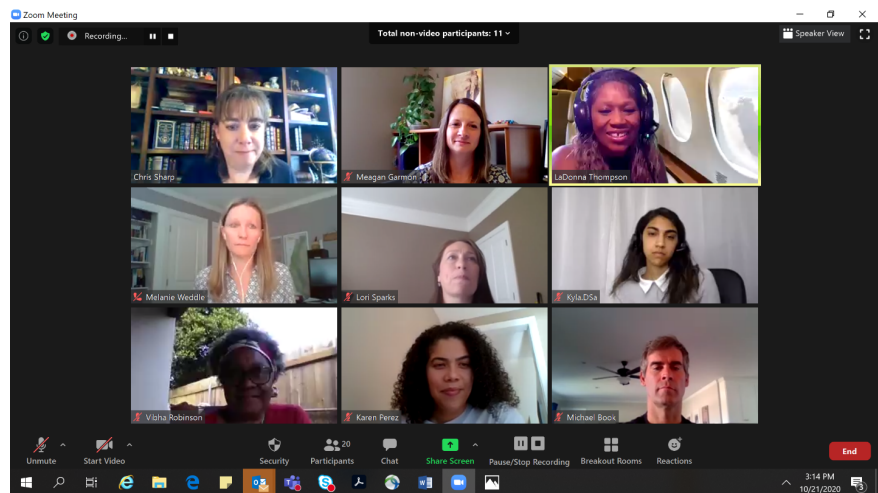
\*\*Includes an additional \$2,000 donation from 2019 that was received in January 2020

## Transportation YOU Committee

*The TransportationYOU Committee partners with local high schools in Washington, D.C. to provide monthly lunch events focusing on college readiness, careers in transportation, professional development, field trips and career spotlight workshops. Mentoring is at the heart of the Transportation YOU initiative.*

The Transportation YOU committee was led by Jasmy Methipara (US DOT), as Chair, and Britton Hammit (Kimley-Horn and Associates), as Deputy Chair. Margaret Akofio-Sowah (WSP USA) served as the committee’s Dunbar liaison. Kyla D’sa (Kimley-Horn of DC) served as the Cardozo liaison and the Instagram manager. Barbara Moreno (Foursquare ITP) assisted the committee as the incoming Chair for 2021. Laura MacNeil (DDOT) and Brandon Buckner (FHWA) provided invaluable support as committee volunteers.

The year was a challenging one for programming for the committee. The Transportation YOU committee maintained its relationship with three DC public high schools: Dunbar, Cardozo, and McKinley Tech. Transportation YOU started 2020 with in-person spotlight speakers from the Prince George’s County Public Works Department and the Federal Transit Administration. Due to the pandemic, however, the planned Spring line-up of events featuring the National Transportation Safety Board and Amazon, and one offering Speed Mentoring, were paused and ultimately canceled. The committee brainstormed over the summer and came up with virtual programming for the Fall, which included a Federal Aviation Administration panel and speakers from the Vaughn College of Aeronautics. Through the interactive Zoom interface, a December virtual scavenger hunt was also planned with a public transit theme. Though faced with many hurdles, Transportation



Screenshot of the FAA Zoom event on October 21, 2021

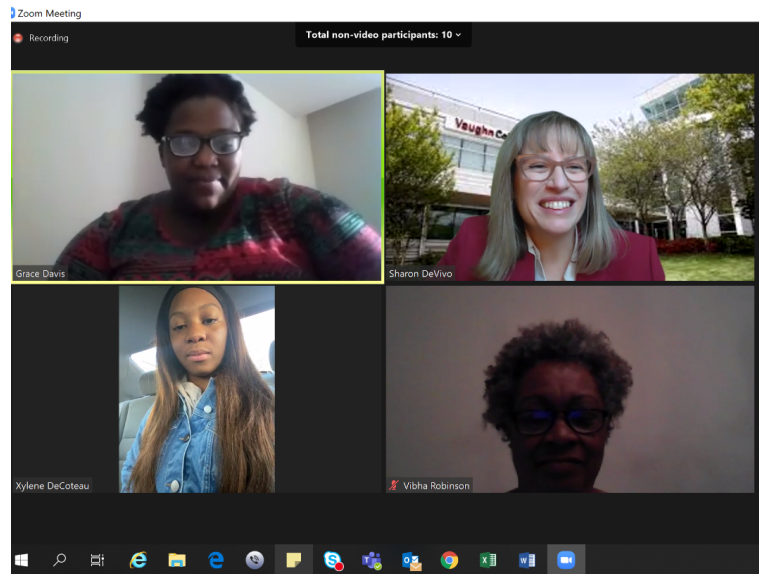


Screenshot of the FAA Zoom event on October 21, 2021

MENTORING, were paused and ultimately canceled. The committee brainstormed over the summer and came up with virtual programming for the Fall, which included a Federal Aviation Administration panel and speakers from the Vaughn College of Aeronautics. Through the interactive Zoom interface, a December virtual scavenger hunt was also planned with a public transit theme. Though faced with many hurdles, Transportation

YOU was able to develop events that presented a wide range of careers to the mentees of DC both furthering the mission of WTS and helping to build more relationships despite our inability to be in-person.

