

WTS SAN DIEGO COUNTY PRESENTS

# ANNUAL AWARDS COCKTAIL PARTY LONG PROGRAM



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Advancing transportation  
> San Diego

**10.28.2021**

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# Welcome

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- **JESSICA SISCO, AECOM**

Professional Development Lead (Programs)

- **JIM STARLING, JACOBS**

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- **JACQUI PERKINS, RICK ENGINEERING**

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- **MARISSA TWITE, KATZ & ASSOCIATES**

Communications Lead (E-Blast)

- **VANESSA ESLAVA, TY LIN**

**INTERNATIONAL**

Communications Lead (Social Media)

- **SEANA URQUHART, CALTRANS DISTRICT  
11**

Annual Awards Dinner Chair

- **DAWN WILSON, MICHAEL BAKER  
INTERNATIONAL**

Annual Awards Dinner Co-Chair

- **AMY JACKSON, KIMLEY-HORN**

Annual Awards Dinner Lead (Awards  
Recognition)

- **CLAUDIA BRIZUELA, CITY OF SAN DIEGO**

Annual Awards Dinner Lead (Awards  
Recognition)

- **PRECIOUS NICANOR, KIMLEY-HORN**

Annual Awards Dinner Lead (Program &  
Graphics)

- **LIZA GALON, CALTRANS DISTRICT 11**

Annual Awards Dinner Lead (Hospitality &  
Registration)

- **DANIELLE ZHANG, CALTRANS DISTRICT  
11**

Diversity & Inclusion Chair

- **KENA TEON, SAN DIEGO MTS**

Diversity & Inclusion Co-Chair

# Event Schedule

6:15pm

01



**WELCOME**  
Pattie Boekamp, WSP

02



**SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER**  
David S. Kim, CALSTA Secretary

03



**INTRODUCTION TO THE 2021  
DIVERSITY & INCLUSION  
COMMITTEE**  
Kena Teon, MTS

04



**INTERMISSION & RAFFLE**

05



**TRANSPORTATION YOU  
PROGRAM**  
Jim Starling, Jacobs

# 2021

06



## PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS

Marissa Thomas, TY LIN International

Jenny Vick, HDR

07



## INTERMISSION & RAFFLE

08



## ANNUAL AWARDS PRESENTATION

Claudia Brizuela, City of San Diego

Raya Fattah, Kimley-Horn and Associates

09



## PRESIDENTS ADDRESS

Lima Saft, Caltrans

10



## CLOSING RAFFLE

# Award Winners

## MEMBER OF THE YEAR

**Sunnie House**

## HONORABLE RAY LAHOOD

**Mark Baza**

## EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

**JACOBS**

## ROSA PARKS DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

**Danielle Zhang**

## INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

**SR-11 Segment 2A & Segment 4 South County Trade Corridor Project**

## ALTERNATIVES MODES & ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

**Inland Rail Trail Phase 2 Project**

## TECHNOLOGY FOR TRANSPORTATION

**SANDAG Regional Transportation Systems Management Operations (TSMO) Plan**

## PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

**Carolyn Crull**

## WOMAN OF THE YEAR

**Katy Cole**

**CONGRATS TO THIS YEAR'S AWARD WINNERS!**

# President's Message

**W**elcome to the WTS San Diego Annual Celebration of achievements in the Transportation Industry! We are excited to see you in person! The last 19 months have taught us to embrace change, continue learning, appreciate and help one another, and be grateful for what we have. Our industry has not slowed down, we see hiring, promotions and advancements. I hope that many of them are women, in alignment with WTS mission to attract, sustain, connect, and advance women's careers to strengthen the transportation industry. We appreciate our corporate sponsors! Your companies, organizations and agencies are the backbone of California's economy that depends on transportation infrastructure for mobility, accessibility, and reliability of service.

Tonight, we celebrate Award Winners and Scholarship Recipients who embody professional excellence and represent WTS's values. We are so impressed with this year's nominees that we had a hard time choosing just one in each category. This shows the caliber and quality of our region's professionals, projects, and organizations! Congratulations to the winners, and to the nominees – we are looking forward to your applications for next year's awards!

Thank you for your support and participation in our activities throughout the year:

- Signature programs with the Region's Leaders
- Lunch and Learns with the Corporate Sponsors
- Celebration of achievements in virtual and in-person social events
- Diversity and Inclusion membership survey
- Scholarship fundraisers
- Annual WTS International Conference
- And this Annual Awards Party!

I am very thankful to our WTS San Diego County Chapter board, the true stars of our organization! Each one of them volunteers their time and talent for our chapter's success and improving the impact of WTS for our members and partners!

Please enjoy networking and this evening's celebration!

● **LIMA SAFT**  
**CALTRANS DISTRICT 11**  
WTS San Diego County President



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# 2021

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- Dena Abraham
- Nathan Audo
- Jewel Jamou
- Silvana Jabraeil
- Rita Isaac
- Fiona Esho
- Paula Ring
- Eva Sanchez
- Annie Lee
- Renee Stueber
- Niki Mazzuola
- Valeria Ceron
- Vanessa Eslava
- Debbie Leung

## RAFFLE SPONSOR



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# Special Guest Speaker

David S. Kim became the third Secretary of the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) on July 1, 2019 following his appointment by Governor Newsom in April 2019. In this role, David is responsible for oversight of 40,000 employees across eight departments, boards and commissions whose mission is to advance a safe, environmentally sustainable transportation system that maximizes mobility for all Californians.

