



2022 VOLUME 3

September 30, 2022

HOT Chapter Newsletter



> Heart of Texas

Advancing women
Advancing transportation

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PRESIDENT’S LETTER

As the summer of 2022 tries to come to a close, and I reflect back on all that the chapter has accomplished, I am amazed and so thankful.

August brought our 18th annual gala, we came “Roaring Back (in-person) into 2022” with another incredible round of fundraising for our scholarships. The evening was a celebration of

our chapter award winners and scholarship recipients. I am truly grateful to all of the donors, sponsors, and everyone who attended the event—we raised more than \$41,000! You are helping us make a difference in the future, especially for young women pursuing careers in transportation. A HUGE thank you to our gala team, including our chair Brittani Kaim for planning and making sure our back in-person Gala was a success.

In September we held our 15th Annual Professional Development Seminar, “It Takes a Village: Spotlighting the Broad Range of Roles in Transportation.” It was great seeing everyone back interacting in person. The event as a whole was very informative and I hope everyone who attended learned some new things and took away some new ideas.

As we move into the remaining months of 2022, we already have several exciting opportunities on the calendar. For our program lunches, in October we will be hosting TxDOT Deputy Executive Director, Brandye Hendrickson, and in November Christiana Astarita will be our speaker. Also in October, we will be hosting a Fall Membership Drive, this will coincide with WTSI’s Fall Campaign, with a 10% discount for new members, so be sure and bring a friend. Emails about all of these, and a few more in the works, will be coming out soon.

Now is a great time to get involved! For any of you looking to be involved in our committees, our Corporate and Agency Partnership, Gala, Programs, and TransportationYOU! committees need help! Please reach out to the individual committee chairs, or anyone on the executive board and we will get you connected.

If you have any questions about WTS or the HOT Chapter, please do not hesitate to contact me or anyone else on our board. Wishing everyone a continued happy, healthy, and safe 2022 and hope to see you at an event soon!

All the best!

Ashley Williams



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Transportation Planner
HNTB

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Brittani Kaim

Communications Marketing
Manager, WSP USA

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Kat Streff

Assistant Project Manager
Kleinfelder

MENTORING CHAIR

Open Position

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mary Jo Galindo

Senior Archaeologist
Galindo Environmental Consulting,
LLC

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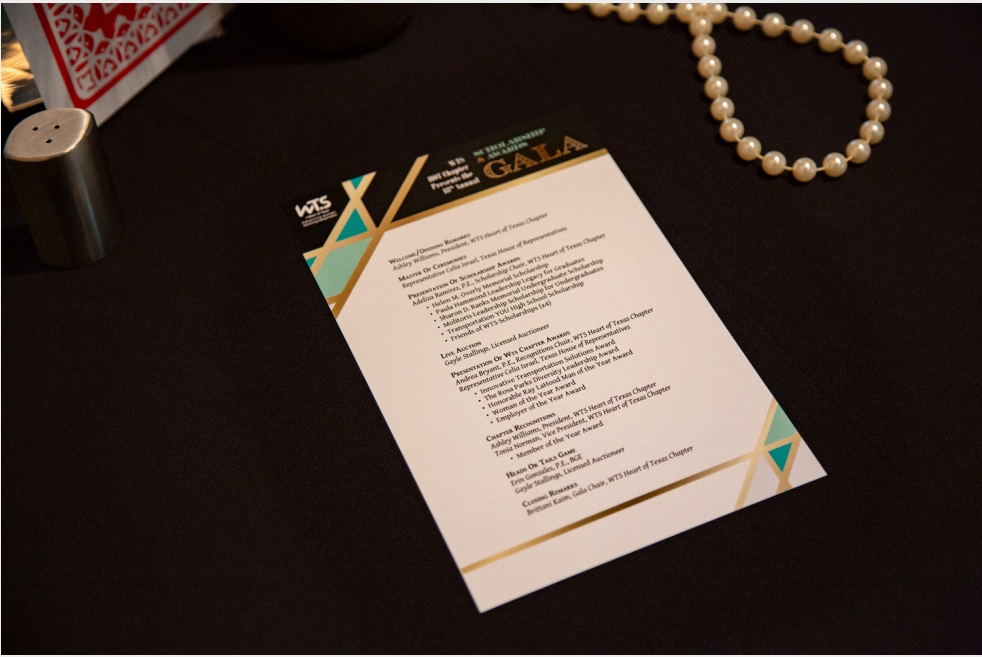
Graduate Student
UT Austin, Civil Engineering

TRANSPORTATION YOU CHAIR

Open Position



The 18th Annual Transportation Awards and Scholarship Gala was held on August 27, 2022 at the Austin Marriott Downtown. At the first in-person gala since 2019, more than 300 members of the industry joined us for a Roaring 20’s good time! WTS HOT Chapter presented nine deserving women with scholarships and six industry awards. Through the live and silent auction, direct giving and other fundraising at the event, we are pleased to announce we raised more than **\$41,000** – a record amount – for the Heart of Texas Foundation to support local women pursuing degrees in the transportation field. Thank you to all who joined us at the event and for the generosity of our donors!