At the FAA Zoom Event on October 21, FAA representatives included organizers Chris Sharp and La Donna Thompson, panelists Meagan Garmon, Lori Sparks, Melanie Weddle and Karen Perez and teachers and students from Dunbar HS, Cardozo HS and McKinley Tech HS. Vibha Robinson facilitated the participation of Dunbar students. Transportation YOU committee members from DC (Kyla D'Sa) and from other chapters (Michael Book) were also in attendance.



President Sharon DeVivo and two recent graduates Grace Davis and Xylene DeCoteau speaking to our students

Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology joined WTS-DC on November 4 for a Zoom event. President Sharon DeVivo and two recent graduates Grace Davis and Xylene DeCoteau spoke to our students. Vibha Robinson once again facilitated the participation of Dunbar students. Transportation YOU committee members also attended.

## Events Throughout the Year

### A Conversation about Closing the Equity Gap in Transportation with Delaware DOT Secretary Jennifer Cohan

On February 25, 2020, the WTS-DC Chapter hosted a lunch event titled “Mobility as a Right and How We Close the Equity Gap in Transportation - A Conversation with Delaware DOT Secretary Jennifer Cohan” in partnership with ITS America. The sold-out event featured speaker Jennifer Cohan, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Transportation, and was an exciting opportunity for participants to hear Jennifer speak about the opportunities and challenges of “mobility on demand” transportation service models.



Jennifer Cohan, Delaware Department of Transportation Secretary

ITS America President & CEO Shailen Bhatt kicked off the event by introducing Jennifer, and Maggie Walsh, Vice President and Strategic Clients and Pursuits Leader at HDR and Chair of WTS-I, moderated the discussion, which focused on the growing equity gap and lack of access to emerging mobility services for women, persons with disabilities, minorities, and lower-income individuals. Maggie’s questions probed the transportation equity challenges faced by DeIDOT and how Jennifer is addressing

those challenges. Maggie and Jennifer also discussed the transportation challenges that are faced more often by women and how public transportation can be made more accessible and comfortable for women.

WTS-DC would like to thank the Delaware Department of Transportation for its generous support for this event!



From left to right, Susan Martinovich, Treasurer of the WTS-I Board and Vice President and DOT National Practice Consultant at HNTB; Paula Hammond, Vice Chair of the WTS-I Board and Senior Vice President and National Transportation Market Leader at WSP USA; Shailen Bhatt, President and CEO of the Intelligent Transportation Society of America; Maggie Walsh, Chair of the WTS-I Board and Vice President and Strategic Pursuits Leader at HDR; Neela Babu, President of WTS-DC; and Laura Chace, Chief Operating Officer of the Intelligent Transportation Society of America

### Executive Women’s Roundtables

President Neela Babu organized two Executive Women’s Roundtables (EWR) in 2020 -- for the first time as virtual events!

On May 15, WTS-DC hosted the first EWR session of 2020, titled “Leading Through Times of Uncertainty: Keeping People & Strategies at the Forefront.” The session was facilitated by Teri Fischer, a speaker and executive coach who is the CEO and Managing Partner of Insight Strategies, Inc., and focused on how we lead during crises, such as the coronavirus pandemic. The session recognized that while all of us know how to do our

jobs, women are being tested as people and leaders of teams, departments, organizations—and even their families. Fisher’s message emphasized that women leaders can choose to shrink or go big. They can choose to have a victim mindset or lead from a place of hope and accountability. Teri challenged the



participants to ask themselves about the choices they would make. WTS-DC would like to thank Insight Strategies for generously donating this event.

WTS-DC continued its Executive Women's Roundtable (EWR) virtually with another session held November 13, titled "Communication in a 21st Century Workplace: Is it evolving beyond my capabilities?" Attendees discussed the latest communication technologies and their comfort level with them, asked questions of the communications experts, and shared their own experiences, including lessons learned. They appreciated the insights on how to create social media posts and how to mine the analytics. The discussion focused on the four primary social media platforms currently used by the business community: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Our communications experts, from KGL Communications and Sharp & Co, explained how these social media accounts should be managed and how to create marketing campaigns to reach specific audiences. WTS-DC thanks KGL Communications and Sharp & Co for generously sharing their expertise with our group!

These invite-only events bring together top-ranking women in the transportation industry in a facilitated forum to interact, network, and discuss common issues. The women who participate in the events include attendees from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. Typical invitees include women who are Executive Leader Members of WTS, women who are in leadership positions within Corporate Member companies and organizations, and women in leadership roles in the D.C. transportation community.

### Transportation Trivia: A Night of Social Distancing Fun

On June 11, WTS-DC hosted a trivia event and invited our audience to engage in an hour of virtual fun and networking. Thirteen WTS-DC members and friends convened for the virtual trivia event.

Five teams of two joined in on the fun with three moderators/scorekeepers. WTS-DC Past President Adrienne Ameel and Board Advisors Margaret Ballard and Avital Barnea developed and read the questions and answers, which included two verbal rounds and one picture round.

Questions ranged from "What is the only underground WMATA Metrorail station that has high speed elevators but no escalators to access the surface?" (answer: Forest Glen) to "In 1997, who was the first female appointed to lead the Federal Aviation Administration?" (answer: Jane Garvey) to "The Arc de Triomphe, one of the most famous monuments in Paris, France, has how many avenues radiating from its central plaza?" (answer: 12).

