



**Advancing women  
Advancing transportation**



**March 8, 2022**

# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY NEWSLETTER

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## History of International Women's Day

Since the early 1900s and the rise of radical \* ideologies, International Women's Day has been observed.

1908: Women advocated better pay, less hours and voting rights by marching through NYC.

1910: Clara Vetkin proposed International Women's Day and got unanimous approval at the International Conference of Working Women.

1914: Women across Europe held rallies to campaign against World War I and to express women solidarity. International Women's Day was agreed to be held nationally on March 8th.

1975: International Women's Day was celebrated for the first time by the United Nations.

2011: In March, Women's History Month was proclaimed to mark the extraordinary accomplishments of women in shaping the country's history.

\* Radicalism: the belief that society needs to be changed, and that these changes are only possible through revolutionary means.



In this article, our chapter will share more details about the Inspiring women nominated for the 2021 Recognition Awards! We hope you enjoy and congratulate these amazing nominees and award winners.

# Rosa Parks Diversity Award Nominees



## Alexandra Natoli

Kimley - Horn

“You can routinely find Alexandra around the office actively engaging with new hires, teaching them technical proficiencies, and being a positive example of professionalism and dedication”



## Shannon Gunn

Kimley - Horn

“Shannon has been instrumental in facilitating connections for these female engineers within the firm and with key clients and industry peers, helping them build the networks that will allow them to learn and grow as professionals”



# Rosa Parks Diversity Award Winner

## Holli Harrington

Indianapolis Airport Authority



Holli's relentless dedication to meaningful opportunities, compliance and training for the Indianapolis Airport Authority is recognized well beyond the walls of the organization. Her ability to bring people together in an inclusive and diverse environment has led to attaining high levels of diverse participation on both capital projects and within the IAA concessions program.

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Holli Harrington is a straight boss in the DEI \* industry, but as a person, she is fantastic. As a new resident of Indianapolis, she took me under her wing to connect me to those leaders in the DEI space.

DEI: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- **Denise E. Jenkins-Agurs, IndyGo**

Holli's warm and brilliant style of networking bridges the gap between ideals and action by building relationships and introductions that foster tangible professional opportunities for women & minorities. Genuine and hardworking, Holli believes in making a place where all can thrive and lives this mission through her work, personal relationships, volunteerism and as a community advocate.

- **Kelly Lynn, Kelly Lynn Photography LLC.**

Holli's passion for mentoring young minority professionals has helped numerous people throughout the City of Indianapolis achieve excellence and success in their respective roles. I am a product of Holli's mentorship and her willingness to provide young minority professionals a safe space to grow as leaders while also pushing them down a path towards excellence is something that I think no one does better than Holli. Her work and impact cannot be measured.

- **Curtis E. Taylor Jr, Air Service Development Coordinator, IAA.**

Through her commitment the next generation of leaders are being developed and nurtured. Holli is committed to creating a better and more welcoming city and state. She is a leading voice on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and truly believes that there is a seat at the table for everyone.

- **David O. Fredricks, Program Manager – Supplier Diversity, IAA.**

Holli is truly a supporter of DEI in her role at the Airport and to anyone she meets. She is a DEI supporter and lives by what she is passionate about, multi-cultural awareness. She is a true DEI facilitator and educator.

- **Denise E. Jenkins-Agurs, IndyGo**



# Innovative Transportation Solution Nominee



## Hoosier Heartland

CARDNO – CRYSTAL RENSKERS

INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTION NOMINEE



The project involves site specific invasive species management, tree and plant installation, monitoring of native species development, and coordination amongst the INDOT, Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), United States Corps of Engineers (USACE), Indiana Department of Natural Resources – Division of Fish and Wildlife (IDNR - DFW), Tippecanoe County Parks, IDNR: Prophetstown State Park, and private landowners.

Crystal strives to provide holistic, long term solutions to erosion and overall habitat establishment aimed at meeting multiple objectives set forth under IDEM, USACE, and IDNR permits. For example, at one stream mitigation site, the stream cross-sections were permitted to be several feet narrower than the permanent box culverts located at each end of the site. Excess siltation and poor development of stream habitat prevented the stream from meeting intended habitat mitigation goals. Reconstruction of the stream would be expensive, require significant replanting of native material, re-exposure to erosion that had been stabilized, and several years of additional monitoring.

Crystal proposed installing in-stream soft structures to establish a wetland shelf, thus trapping sedimentation while stabilizing a thalweg without disrupting the progression of the riparian buffer. This received unanimous approval from the client and the regulatory agencies.

For this particular project, site successes include native tree and shrub establishment at all sites, all stream sites have been stabilized by addressing erosional features, native plant coverage is well established with coverages as high as 100% and woody stem density typically well exceeding required minimums. The adaptive management strategies developed and implemented by Crystal and her team facilitated incremental successes at each site year after year, allowing the sites to develop in-line with permit standards and goals.