For more pictures of the event go to <https://www.wtsinternational.org/chapters/heart-texas/photo-gallery>



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AWARD WINNERS

Innovative Transportation Solutions



Mobility35 Capital Express North (CapEx)
Bethany Shearrer

Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership

ATKINS

Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

Honorable Ray LaHood Award



James M. Bass

Woman of the Year



Cynthia Long

Member of the Year



Cheryl Goodgame

Employer of the Year

Jacobs



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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► Entertainment Sponsor



Casino Sponsors







Friends of WTS Scholarship Sponsors







Live and Silent Auction Donors

- Adeliza Ramirez
 - Austin Bouldering Project
 - Align Pilates
 - All-Star Sports Camp
 - Amanda Hisle Riley
 - Andrea Bryant
 - Antones
 - Ashley Williams
 - Austin Film Society
 - Austin Java
 - Austin Marriott Downtown
 - BookPeople
 - Bowman Engineering and Consulting
 - Brittani Kaim
 - Caroline Crockett
 - Castle Hill Fitness
 - Central Machine Works
 - Cheryl Goodgame
- Chuy's
 - Distant Relatives
 - Erin Perkins-Watry
 - Esther's Follies
 - Glenda Morrison
 - Intero Restaurant
 - Jackie Sartor
 - Kalahari Resort
 - Kat Streff
 - Kendra Scott
 - La Lune Studios
 - Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
 - Laura Friello
 - L'Oca d'Oro
 - Mary Jo Galindo
 - Moonshine Grill
 - Nicole and Derrick Hisle
 - No Comply Skate Shop
- Odd Duck
 - Once Upon a StoryBook Studio™
 - Paramount Theatre
 - WTS Past Presidents
 - Pinthouse Pizza
 - Salt Traders
 - Sour Duck Market
 - Stride 5th Street
 - Sukha Yoga Austin
 - Tiff's Treats
 - Tiny Grocer
 - Tiny Pies
 - Tonia Norman
 - Viva Day Spa
 - Water2Wine
 - YTX Yoga



Sharon D. Banks Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship **Caroline Muhith**

Caroline Muhith is a sophomore at the University of Texas at Austin pursuing a B.S. in Civil Engineering. She is from Spring, Texas, where she graduated *summa cum laude* from the John Cooper School. Caroline is a member of both the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) and participates in the Texas Running Club. She also works as a peer tutor for fellow undergraduate engineering students. Caroline spends her summers in New Hampshire working as a camp counselor. She is currently investigating solutions for combining accessible and sustainable transportation to increase equitable public transportation.



Paula Hammond Leadership Legacy for Graduates **Maria K. Bassil**

Maria Bassil earned her B.E. in Civil and Environmental Engineering with high distinction from the Lebanese American University in spring 2019. Then, she pursued her Master of Science in Civil and Environmental Engineering also at the Lebanese American University and graduated in 2020. In her master's degree, she explored the emerging technology of connected and autonomous vehicles and its various implications. Driven by passion and excellence, she applied and was accepted into the civil engineering doctoral program at the University of Texas at Austin starting fall 2020. She works at the UT Center for Transportation Research on a wide range of topics and projects for the city of Austin and the Texas Department of Transportation. She aims to contribute to the development of the transportation engineering field through her research and continuing education.



Molitoris Leadership Scholarship for Undergraduates **Julienne Cantu**

Julienne Cantu is an undergraduate student at the University of Texas at Austin majoring in mechanical engineering. Her professional interests include helping people through their common needs, including transportation. Coming up with new transportations methods as well as fuels can be a big help to those needing easier transportation routes along with cost cutting technology. This can easily make the world a better place to live in while pushing for more modern approaches by incorporating different energy sources that are safe for the environment. She sincerely thanks WTS for offering her this scholarship to accomplish her career goals, and she will be sure to put it to good use towards her education.



Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship **Yang Xu**

Yang Xu is currently a Ph.D. Candidate in Transportation Engineering of the Civil, Architectural, and Environmental Engineering (CAEE) at the University of Texas at Austin. She received a master's degree in Architectural Engineering from Southeast University (Nanjing, China), where she also received her bachelor's degree in Computer Science. Her current research interest is to implement artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) algorithms to facilitate decision makings in transportation infrastructure management. Yang hopes her research can help transportation agencies to better understand infrastructure conditions and maintenance needs, improve the accuracy of performance predictions, and identify cost-effective infrastructure management strategies that can improve public travel safety and comfort. More importantly, Yang hopes she can make a positive influence in encouraging more women to enter a career in engineering.



TransportationYou
Emilie Grace Baillo

Emilie Grace Baillo graduated from the Liberal Arts and Science Academy High School in Austin, Texas. As a high school mentor for ACC’s Verizon Innovative Learning Program, Emilie’s passionate about making STEM more accessible to low-income and underrepresented communities. Through STEM-exploration and self-awareness activities, she encourages middle school mentees to form and pursue meaningful goals for themselves in career, academic, and personal development. Emilie is also President of her school’s Minorities in Math club, which hosts math activities and tutoring for middle schools in East Austin. From her experiences with ACE mentorship and Women Engineers at UT, Emilie is fascinated with the intersections between computing, engineering and transportation. She plans to pursue computer science in college to develop software that makes public transportation more equitable for communities of color. Outside of school, Emilie loves cooking, reading, writing, and spending time with her dog Datu (chieftain in Bisaya!).