For the final question, teams were able to wager up to their total number of points accrued through the first three rounds. The category of the final question was "U.S. Airports" and teams had to come up with the correct three-letter codes for five major airports across the country (Portland, Phoenix, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Newark, and Orlando). Teams had to correctly name all five three-letter codes to claim any points. The final question ended up tumbling two teams down to zero points, but three teams knew all five airport codes, allowing one team to double their score.

Despite having to stay at home and social distance, participants agreed that the night provided a creative way to network, learn some random transportation facts, show off people's obscure transportation

prosess, and have fun. Thank you to all who participated and to Kimley-Horn for providing the Zoom platform.

## Take a Breath: An Evening of Mindfulness with Pause Breathwork Instructor Tanya Saunders

On June 17, WTS-DSC hosted Pause Breathwork Instructor Tanya Saunders, who invited participants to take time out to breathe, connect, release, and transform their minds and bodies during this difficult time. Tanya guided participants through a meditative breathwork journey set to music to breathe, feel, heal, and thrive.

Created by Founder and CEO Samantha Skelly, the Pause Breathwork breathing method uses various, continual breath patterns to break down emotions in the body that stay stuck and create stress in our energetic bodies. During the June session, Tanya virtually guided participants through a meditative breathwork pattern, which has the intention of transformation.

Breathwork allows one to reconnect with one's body to feel deeply and to understand and experience one's own unique intelligence and emotions. The practice of breathwork enables one to be present, to be aware of oneself, and to breath and feel though experiences to release, heal, and transform. Participants enjoyed connecting with their breath and with each other in an intimate, albeit virtual, setting.

WTS-DC thanks Tanya Saunders for providing the chapter with the opportunity to experience breathwork firsthand!

## Coffee Chat with FAA's Pam Whitley

On July 21, WTS-DC held a coffee chat with Pamela Whitley, Acting Assistant Administrator for NextGen (ANG) at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). This coffee chat was designed for a small group of attendees to sit around a virtual table with Whitley and engage with her in a conversational format. Twenty WTS members and friends joined us for this event.

Whitley discussed the NextGen program. The Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) is the FAA-led modernization of America's air transportation system to make flying even safer, more efficient, and more predictable. Whitley shared how the NextGen program was created by Congress in response to congestion and delays in the national airspace system. Congress created a joint organization to look at the problem and Whitley led that effort.

Throughout her career, Whitley volunteered to take on new tasks and, as an engineer, she always looked for ways to solve problems. When taking on a new role, she pursued opportunities that she believed would expand her skill set and help her reach her personal goals. When asked about her leadership



Tanya Saunders, certified Pause Breathwork instructor

experience, she discussed the importance of building relationships and meeting people. She also mentioned the value of guiding people and having them take ownership of their work. Her leadership strategies have allowed her to develop a team of people who respect her and respond to her requests.

Attendees were grateful for this opportunity to chat with Whitley and WTS-DC is thankful for her willingness to join us.

## From Grounded to Take-Off: A Discussion on Domestic and International Aviation Recovery – An Event Hosted Jointly with YPT-DC and TRF



Joint Event with TRF-DC and TRF

For the 11th year in a row, the Transportation Research Forum (TRF-DC), WTS Washington, D.C. Chapter (WTS-DC), and Young Professionals in Transportation (YPT-DC) partnered to host “From Grounded to Take-Off: A Discussion on Domestic and International Aviation Recovery.” The virtual discussion examined the impact of COVID-19 on domestic and international travel as well as the steps that countries, airlines, and airports are taking to ensure a safe, secure, and resilient air transportation system. The panel of industry

experts discussed the role that their respective organizations have played in safeguarding the flying experience and provided insights on how public health fits into long-term recovery strategies.

Listeners enjoyed hearing from Carey Fagan, Director of the Asia-Pacific Region, Federal Aviation Administration, Dr. Ansa Jordaan, Chief of the Aviation Medicine Section, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and Annie Russo, Senior Vice President of Government and Political Affairs, Airports Council International-North America. Peter Cerda, Regional Vice President of the Americas, International Air Transport Association (IATA), moderated the discussion.

The lively conversation began with a summary of the pandemic’s impact on the aviation industry and experts’ best estimates of the “time to recovery” (to 2019 levels) for domestic and international air traffic. The panelists emphasized that the “new normal” of the pandemic has brought about a drastic change in passenger behavior and the need for the aviation industry to work together to put passengers back in the air. During the question-and-answer, the panelists agreed that the biggest challenges facing the industry are two-fold: harmonizing the industry’s approach to air travel after the pandemic and ensuring that passengers understand the measures in place to make air travel as safe as possible for the consumer.

## Coffee Chat with Chris Conklin, Director of Montgomery County Department of Transportation

On September 10, WTS-DC hosted a coffee chat with Chris Conklin and Hannah Henn to discuss how Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is responding to the pandemic. Chris Conklin is the Director of MCDOT, and Hannah Henn serves in two roles as Acting Strategic Communication Manager and Senior Engineer for Strategic Innovation in the MCDOT Office of the Director. WTS-DC and MCDOT were joined by 27 members and friends, making the conversation very lively.