A longtime transportation leader with experience in the private sector as well as all three levels of government, David served as Vice President, Government Affairs for Hyundai Motor Company from 2017-2019. Prior to this assignment, David spent nearly eight years in senior level roles at the U.S. Department of Transportation. He served as Deputy Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the number two position in the agency. Additionally, he was FHWA's Associate Administrator for Policy and Governmental Affairs and before that, spent two years as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs in the Office of the Secretary of Transportation.

At the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, David led federal, state and local government affairs from 2004-2009 as Deputy Executive Officer for Federal Advocacy and Government Relations. Additionally, he served in the administration of Governor Gray Davis from 1999-2003 where he represented the State of California's interests before Congress and the executive branch on transportation, water, energy and environmental priorities. From 1998 to 1999, David worked in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative as Deputy Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Congressional Affairs. He also spent three years as a Washington representative for the City of Los Angeles.

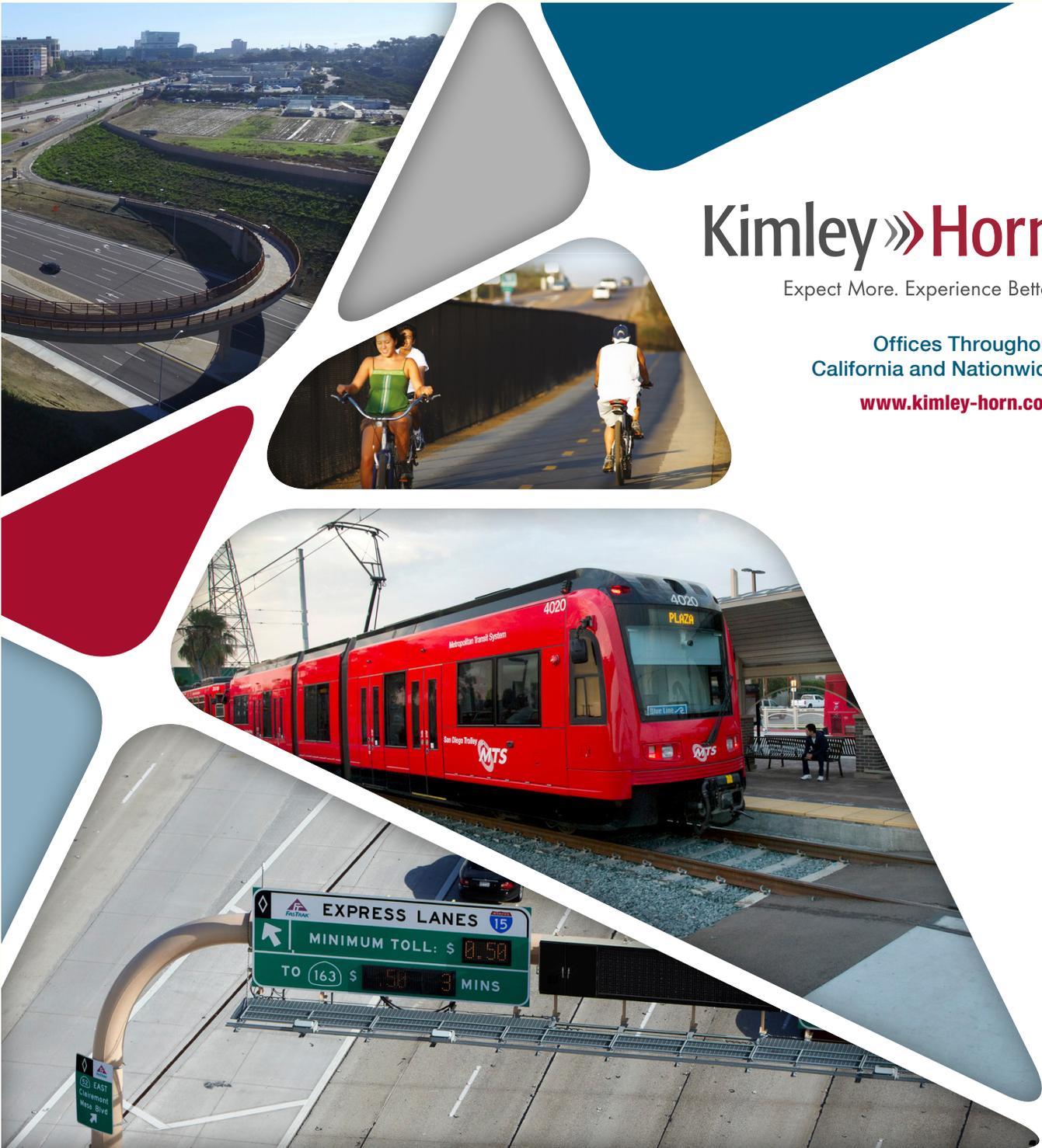
For a decade, David served on the staff of numerous

elected officials in Los Angeles, Sacramento and Washington. He spent five years working in various capacities with Xavier Becerra, during his time in both the California State Assembly and Congress. Kim began his public service career as a field representative and administrative assistant to State Senator David Roberti.