Friends of WTS Scholarship
Estella Zhao

Estella Zhao will be attending the University of Texas at Austin and majoring in Electrical Engineering. She is an International Baccalaureate scholar and a member of the 2019 Bands of America Grand National Champions team from Vandegrift High School. Her interest in pursuing STEM as a career arose from her AP Statistics and Calculus courses, as well as The Coding School's Qubit by Qubit Introduction to Quantum Computing virtual course. The intersections and cooperation between different interdisciplinary fields is what draws her to Electrical Engineering, and she hopes to eventually work in the field of Connected Autonomous Vehicles or the Texas power grid.



Friends of WTS Scholarship
Sarah Chu

Sarah Chu is a rising freshman at the University of Texas at Austin where she plans to study Civil Engineering. She hopes to explore more about the sustainability of the construction industry as well as learn how to make public transportation more accessible. She had the privilege to extern at Turner Construction through ACE Austin in Summer 2021 and began an internship in TxDOT’s Materials and Tests Division this summer. During and after her college career, Sarah plans to give back to the community through being an ACE mentor to future engineers and volunteering through Engineers Without Borders.



Friends of WTS Scholarship
Anya Kureshi

Anya Kureshi will be a freshman at the University of Texas at Austin studying sustainability with a focus on transportation and energy policy. This summer she was an intern with Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs. With the help of a \$5,000 grant, she was responsible for organizing a sustainability conference alongside the Vietnamese American Community of Austin. In the past year, she has interned with Texas Representative Jacey Jetton, Austin Municipal Court Judge George Thomas, and City of Austin Mayor Steve Adler. She is also a Girl Scout Gold Award recipient and has been recognized for her work in helping teens prepare for adulthood. During her spare time, she works at H-E-B and volunteers at the Austin Animal Center.

Friends of WTS Scholarship
Gunjan Sharma

Gunjan graduated from McNeil High School and will attend Texas A&M University in the fall to study Engineering.

BOARD MEMBER TESTIMONIAL

LAURA FRIELLO, SECRETARY

I officially joined WTS in 2014 when I came on to the board as scholarship chair at the mid-year point to help take over the committee chair position. I had always been passionate about scholarship activities in different organizations and found a great opportunity to help the HOT chapter expand their scholarship programs from 2014-2018 while I served in the committee chair position. Afterwards, I’ve been on the Executive Board as Treasurer from 2019-2020 and Secretary from 2021-2022.



Since I’ve started with the WTS HOT Chapter, I’ve been active on the Scholarship, TransportationYou, Gala, and the CP/Member Event Committees. What’s kept me going in the organization is the ability to both drive the mission and outreach to a variety of levels of women in transportation from Kindergarten to retirement. In each position I stepped into, the person before me as well as those surrounding me had set the role up for success. The other great thing about WTS is how I was able to expand my leadership and professional network in a way that no other organization had allowed. There are a variety of committees and positions if you want to help for an hour or a decade.

Laura Friello is a project manager with Garver’s Transportation Team. She has extensive experience with roadway drainage and pedestrian facility design, analysis, and construction documents. Additionally, Laura has worked throughout Central Texas designing, directing, and documenting the construction of roadways, utilities, trails, and pedestrian walkways for various local, municipal, and state regulations.

FALLing for WTS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

October 27, 2022
4:30 pm - 6:30 pm

Oskar Blues Brewery Taproom
10420 Metric Blvd., Suite 150
Austin, TX 78758

Register by October 20 to receive your first drink free courtesy of WTS!

Bringing a friend? Register a guest and WTS will cover their first drink, AND you'll receive an extra raffle ticket.

Any question? Reach out to our Membership Chair, Kat Streff at membership@wtshotchapter.org

10% discount for new members who register in October

OCTOBER LUNCHEON

Brandye Hendrickson, TxDOT Deputy Executive Director

On Wednesday, October 19, 2022, please join us and learn more about our featured guest speaker Brandy Hendrickson, TxDOT Deputy Executive Director. Brandy will share with us her career path and her role at TxDOT. She will touch on her portfolio and the new transportation bill

As Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Hendrickson is responsible for directing the planning and administration functions of the agency, in addition to government affairs, communications, strategy and innovation, and modal programs. Prior to her appointment as Deputy Executive Director of TxDOT in July of 2021, Brandy worked in Washington D.C. as Deputy Director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) from 2019-2021 and Acting Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration from 2017-2019. She served much of her career in various executive roles within the Indiana Department of Transportation, including leading the agency in a CEO capacity from 2015-2017. Brandy has served on multiple transportation boards and is a recognized leader for her contributions to the transportation industry.



Register now! Registration closes on Friday, October 14th at Noon or when the event has reached maximum capacity.