Conklin and Henn started the conversation with an interesting presentation discussing an overview of the many innovative initiatives the county is taking to respond to the pandemic. The presentation covered how the county was able to navigate funding through the Cares Act, its Shared Streets initiative, parking enforcement, the COVID Corps Youth Program, Safe Routes to Schools, and changes in transit services in the county.

MCDOT discussed how they approached the challenging task of reducing and modifying transit routes in the county. The county ensured that all of the bus routes still connected communities to essential services such as grocery stores, hospitals, and banks. MCDOT focused their attention on making sure that transit dependent communities were still being served. They also included a map to show residents how they could access essential services and other routes that may be available to them. The county was one of the first to enforce a rear-door bus boarding policy, to require masks to be worn, and to provide masks to customers. The county worked hard on sanitizing all of the buses every day to make citizens feel comfortable with riding the bus.

MCDOT discussed the innovative COVID Corps Youth Program deployed during the pandemic. The summer employment program provided young residents an opportunity to support the county's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the services the program offered specific to MCDOT included providing information to the community about changes in transit service and educating the public on scooter and bike safety and etiquette.

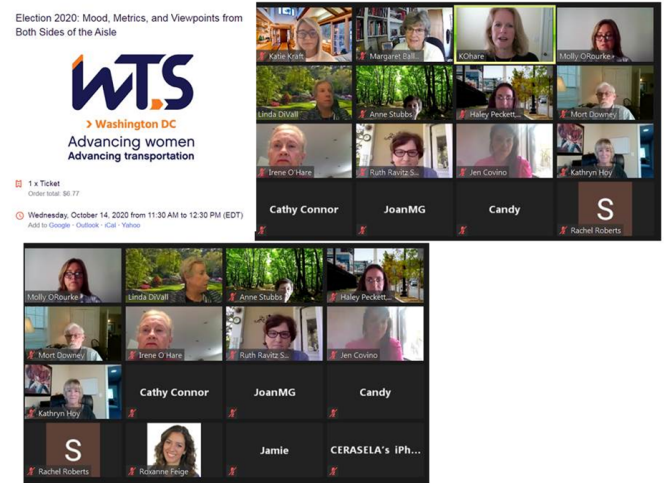
WTS-DC extends its appreciation to MCDOT as well as Chris Conklin and Hannah Henn for taking time out of their busy schedules to speak at this event and respond to some tough questions from the audience.



MCDOT Presentation Slide - Shared Streets Initiative

## Election 2020: Mood, Metrics, and Viewpoints from Both Sides of the Aisle

In October, the Legislative Committee organized a virtual webinar about the upcoming election and related demographics. Two highly respected individuals in public opinion research offered key insights. Linda DiVall, a Republican pollster, and Molly O'Rourke, a Democratic pollster, provided their professional expectations into the Senate, House, and presidential races. Ms. DiVall is the founder and Executive Chairman of American Viewpoint; Ms. O'Rourke is a partner at Hart Research. Kerry O'Hare (O'Hare Infrastructure Strategies, LLC), Deputy Chair of the Legislative Committee, moderated a robust conversation about polling and the 2020 election, including lessons learned from 2016.



Screenshots from Election 2020 event

## Vision Zero: Transportation Safety in the DMV

On October 21, WTS-DC hosted representatives from Montgomery County, DDOT, the City of Alexandria, Arlington County, and Prince George's County to discuss transportation safety and their adoption of Vision Zero—a programmatic strategy to reduce deaths and serious injuries on the transportation system. Dr. Laura Fraade-Blonar, an injury epidemiologist specializing in transportation at RAND Corporation, moderated the panel. During the discussion, panelists described how adopting Vision Zero has impacted their respective jurisdiction's approach to responding to safety concerns, implementing projects, prioritizing equity, and adjusting to new circumstances in a global pandemic. The following key themes emerged throughout the hour-long conversation:

- Through the implementation of their Vision Zero programs, each agency has enhanced their data collection, review, and analysis efforts to inform decision-making. Vision Zero's safe systems approach means using data to proactively address safety issues—preventing crashes before they happen. Panelists added that making crash data available to the public promotes transparency in this process.
- Top-down support from officials and jurisdictional leadership is paramount to the success of Vision Zero programs. Identifying transportation safety as an agency priority gives program staff the ability to go bolder and spark the organizational change needed to move safety projects and policies to the forefront.
- Vision Zero has provided a platform for agencies to enhance internal collaboration practices, moving the transportation safety conversation outside of just engineers and planners to engage staff from disciplines such as public health, police, parks/recreation, land use, and public safety. Panelists

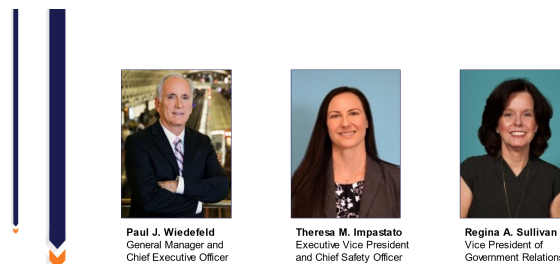
emphasized that Vision Zero has helped to enhance coordination across these departments and break down silos to create a unified approach to transportation safety.