A native of Davis, California, David earned a B.A. in Political Science from Occidental College and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Southern California.

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# Award Judges



● **NENSI LAKRORI**  
2021 Awards Jury Panelist

Nensi Lakrori is a full-time lecturer in the Department of Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering at San Diego State University (SDSU). For nearly ten years, she worked in project design and delivery on both transportation and rail-related projects in Michigan, Indiana, and Southern California. She began her career as a highway design engineer in Michigan before moving to California to work on the I-15 Managed Lanes and the SR-73 Toll Road widening projects. She holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Michigan State University, where she also served as Chi Epsilon chapter president for two years, and an M.S. in Transportation Engineering from SDSU. She is a registered P.E. in California, holds a LEED AP Building & Construction accreditation as well as OSHA 10 certification. Since 2015, she has taught civil design, construction, and construction management courses and continues to help students acquire the skills necessary to reach their fullest potential upon graduation. In 2019 Ms. Lakrori was awarded both the “Most Influential Faculty Award” in the SDSU Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering Department as well as “Most Outstanding Engineering Educator” by the San Diego County Engineers Council. In addition to teaching, she acts as Faculty Advisor for the San Diego State chapters of WTS, Tau Beta Pi, and American Concrete Institute (ACI). She also serves as the Pacific West Region Council Vice-Chair for WTS. Outside of the classroom her two young and energetic boys are continuously helping her fine-tune the work-life equation.



● **KIRSTIN SKADBERG**  
2021 Awards Jury Panelist

Kirstin Skadberg is president and owner of Kirstin Skadberg Consulting, a certified small woman-owned business specializing in environmental planning, project management and training design. Kirstin holds a Ph.D. in ecology from the SDSU/UC Davis Joint-Doctoral program and teaches Environmental Assessment Practices at USD. She has over 25 years of environmental planning, environmental research, and teaching experience.



● **NADIA NUNEZ**  
2021 Awards Jury Panelist

Nadia Nunez, is a bicultural Architect and Artist from Tijuana, MX. After obtaining her Architect license in Mexico in 2009, Nadia continued her studies in San Diego earning a Master of Architecture degree. She has experience working in both small and big scale construction companies on both sides of the border. As an artist, she has focused her efforts on promoting art as a healing and empowerment tool.



● **MARK BAZA**  
2021 Awards Jury Panelist

Mark Baza was appointed the Executive Director of the Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC) in May 2010. ICTC is the regional transportation and transit planning agency, and operates public transit services for Imperial County. Mr. Baza and ICTC team are also leading efforts to implement binational projects in partnership with Caltrans, the U.S. General Services Administration, Federal Highway Administration, the State of Baja California and Mexican government. Mr. Baza has 32 years of experience in the transportation planning and engineering industry. Mr. Baza began his career with Caltrans District 11 for 21 years, where he managed regional planning for San Diego and Imperial, and concluded his career at Caltrans managing a portfolio of capital goods movement and cross-border infrastructure projects with Mexico.

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# Award Judges

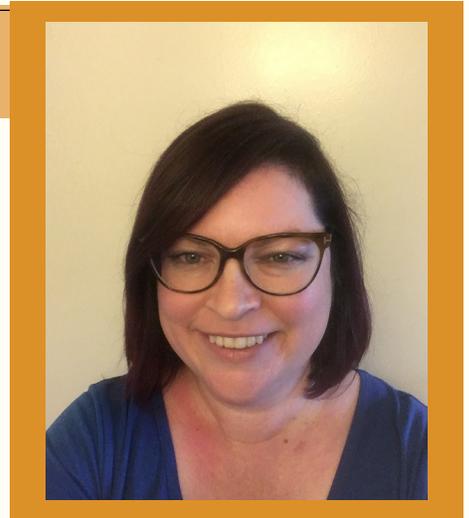


● **MONIQUE CHEN**  
2021 Awards Jury Panelist

Monique Chen brings over two decades of experience providing engineering and planning services to the transportation industry for both public and private sector clients. Almost 10 years ago, she co-founded CR Associates (also known as Chen Ryan Associates) out of her inspiration and desire to create lasting changes for the transportation planning and engineering professions. Influenced by the Complete Streets Act, her goal was (and is) to be a pioneer in reshaping infrastructure to encourage American cities to be less dependent on automobiles and make space for people to have more options for safe travel. Today, she has helped establish CR Associates as being among the first boutique firms in California to develop and use alternative planning practices that effectively elevate walking and cycling to the same importance as driving.

● **KIMBERLY DODSON**  
2021 Awards Jury Panelist

Kimberly Dodson is an Associate Transportation Planner at Caltrans District 11. She holds a Master of Engineering from University of Arizona and a Master of Science emphasis in GIS from San Diego State University. Kimberly was a former recipient of a WTS San Diego Chapter student scholarship. She has volunteered with the WTS San Diego Chapter for a variety of events. She congratulates all the 2021 WTS San Diego Chapter Award winners!