# Innovative Transportation Solution Nominee



From Anthony Ross, Ph.D. | LPA Program Administrator | Cultural Resources Office | INDOT Environmental Services

"The first person who comes to our minds is Kia Gillette at HNTB. She was the environmental manager for the North Split Project, which as I'm sure you're aware, included a number of challenges, not the least of which was an incredibly complex Section 106 process.

The project area is nearly surrounded by historic properties/districts, including the headquarters of Indiana Landmarks. The process included a very active set of consulting parties, including the Rethink Coalition. From the beginning, the project was also complicated by the legacy of interstate construction in downtown Indianapolis. Plus, the project was on a tight schedule and was one of the agency's highest priority projects.

Kia was key in keeping everything on track. Even though she's not a historian or archaeologist, she had an excellent understanding of the process and knew how to manage the team to keep the process moving.

Re mitigation, she was instrumental in achieving a consensus on a creative mix of stipulations, including extensive landscaping, a vibration monitoring plan, and connectivity improvements, including the Monon Loop—which I bet many people don't know was a Section 106 mitigation item—and funding for the Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site to construction a multi-use path between its property and Pennsylvania Street. The process is still ongoing—6-month updates and consulting party review of landscaping plans are still ongoing/forthcoming.

Kia deserves a huge amount of credit for the successful completion of the Section 106 and NEPA processes for this project. It could have easily gone off track. Many simpler projects have done so. I think we're all in agreement that she should be recognized!"

# Innovative Transportation Solution Nominee



The project management for the design and delivery of the CR 300S/New Airport Rd project in Orange County was one of her most challenging projects. Melissa led a team of 40 Michael Baker engineers, technicians, and environmental scientists and eight subconsultants to deliver the project for INDOT.

The challenging environmental documentation and permitting effort was led by a 100% female team. The Categorical Exclusion Level 4 included bat mist netting, a karst investigation, and an archaeological investigation. Individual permits were required for both IDEM 401 and USACE 404 permits. Wendy Vachet from Michael Baker led a meeting early on with all environmental stakeholders to share project information, get input, and address concerns.

Construction was complete in September of 2021. With construction now complete, Orange County has a viable route from SR 145 to the French Lick Airport. The only other available route to the airport is a narrow county road with sharp curves and grades more than 15%. The route provides improved access to local residents and anyone utilizing the French Lick Airport.

Michael Baker International staff prepared a Powerpoint with audio narration for the Airport Rd. project that our chapter is sharing if you would like to hear more details about this project.

CR 300 S Airport Rd Presentation Link:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:dce95962-e2cd-42f3-b745-a783fb427b43>

# Innovative Transportation Solution Winner



I-69 Finish Line Segment 6.3 had a high concentration of female leaders from INDOT, environmental agencies, WSP, and WSP's teaming partners. This project upgraded SR 37 to interstate standards in Morgan County, Indiana. The project involved six miles of mainline improvements, new crossroads roads, six new bridges, two bridge widenings, and a bridge rehabilitation. This segment also included a White River bank stabilization contract. This complex project was completed on an aggressive schedule, moving project completion two years earlier than originally planned.

Winners pictured included (from left): Sandra Flum, Cat Seely, Kyanna Wheeler, Sarah Rubin and Natalie Garrett from INDOT. Kelli McNamara, Kim Mills, and Sandra Jones from WSP USA, Samantha Stroebel and Summer Elmore from CHA Consulting Inc., and Erin Pipkin from Compass.

# Innovative Transportation Solution Winner

## Woman Leadership of I-69 Finish Line Segment 6.3



**Sandra Flum**  
INDOT



**Cat Seely**  
INDOT



**Kyanna Wheeler**  
INDOT



**Sarah Rubin**  
INDOT



**Kelli McNamara**  
WSP USA



**Kim Mills**  
WSP USA



INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS NOMINEE



### The leadership of women drove the success of the I-69 project.

WSP's **Kelli McNamara** managed the interstate design (Contract 4) for WSP. Kelli led a multidisciplinary team to deliver a complex final interstate design from conceptual design to contract plans in under a year. **Kimberly Mills** of WSP managed the crossroad design (Contract 3) for WSP. Kimberly's leadership kept the project on-schedule and under budget during start-up and drove the design schedule acceleration.

INDOT Project Manager **Sandra Flum** worked on the client side to facilitate the extremely aggressive schedule. Sandra connected the design team with decision makers, managed the complex right-of-way acquisition, and accelerated reviews. **Cat Seely** also served in a project management role for Contract 3 and the tree clearing contract. Sandra and Cat worked under **Sarah Rubin** of INDOT's Major Projects group. Sarah Rubin led the entire Section 6 effort for INDOT – which included additional project segments north and south of Segment 6.3.

The I-69 Finish Line Segment 6.3 design team was supported by several women in lead design roles such as **Kyanna Wheeler** with INDOT who managed the demolition contracts, **Sandra Jones** with WSP for utility coordination, **Samantha Stroebel** with CHA for hydraulics, **Summer Elmore** with CHA for permits, and **Natalie Garrett** with INDOT and **Erin Pipkin** with Compass for public outreach support.