- Equity is the cornerstone to Vision Zero. Panelists described how they integrated equity metrics into their project evaluation and selection criteria to address underserved areas or vulnerable populations. Panelists also emphasized the importance of making their public engagement efforts accessible to people of all abilities, ages, languages, incomes, races, ethnicities, and neighborhoods.
- The Vision Zero program coordinators at each regional jurisdiction meet monthly to discuss ongoing activities and plans. This has created a new avenue to collaborate and share lessons learned, which has been extremely valuable, especially for cross-border issues.

Over 50 attendees logged in to the virtual panel bringing excellent questions and perspectives to the conversation. We thank those who attended and helped to raise over \$300 for the WTS-DC scholarship fund! For more information on Vision Zero, please visit the [Vision Zero Network](#).

### WMATA During the Pandemic: Panel Discussion with WMATA Leaders

This annual event, organized by Advisor Anne Stubbs, had a new look this year — a Zoom webinar. The panel consisted of: WMATA General Manager/Chief Executive Officer Paul Wiedefeld; WMATA Executive Vice President and Chief Safety Officer Theresa Impastato; and WMATA Vice President for Government Relations Regina Sullivan. The discussion focused on WMATA during the COVID-19 pandemic. Three themes – strategic and adaptive decision-making, collaboration, and communication – were threaded throughout the discussion of WMATA’s readiness and response to the pandemic and its impacts on the priorities, operations and finances of the organization and the physical system.



WMATA During the Pandemic

- WMATA immediately focused its priorities on the most critical challenges: safety of the workforce and customer; aligning service with demand, especially for essential service and the transit-dependent; service equity; and protecting the system’s future as a critical transportation and economic asset for the region’s recovery.
- Planning, preparedness, regional partnerships, and communication were central to WMATA’s response to the operating challenges.
- A similar reliance upon regional collaboration and communication – with its board and workforce and with other transit agencies and organizations – guided WMATA’s steps to deal with the financial fallout of the pandemic.

Acknowledging WTS’s focus on professional development for women in transportation, Ms. Impastato and Ms. Sullivan also shared lessons learned from their own career paths. They spoke about unexpected

experiences in one's work life that can offer risk as well as opportunity for professional growth and career development. Remaining curious and saying "Yes" to such opportunities can lead to personal and professional growth. If public service is recognized as a calling, being open to such opportunities can be educating and rewarding at any level.

Once again, the WMATA event was one of the Chapter's most popular (well-attended) with nearly 90 participants who engaged with a variety of questions. In addition to being informative, the webinar generated almost \$1,500 for the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund.

Thank you to WMATA for its continued support of the WTS-DC Chapter!

## Holiday Party

The 2020 WTS-DC Holiday Party was held virtually on Tuesday, December 8, 2020. Members and guests from throughout the transportation industry attended on-line. Attendees viewed several pre-recorded videos of award winners and scholarship recipients. The Chapter President Neela Babu gave welcoming remarks and applauded the Chapter's corporate members. Committee Chair Audra Bandy explained the expectations for the Zoom event.

This event was an opportunity for our Chapter to recognize and honor the recipients of our Recognition Awards. (See the "Recognition Awards" section for more details.) These individuals and organizations made extraordinary contributions to the transportation industry as leaders, role models, mentors, and benefactors and they generously support WTS-DC in a variety of ways. The Director of the District of Columbia's Department of Transportation (DDOT), Jeff Marootian, served as the emcee for awardees. Our chapter shared the video presentation to the Recognition Award recipients on the chapter [website](#).

During the party, we recognized nine extremely talented and deserving students as WTS-DC scholarship recipients. These scholarships are a way to support our industry's future. (See the "Scholarship Awards" section for more details on our scholarship awardees.)

## Recognition Awards

WTS-DC honored the following individuals, entities, and transportation projects this year:

### Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award

This award honors an individual or organization that has made significant contributions in promoting diversity and cultural awareness within their organization, the transportation industry, or in a project or activity that supports the goals and mission of WTS. The recipient is selected based on the following criteria: exhibiting extraordinary efforts or initiatives in facilitating professional opportunities for women and minorities; and contributing significantly to promoting diversity, inclusion and multi-cultural awareness within his/her/the organization, the transportation industry, or in a project or activity that supports the goals and mission of WTS.

In 2020, WTS-DC honored *District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser* with the Chapter's Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award for her work to create the Black Lives Matter Plaza on our very own District streets during tumultuous social unrest and to strengthen transportation as a way to connect District residents with opportunities.



District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser (image credit: <https://mayor.dc.gov/biography/muriel-bowser>)

### Employer of the Year Award

This award honors an organization (company, non-profit, association or government agency) for recruiting, retaining and advancing women. The recipient is selected based on the following criteria: an organization that includes women in executive and senior positions and leading major initiatives; an organization that has career development plans and succession programs in place for women to advance within the organization; an organization that provides continuing development for its female employees through professional education, professional organizations, and professional development opportunities; an organization that encourages women students to enter the transportation field by providing internship opportunities; and an organization that supports WTS through memberships, sponsorships, and employee involvement at the local and international levels.