## THANK YOU TO THIS YEAR'S AWARD JUDGES!

- Nensi Lakrori
- Monique Chen
- Nadia Nunez
- Mark Baza
- Kirstin Skadberg
- Kimberly Dodson

## THANK YOU TO THIS YEAR'S SCHOLARSHIP JURY PANEL!

- Heather Furey
- Lauren Ferrell
- Bruce Urquhart
- Danielle Berger
- Arun Prem



# Scholarship Panel



● **HEATHER FUREY**  
2021 Scholarship Jury Panel

Heather Furey is the Director of Capital Projects and Land Management at the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). Heather joined MTS in 2019 after spending nearly 20 years in the private sector, assisting public clients with planning, design and construction of major development projects. At MTS, Heather is leading a team of Trolley and transit engineers implementing the agency's \$100 million capital improvement program and real estate portfolio for maintenance work and Transit Oriented Developments. The department is new to MTS, created in January 2019, to combine the Trolley and transit engineering staff into one group. Heather has been streamlining the department's work, standardizing budget and schedule reporting, continuing to build strong relationships with the A/E, CM and Construction communities, and completing projects on time and under budget.

Heather has a BS in Civil Engineering from Michigan State University, is a licensed civil engineer. Upon retirement, Heather and her husband Chuck plan to cruise the world's waterways aboard their sailboat, Blond Fury. Practice runs have included a sail from Los Angeles to Honolulu in 2019 and San Diego to Puerto Vallarta in 2020, just before the start of the pandemic.

Ms. Lauren Ferrell is a project manager and civil engineer with over 13 years of professional experience. She has extensive engineering and management experience leading multi-discipline teams to complete preliminary, environmental, and final design for transportation and transit centered projects. In addition to completing challenging environmental and engineering projects, Lauren specializes in storm water industrial and construction compliance management.

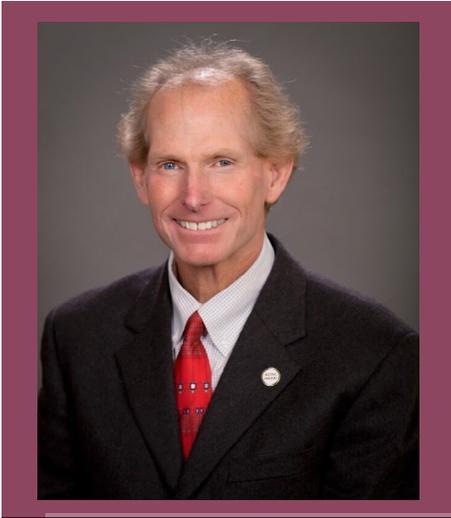
Ms. Ferrell is a San Diego native who graduated with her bachelor's and master's degree from San Diego State University (SDSU) in Civil Engineering. She has served in a variety of leadership roles fostering industry engagement. She currently is the President-Elect of ASCE San Diego Section and a former President of WTS San Diego County Chapter, as well as the recipient of the 2018 WTS International Member of the Year Award. Ms. Ferrell also participates as a mentor for SDSU's Aztec Mentor Program that support college students as they transition from academics to their professional career.



● **LAUREN FERRELL**  
2021 Scholarship Jury Panel

We create  
opportunity.

# Scholarship Panel



● **BRUCE URQUHART**  
2021 Scholarship Jury Panel

Bruce Urquhart, Professional Land Surveyor, has over 37 years of experience in the land surveying and management disciplines. His last position at Caltrans was the Division Chief for Land Surveys in District 11 (San Diego.) In December 2015, Bruce retired from Caltrans. For the past 28 years, he has also been an adjunct professor at San Diego State University (SDSU) teaching Surveying for Civil Engineers.

Since retirement, Bruce's focus has been on teaching at SDSU. In addition, he's been an active member of the San Diego Chapter of Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) for the past nine years. He's been a mentor in the Mentor Program, served as a judge for the WTS Annual Awards and Scholarships, and continues to participate in WTS activities and events on a regular basis. As a faculty member at SDSU, he is a strong supporter of the Student Chapter of WTS.



● **DANIELLE BERGER**  
2021 Scholarship Jury Panel

Danielle Berger, AICP is a Senior Project Manager at Dudek. Her work focuses on enhancing the built environment while working to preserve natural resources through planning, outreach, and strategic partnerships. Danielle is a graduate of the University of Toronto and Columbia University, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, a founding member of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals Utah Chapter, and a member of the American Planning Association.

Outside of work Danielle can be found exploring by bike, skiing, and flyfishing.



● **ARUN PREM**  
2021 Scholarship Jury Panel

Arun is Executive Director of FACT, a nonprofit that provides senior/special needs transportation throughout San Diego County.

Arun began his transportation career with New York City Department of Transportation where he managed the bus services contracts and Civil Rights and Alt Fuel Programs. He worked on implementing the City's first ADA compliance program for bus services.

Before his work in San Diego, Arun served as Director of Strategic Planning for Access Services in Los Angeles, the ADA paratransit agency that serves LA County.

# 2021

# Hello Progress



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To all the award winners and those celebrating their own victories from the past year...