# Innovative Transportation Solution Winner

## Woman Leadership of I-69 Finish Line Segment 6.3



**Natalie Garrett**  
INDOT



**Sandra Jones**  
WSP USA



**Samantha Stroebel**  
CHA Consulting Inc.



**Summer Elmore**  
CHA Consulting Inc.



**Erin Pipkin**  
Compass



INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS NOMINEE



### Project Key Elements:

- Schedule for Delivery:** Kimberly Mills and Sandra Flum launched the project and accelerated the project delivery pace. Kelli McNamara continued to push project schedule, managing an effort that required a multidisciplinary team to deliver a final interstate design from concept to contract plans in under a year.
- Right-of-Way Acquisition:** The project R/W acquisition was fast and affected multiple aspects of the project design. Kimberly Mills assisted in tracking the land acquisition in real-time. Sandra Jones managed the phased utility relocation based on which parcels were available in order to eliminate roadblocks to construction.
- Environmental:** When permitting challenges arose, Summer Elmore quickly reacted and addressed the problem. A scope change to a bridge on Stotts Creek required a new IDNR permit late in the design cycle. Under Summer's guidance, IDNR approved a new permit in under three months.
- Hydraulics:** Samantha Stroebel successfully led the early, schedule critical task of hydraulic analysis and approval for eight hydraulic design packages within the first six months of the project.

Nomination Video: <https://youtube/ICjIvHvpdBM>

# Woman of the Year Nominees



## Samantha Stroebel

CHA Consulting Inc.

“Samantha’s initiative, leadership skills, and willingness to take on new challenges have been integral to the success of CHA’s transportation team and were the catalyst for her recent promotion to Section Manager”

WOMAN OF THE YEAR NOMINEE



## Lisa Casler

RQAW Corporation

“Lisa leads monthly RQAW Women in Transportation Luncheons, where she provides an opportunity to bridge communication gaps for female engineers with questions about their careers and how to navigate through the workforce”

WOMAN OF THE YEAR NOMINEE



# Woman of the Year Nominees



## Kelli McNamara

WSP USA

"Kelli has helped grow my technical skills, been my biggest influence as a project manager, taught me about the importance of client relationships, and has always challenged me to set my goals high and not underestimate myself."

– Emily Chen

WOMAN OF THE YEAR NOMINEE



## Ericka Miller

Indianapolis DPW

Ericka has always shown professionalism with respect to equity when it comes to providing opportunities for professionals in the transportation field. In her role in the City, Ericka has committed herself to foster a culture of respect while providing an environment where one feels welcome and valued

WOMAN OF THE YEAR NOMINEE



# Woman of the Year Winner



Since taking the lead, Inez has ushered in the Red Line, the first all-electric bus rapid transit (BRT) line in the Midwest, recruited emerging leaders, including several women and minorities, to the executive team, maintained and innovated service during a pandemic, developed and executed the purchase of a new headquarters to meet the growing needs of the agency, put new vehicles into service moving IndyGo toward its clean fleet goals, enhanced improvements with paratransit services, and championed diversity and workforce development within the agency.



Inez is a pioneer at IndyGo when it comes to breaking barriers for women and minorities. She hired a vice president to lead the establishment of IndyGo's diversity and inclusion program. Inez believes diverse and inclusive teams have a positive impact on our ability to serve the community.

She also believes this is one way we can move conversations forward to celebrate our employees' diverse voices. Additionally, this team created a diversity and inclusion committee made up of 15 teammates from across the agency who volunteer their time to engage in experiences about differences, creating intentional spaces for learning, growth and advocacy regarding inclusion and social justice throughout IndyGo.

Inez started in the transit industry in customer service more than 30 years ago and climbed her way through the ranks obtaining the necessary education to achieve her goals. She's worked in almost every facet of public transportation managing annual budgets in excess of \$365 million and overseeing teams of nearly 2,000 employees and fleets with more than 1,000 vehicles. Her areas of expertise include operation and strategic planning, labor and employee relations, paratransit services and much more.





This level of understanding led her to participate in and graduate from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) leadership class and hold positions on numerous APTA committees and boards, including the Leadership APTA Committee and the APTA Board of Directors. The training and connections she's made along the way have allowed her to use her influence and connections to lead other talented women to make a difference in the transit industry.

One example is IndyGo's Chief Development Officer Jennifer Pyrz. With more than 20 years of experience in the transportation consulting industry, Pyrz leads all IndyGo capital plan projects, including one of the biggest transit projects in Indiana with the design, construction and implementation of the agency's second bus rapid transit system, the Purple Line. The \$162 million project will lead to more than 15 miles along one of the city's most densely populated corridors providing more efficient transit and significant infrastructure improvements.

All of this points to why Inez is respected as a forthright, innovative leader with unparalleled leadership skills.

**Woman of the Year Nomination Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTWYGOmRWwY>

# We Want to Hear from You!

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