WTS-DC honored the *American Public Transit Association (APTA)* as the recipient of the Chapter's Employer of the Year Award. APTA's mission is to advance public transportation, and APTA has worked hard to advance women in its organization and in the industry. APTA has been a steadfast supporter of WTS-DC and of women's professional development in transportation.



**AMERICAN  
PUBLIC  
TRANSPORTATION  
ASSOCIATION**



## Innovation Transportation Solution Award

This award salutes an innovative transportation project led by a woman. (Only completed projects will be considered for the award.) The recipient is selected based on the following criteria: the purpose of the transportation initiative, solution, project, or policy and the number of women involved from initiation to completion; the key elements of the project and how the female project manager successfully implemented those elements; a description of how female project manager successfully met and overcame challenges; and how the project achieved its purpose.

WTS-DC honored *Open Streets DC* as the Chapter’s 2020 recipient of the Innovative Transportation Solution Award. The Open Streets DC event was held in October 2019, and it re-envisioned Georgia Avenue, NW as a place for walking, dancing, bicycling, and even rock climbing. Open Streets DC supported Vision Zero as a way to pilot new transportation choices. The project manager, Anna Chamberlin, Director of DDOT’s Planning and Sustainability Division, accepted the award. Chamberlin, along with several other female leaders, overcame many logistical and regulatory challenges to make the event a success.

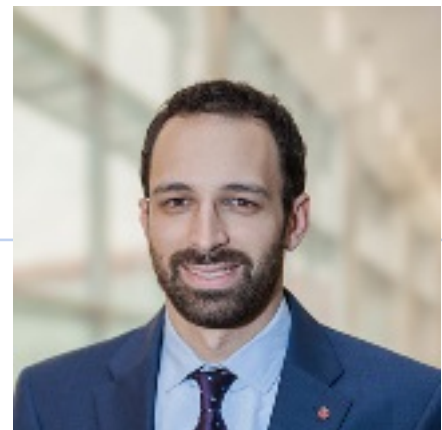


Open Streets DC

## Honorable Ray LaHood Award

This award honors a man who is a leader in transportation and has contributed, directly and by example, to the advancement of women and minorities in the transportation field. The recipient is selected based on the following criteria: a man who is a leader in transportation and has made an outstanding contribution to the transportation industry; a man who has directly contributed toward the advancement of women and minorities through programs or opportunities in the transportation field; a man who has led by example, seeking out opportunities to advance and advocate for women in his own organization, and who has actively ensured that women are able to compete for key positions of authority within that organization; and a man who through his career achievements and support of women in the industry has advanced the reputation and credibility of women in transportation.

WTS-DC honored *Gerald (Jerry) Mrykalo*, Senior Associate at Dewberry, with the Chapter’s Honorable Ray LaHood Award. Mr. Mrykalo has a long track record as a champion and mentor of women in the transportation engineering field. He creates opportunities for the advancement of women and minorities in the field and volunteers to share his professional knowledge with emerging professionals.



Gerald Mrykalo, Senior Associate, Dewberry

## Member of the Year Award

This award honors a WTS -DC member who has made extraordinary contributions to the success of WTS. The recipient is selected based on the following criteria: a member who has shown an extraordinary commitment to the goals and growth to WTS-DC by working effectively in support of WTS goals; a member who has promoted the reputation of WTS within the transportation industry; a member who has worked effectively to strengthen communication between local and international WTS levels or between chapters; and a member who has done an outstanding job of revitalizing or expanding a chapter or any of its functions.

The Chapter celebrated **Cherie Gibson**, who chairs the Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee, as WTS-DC's 2020 Member of the Year. Cherie has helped to raise tens of thousands of dollars to support the Chapter's activities and build strong relationships between WTS-DC and companies across the District and the larger region.



Cherie Gibson, HNTB

## Woman of the Year Award

This award honors a woman who is an outstanding role model and has contributed to the advancement of women and minorities in transportation. The award is intended to reach beyond WTS-DC membership. The recipient is selected based on the following criteria: a woman who is a leader in transportation and has made an outstanding contribution to the transportation industry; a woman who has directly contributed toward the advancement of women and minorities through programs or opportunities in the transportation field; a woman who through her career achievements and support of women in the industry has advanced the reputation and credibility of women in transportation.

WTS-DC honored **Nicole Nason**, Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, as the Chapter's 2020 Woman of the Year. Ms. Nason has championed leadership opportunities and advocated for the advancement of women at FHWA. She is committed to promoting women in the transportation industry overall. She has also supported WTS-DC through her participation in various events such as the 2019 Transportation YOU Summit.



Nicole Nason, Administrator, FHWA

The Recognition Award recipients received their awards virtually at the WTS-DC Holiday Party on December 8, 2020.

## WTS International 2020 Honorable Ray LaHood Award

On May 21, WTS International recognized WTS-DC 2019 Honorable Ray LaHood awardee, **Paul Skoutelas**, CEO of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), as WTS-DC's 2020 Honorable Ray LaHood award recipient. Through his leadership positions, Skoutelas has worked to create opportunities for women transportation professionals. In his current role, he is instrumental in continuing the strong industry partnership between APTA and WTS. Both organizations "share [a] long history of working

together and ... are aligned in supporting [the] professional development and career advancement of women,” said Diane Woodend Jones, former WTS Chair.