**Cheers to you!**

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# Scholarship Recipients

# 2021



• **NATALIA MOSQUEDA**  
2021 High School  
Scholarship Recipient

Natalia is a senior at Del Norte High School in San Diego. This fall, she will be attending the University of California, Davis, to pursue a degree in civil engineering. Interested in transportation infrastructure design, Natalia wants to enhance public works, specifically bridges and ports, thus making communities safer. By challenging herself through numerous AP classes and developing experience through organization involvement, she is confident and excited to become a female leader in the industry and give back to WTS for years to come.



• **MARIAM HAROUN**  
2021 High School  
Scholarship Recipient

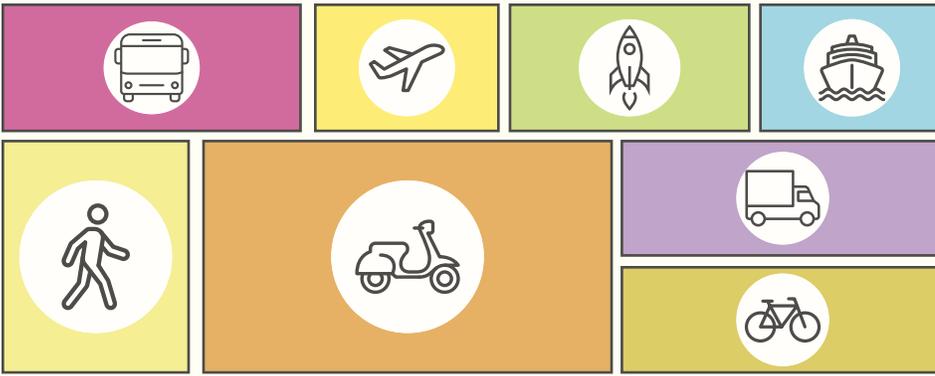
Mariam is a senior at Poway High School in San Diego. She will attend the University of California, Irvine, as a civil engineering major in the fall. Mariam looks forward to becoming a leader in civil engineering, creating safer and more accessible transportation for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Her mission is to encourage other women to enter the field, advocate for equitable opportunities for women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics positions, and become a role model to others in engineering.



• **JILLIAN ARTHUR**  
2021 Undergraduate  
Scholarship Recipient

Jillian is an undergraduate civil engineering student at San Diego State University and currently interns at AECOM. She is involved in the student chapters of WTS as treasurer and the American Society of Civil Engineers as junior mix design lead. Through her education and work experience, Jillian has honed her interests, established career goals, and developed professional skills. She plans to grow her career in the transportation field so she can design infrastructure people use every day and make a significant difference in the community.

## We create opportunity.



● **LAURA VARELA**  
2021 Undergraduate  
Scholarship Recipient

Laura is a structural engineering student at the University of California, San Diego. Through her recent internship with the County of Riverside, she was able to contribute to the Avenue 66 Overpass Construction Project in Coachella, which allowed for improved access to retail centers and economic growth for the community. What excites Laura most about this career path is producing mathematical solutions that benefit all of society, and her objective is to continue in the transportation industry and provide improved travel modes that help resolve urban sprawl.



● **GINA CHADERGIAN**  
2021 Undergraduate  
Scholarship Recipient

Gina is an undergraduate student at San Diego State University studying civil engineering. Through her studies, she developed an interest in transportation, which led to her current internship with Caltrans D11. Through this experience, she now understands the steps required to successfully produce plans, specifications, and estimates for highway maintenance and rehabilitation projects. Her primary career goal is to increase the safety, efficiency, and productivity within her community by constantly creating innovative solutions, as well as helping those around her.

# 2021 Scholarship Awards



## High School Recipients

- Natalia Mosqueda
- Mariam Haroun



## Undergraduate Recipients

- Jillian Arthur
- Laura Varela
- Gina Chadergian



## Graduate Recipients

- Rubi Morales
- Nicole Zanchetta
- Alishia Ballard
- Shawna McCann

# Scholarship Recipients



● **RUBI MORALES**

2021 Graduate Scholarship Recipient

As a second-year graduate student at San Diego State University, Rubi is pursuing a master's degree in city planning. She earned her undergraduate degree in political economy with a concentration in commodities from the University of California, Berkeley. Rubi currently interns at the San Diego Association of Governments, assisting primarily with the Central Mobility Hub and Connections Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan. Through these projects, Rubi has learned the value of operating and managing transit networks and roads scientifically. Upon receiving her master's degree, she plans to begin her career as a transportation systems planner to continue implementing personalized mobility options and goods movement in San Diego.



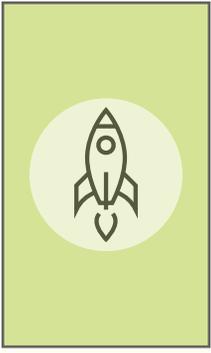
● **NICOLE ZANCHETTA**

2021 Graduate Scholarship Recipient

Nicole is currently working toward a graduate degree in city planning at San Diego State University. After receiving her undergraduate in community and regional development from the University of California, Davis, she worked at the Center for Sustainable Energy in San Diego as a project coordinator. As a planning intern at the San Diego Association of Governments, she is currently assisting with the development of the 2021 Regional Transportation Plan. After graduation, her goal is to pursue a transportation planning career in the public sector, incorporating new transportation technologies into communities, and reimagining land use and transportation.