Skoutelas also has contributed to the advancement of women and minorities through his long involvement in WTS. He has been a member of WTS for more than 20 years, and was instrumental in the creation of the WTS chapter in Pittsburgh, and participated in Central Florida, New York, and now in D.C. Skoutelas has spoken highly of the impact WTS membership has had on his career: "WTS has helped to enlighten me about the diversity of our industry and importance of inclusion in ensuring that many talents and perspectives are at the table when making decisions." Skoutelas has been an active supporter of WTS-DC, and in 2019, headlined a breakfast event titled, "The New Mobility Paradigm: A Conversation with APTA's Paul Skoutelas," where he engaged a sold-out audience on the need for transit in increasingly multimodal world. Through WTS, Skoutelas has been able to identify and network with emerging women transportation leaders and help them to grow and develop their careers.

Since being recognized by WTS-DC in 2019, Skoutelas has stayed busy with advocacy and policy leadership related to public transit amidst one of the worst financial and transportation crises of our time. He successfully advocated for \$25 billion for transit in the CARES Act, which was signed into law to cover lost revenue. He also advocated for the House to include \$15.75 billion in the HEROES Act, which is still pending. His impactful leadership embodies all of the principles of the Honorable Ray LaHood Award: he leads through difficult times, he has made a demonstrable impact on the state of transit today, and he continues to advance women and minorities in transportation.

## Scholarship Awards

### Undergraduate Scholarships



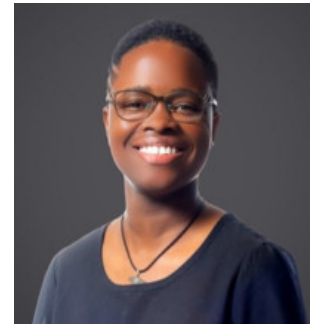
Nicole Russo

**Nicole Russo** is pursuing a bachelor's degree in civil and environmental engineering at the University of Maryland with a minor in sustainability studies. Nicole is interested in transportation and project management and her goal is to create a more inclusive community that strives to consider all stakeholders that will be affected by the implementation of a transportation project.

Nicole received the Dewberry \$2,000 named scholarship. She was also recommended for the WTS-International Sharon D. Banks Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship.

**Jhanelle Davy** is pursuing a bachelor's degree in civil and environmental engineering at Howard University. She is the current president of Howard University's American Society of Civil Engineers and the current president of Howard University's Institute of Transportation Engineers. Her ultimate career goal is to become a leader in the transportation industry and open doors for other young women to do the same.

Jhanelle received a \$1,500 scholarship. She was also recommended for the WTS-International Molitoris Leadership Undergraduate Scholarship.



Jhanelle Davy

### Graduate Scholarships

**Abigail Wolfgram** is pursuing a master's degree in public policy at George Mason University with a 4.0 GPA. Abigail currently works at AECOM as a civil engineer in the transportation department serving as a deputy project manager, discipline manager, and task coordinator for local engineering and planning projects. She has impressive leadership and outreach service that includes community service at the Arlington County Detention Facility, leading the Ascent Arlington Professional Group, and co-founder of the Transportation Racial Equity Dialogue Group (TRED) at AECOM. Her goal is to play a role in developing policy solutions to meet our communities' most complex transportation problems.



Neoma Ugwu

Abigail received a \$2,000 scholarship. She was also recommended for the WTS-International Leadership Legacy Graduate Scholarship.

**Nneoma Ugwu** is pursuing a master's degree and Ph.D. in civil engineering with a concentration in transportation planning and policy and project management at the University of Maryland. Her research projects include the



Abigail Wolfgram

impact of COVID-19 on travel demand and congestion in Maryland and an electric vehicle (EV) parking and charging study at the University of Maryland. She grew up in Nigeria and her long-term goal is to return home to Nigeria and work with the Ministry of Transportation to develop the failing road infrastructure.

Nneoma received the HDR \$2,000 named scholarship. She was also recommended for the WTS-International Helene M. Overly Memorial Graduate Scholarship.



Sara Zahedian

**Sara Zahedian** is pursuing a Ph.D. in transportation from the University of Maryland. Sara is a current research assistant collaborating with the I-95 Corridor Coalition from Vehicle Probe Project (VPP) and is working on data quality analysis of National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS). She is the Vice President of the ITS-ITE University of Maryland Student Chapter. In the last year of her Ph.D. journey, she is confident that her expertise in the transportation field and passion for innovation has empowered her to be one of the leaders in the transportation field.

Sara received the WSP \$2,000 named scholarship.

**Andrea Adibe** is pursuing a master's degree in business and finance with a concentration in procurement from The George Washington University Law School. Andrea currently works at the Virginia Office of the Attorney General as the Assistant Attorney General in the Transportation Section. She has experience researching contracts related to Public Private Partnerships (P3) infrastructure projects and counseling staff regarding operations and maintenance issues associated with concession contracts. She grew up in Nigeria where she became intrigued by the rapid movement of people and things. Her goal is to continue making a positive impact in her community through her work efforts upon graduation.



Andrea Adibe

Andrea received a \$1,500 scholarship.