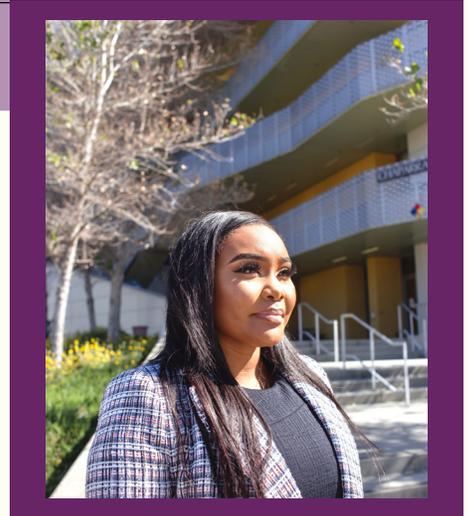
# 2021



● **ALISHIA BALLARD**

2021 Graduate Scholarship Recipient

Alishia will be graduating with a master's degree in engineering management from California State University, Northridge this year. As an assistant engineer at the County of San Diego, she utilizes her problem-solving abilities and performs land development discretionary review for private development projects. Over the years, Alishia has been an active member of the National Society of Black Engineers, serving multiple chair positions and contributing her time to several committees and boards. With her graduate degree, she plans to continue her career as an engineer and expand to a program coordinator with the hopes of making the sustainable development goals set for supply chain and environmental work



● **SHAWNA MCCANN**

2021 Graduate Scholarship Recipient

Shawna is working toward completing her graduate degree in city planning from San Diego State University. After learning more about the planning profession, she discovered a passion to make the built environment more sustainable, equitable, and enjoyable. Shawna's focus is on transportation planning and helping create systems and networks that support greenhouse gas goals while meeting the needs of communities. As a transportation planning intern for the San Diego Association of Governments, she supports the planning team primarily through collaborative communication with public agencies, organizations, and the public. Shawna is also active in the San Diego State University City Planning Association chapter as the social media manager.



# We create opportunity.

# Transportation YOU

The Transportation You program began 10 years ago as a partnership between the U.S. Department of Transportation and WTS to increase interest in high school girls and young women in STEM studies through mentorship and outreach to students. Our WTS San Diego Chapter has provided mentoring opportunities to local high school girls since the program began. The highlight of the program is the annual Washington D.C. Summit. A mentor and mentee pair are selected to travel to Washington D.C. and have hands on demonstrations with the multiple agencies of the US DOT (FAA, FHWA, FRA and FTA) , and provides an overview of available careers within the transportation industry. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic restrictions the in-person D.C. Summit was cancelled again this year. WTSI organized a virtual D.C. Summit taking place over three days in June 2021. Our mentor – Jacqui Perkins, a designer at Rick Engineering, and our mentee - Seoyoung (Kelly) Hwang, a Junior at Canyon Crest Academy attended the virtual Summit. WTSI did a great job putting the virtual Summit together. They included many of the elements from the in-person Summit including discussions with women in leadership positions, virtual tours, games, and opportunities for the girls to network.

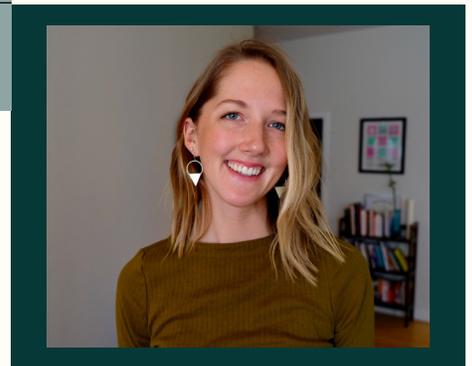


● **KELLY HWANG**  
2021 Transportation YOU Mentee

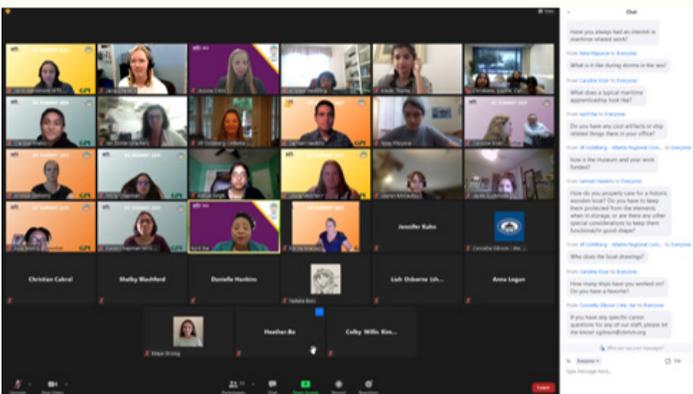
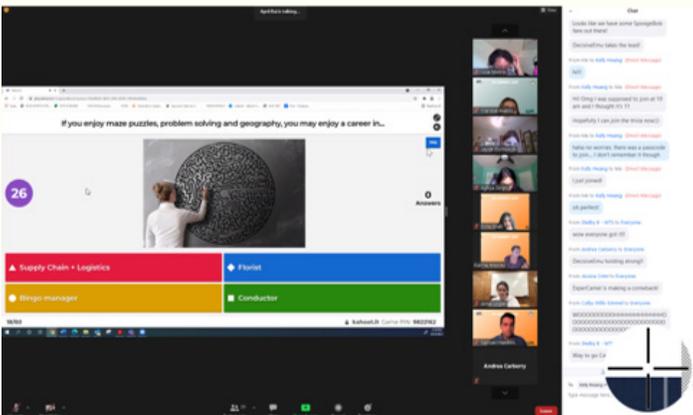
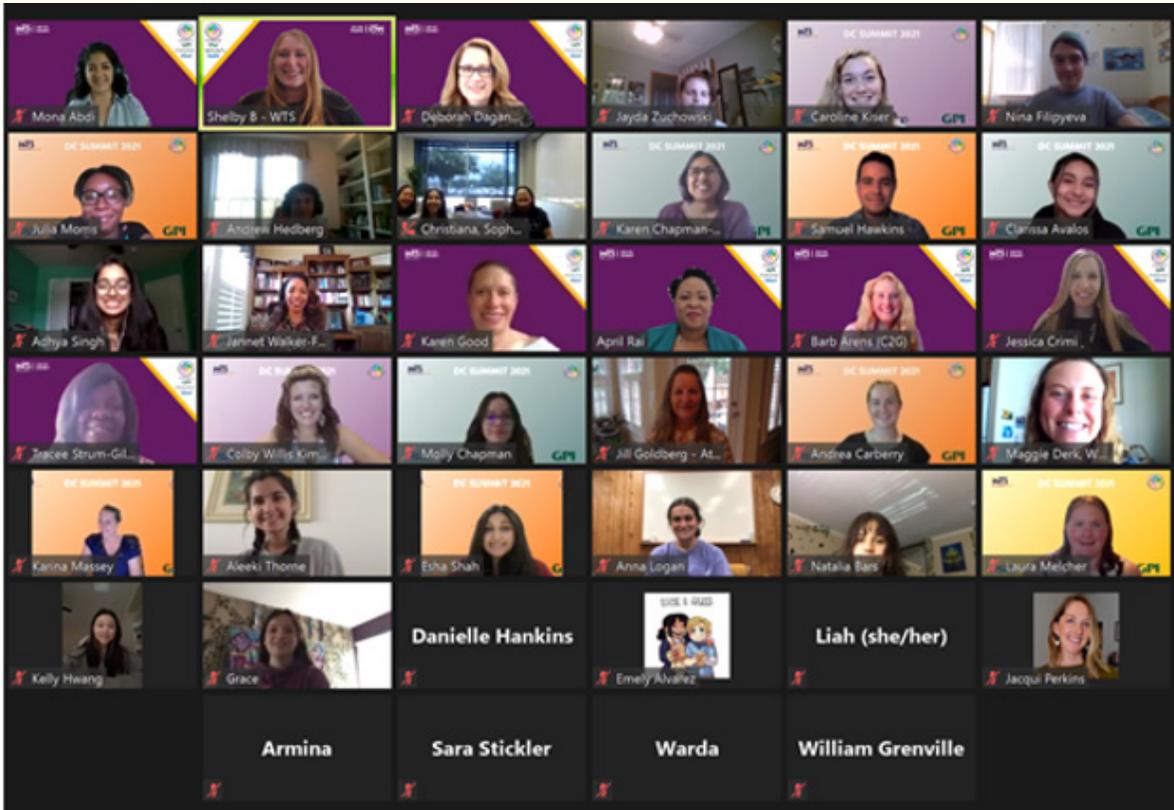
**“The Transportation YOU summit taught me a lot of fun facts about transportation jobs, signs, roles, and more. I really liked the live tours that we did, especially the space port. I was a bit confused sometimes during interviews, but overall, the experience was great!”**

● **JACQUI PERKINS**  
2021 Transportation YOU Mentor

**“I really enjoyed the pace of the event. Even though it was a virtual event, it never felt stagnant or unengaging. The Transportation Trivia was really fun, and I personally learned a lot from that. Also, the live tour of the DC airport was really cool. Overall, I think the event was really interesting and there was a good variety of activities/speakers throughout.”**



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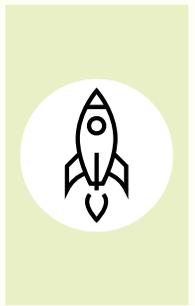
# Member of the Year

award winner

**SUNNIE HOUSE**



# 2021



**S**unnie House has been a member of WTS for over 30 years. During that time, she has served on the boards of the Los Angeles and San Diego Chapters in various roles and was the president of WTS International from 2004 to 2006. Sunnie has worked her entire career to advance the reputation and credibility of WTS and all women in transportation as evident in both her commitment as a WTS leader and her outspoken support of WTS. Sunnie truly embodies the mission of WTS, as she seeks to attract women in transportation at all levels, from students to executives. Sunnie's tireless commitment to WTS has made an undeniable difference to both our local chapter and the international organization.