**Marta Woldu** is pursuing a master's degree in Community Planning from the University of Maryland. She is a graduate assistant at the University of Maryland National Center for Smart Growth and the Acting Assistant Director of Sustainability Initiatives at the University of Maryland Department of Transportation Services. In these roles, she has taken tremendous pleasure in expanding the Sustainable Transportation Program and supporting significant shifts for a greener campus and society.



Marta Woldu

Marta received a \$1,500 scholarship.



Kyla Elzinga

**Kyla Elzinga** is pursuing a master’s degree in transportation policy, operations, and logistics from George Mason University. She is currently the Director of Operations and Special Assistant for Planning at Freedman Consulting, LLC working directly with the Executive Team to implement and maintain efficient processes for staffing, client work, and internal systems. She became interested in transportation due to her love for operations and logistics and her care for the impact that accessible transportation has on the community. Her ultimate career goal is to be a high-level leader in the transportation industry where she can affect change and resolve large-scale disparities in transportation affordability and accessibility.

Kyla received a \$1,500 scholarship.

**Sanaz Aliari** is pursuing a Ph.D. in transportation engineering from the University of Maryland. Her Ph.D. proposal topic is related to meeting point incorporation in vehicle routing problems. Since 2016, she has held the Graduate Research Assistant position at the Center for Advanced Transportation Technologies (CATT). She has set ambitious goals for herself to become a successful woman in academia, tackling some of the most challenging problems in the field of transportation addressing multidisciplinary issues with important financial and environmental impacts.

Sanaz received a \$1,500 scholarship.



Sanaz Allari

## Other Chapter Activities

### WTS International Annual Conference

In support of Chapter members’ continued professional development, each year WTS-DC provides an opportunity for board members to apply for funding to attend the WTS Annual Conference. The Chapter planned to send four board members — Audra Bandy, Holiday Party Committee; Shelley Wynne, Scholarship Committee; Rachel Roberts, Treasurer; and Neela Babu, President — to the 2020 WTS-I Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, WTS-I decided not to hold the conference in person. Instead, WTS-I provided some of the conference’s content through an online learning webinar series in September and October 2020. The Chapter offered the online webinar opportunity to Audra, Shelley, Rachel, and Neela. Audra attended for the Chapter.

### WTS International Splash Party

On May 29, WTS-DC members participated in WTS International’s virtual “splash party” for the Northeast Region to celebrate the new WTS brand identity and to build excitement. WTS International Executive Director Sara Stickler emceed the event, and chapter presidents were invited to give brief remarks about their chapter’s uniqueness and about a memorable chapter event. Neela Babu, WTS-DC President, had the honor of speaking on behalf of WTS-DC. Neela spoke about WTS-DC’s unique role in the WTS network. WTS-DC was the very first chapter of WTS! In 1977, 40 women in Washington, D.C. -- all engaged in transportation -- recognized the need for a means to enhance professional and personal

advancement in their field, and to develop greater industry and government recognition of the increasing involvement of women in the field of transportation. That original initiative gave birth to the Women’s Transportation Seminar and has grown over the past 40+ years into an international organization of over 8,500 women and men. The splash party was a wonderful way to engage with women across the northeast WTS network and share stories about the impact that WTS has had on so many lives.

## WTS International Chapter Leadership Training

In November 2020, WTS-I held its annual leadership training virtually due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the change, the training was still valuable and productive for many WTS members. From WTS-DC, Shelley Wynne (Scholarship and Fundraising Committee Chair), Sophie Guiny (Program Logistics Committee Deputy Chair), and Amber Garnett (Communications Committee Deputy Chair) attended. All three women enjoyed the leadership training.

I found the Chapter Leadership Training to be an *insightful* and *inspirational* event. WTS-I has created a roadmap to further develop the WTS mission to “attract, sustain, connect, and advance women’s careers to strengthen the transportation industry” and unify all of the organization’s chapters. ... [T]hrough the pillars of attract, sustain and connect, WTS strives to build networks and connect members to form meaningful and lasting professional relationships to continue to advance women in the transportation industry.

*Shelley Wynne, Scholarship and Fundraising Committee Chair*

The best part of the WTS Chapter Leadership Training was *networking* with fellow chapter board members. Program chairs had lots to talk about with the abrupt switch to virtual events in March. We discussed the challenges of finding the best time of day to schedule events—while in the past evenings were popular, the prospect of another hour in front of a computer screen has become less appealing. So many chapters successfully, like WTS-DC, switched to more lunchtime events. And with no traffic to contend with, we all noticed how much easier it was to book speakers! ... I left the training *full of ideas* about using breakrooms on Zoom and planning new events for 2021.

*Sophie Guiny, Program Logistics Committee Deputy Chair*

The Chapter Leadership Training was an incredibly *informative* and engaging experience. As co-chair of the Communications Committee, it was helpful to have WTS-I outline the organization’s communications goals: Foster trust with stakeholders, gather comprehensive feedback from all core audiences, and build buy-in to the One-WTS vision of unifying WTS-I, WTS Foundation, and WTS chapters. ... [M]y favorite part of the training was hearing from *WTS Woman of the Year Nuria Fernandez*, who left us all with an encouraging piece of advice, “We have to support, encourage, mentor, and push forward others so that they can grow and prosper and make an impact in our world.”

*Amber Garnett, Communications Committee Deputy Chair*



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Advancing women  
Advancing transportation

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