During her WTSI presidency, Sunnie worked to elevate the organization to new heights through several initiatives. She was instrumental in the effort to establish WTS as an international organization through the successful development of a WTS chapter in London, England. She also led a membership drive and raised WTS memberships by over

1,000 members. She worked to move the organization from volunteer-based to having paid staff through the hiring of the first Executive Director. Sunnie promoted the WTS Appointment Program for public and private sector; she met with United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary Mineta during her presidency and discussed potential positions in USDOT and pointed out the extensive talent pool that WTS has to offer in filling those appointed positions.

As a Director for the San Diego Chapter in recent years, Sunnie has provided invaluable guidance and insights for chapter leadership to re-focus on key goals. She led the Strategic Realignment process to ensure that all committees were setting goals that directly supported the chapter mission and priorities. She began by identifying the need for a strategic realignment as our board worked through a major reorganization, then worked with the Executive Board to guide a chapter vision and mission exercise, based on the WTSI strategic planning efforts. Sunnie then worked with each committee individually to guide

a discussion of our chapter's vision and mission and reinvigorate the drive towards their goals. Through Sunnie's commitment, the San Diego chapter was able to refocus efforts to directly contribute to the mission.

She also launched the Small Business Executive Mentoring program, where women executives from small business were paired one-on-one with women executives from larger organizations. This ongoing program will not only support women in small business but will also bring more executive-level women to the WTS chapter, increasing membership value to our entire member base. Sunnie seeks to sustain women in the industry by giving her time to advise our board, and by ensuring that the chapter's programming is of high quality and provides value to all career levels. Finally, she advances women, leveraging their own reputation to lift women in the industry. In her over 30 years of membership, Sunnie has remained committed to the WTS mission, and she is constantly striving to elevate our organization.

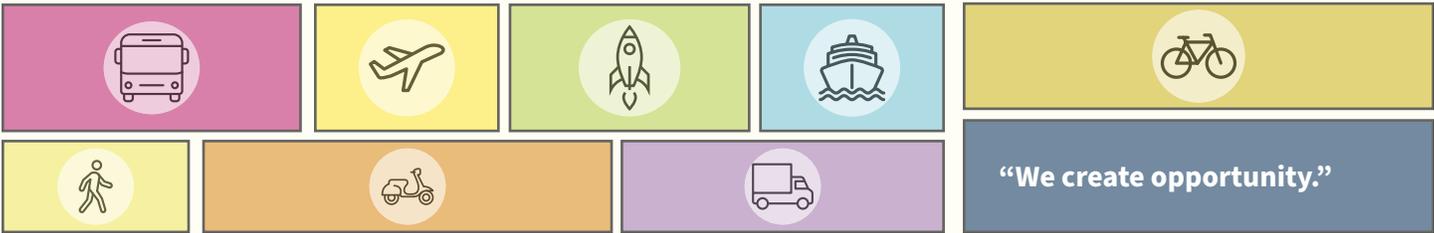
**We create opportunity.**

# 2021 Honorable Ray Lahood

award winner

**MARK BAZA**





It is with great pleasure that we present Mark Baza with this award in recognition of his outstanding leadership and tireless efforts in addressing and promoting diversity and inclusion and raising awareness within the transportation community. Mark has dedicated 32 years of service to the transportation industry, with 11 years as the Executive Director at Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC) and 21 years at the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 11. During his career he has led efforts to create a more inclusive work environment for all. He has inspired, supported, promoted, and encouraged hundreds of women, minorities, and colleagues alike. Mark's colleagues have noted his demeanor of interest, concern, and ability to listen, which has created a valuable platform for women and minorities to be considered for promotions, opportunities, and career development.

Mark has demonstrated his commitment to advance and advocate for women in his own organization, ensuring that women are prepared and encouraged to compete for key positions of authority. Under Mark's Leadership as the Executive Director of ICTC, the organization includes a remarkably diverse and inclusive workforce, including 73 percent women. Within his staff at ICTC, 8 out of the 11 staff members are minority women and 50 percent are managers at an executive level. In addition, he encourages the consultant firm which manages the

transit services for the agency to hire, promote and professionally develop women on the team. Currently, 25 percent of the managers for the transit operations team are Hispanic women.

Mark has been a strong supporter of the WTS San Diego chapter since its inception and an active member of the WTS board for over 10 years, directly contributing toward the advancement of women and minorities. During that time, he mentored many committee and board members and provided support on the programs. He has also served as a keynote speaker in chapter events. In the mid-1990s, Mark was an active member of the Hispanic Advisory Committee at Caltrans and served as the Committee Chair for a term. Under his leadership, the Committee partnered with other Latino groups in other local public agencies to create career development workshops where many of the attendees were Latina women.

Lastly, Mark has made several outstanding contributions to the transportation industry. Mark began his career with Caltrans in 1989 and rose to the position of Project Manager for the Trade Corridor. In his 21-year tenure, Mark spearheaded many initiatives that enhanced mobility within the region through goods movement programs and cross border transportation access. Mark was one of the original authors of the first report on "Transportation Issues along the California/Mexico Border".

The report was submitted to the US Department of Transportation and gained national attention for its revealing depiction of the transportation challenges across the border. The report was a catalyst for funding the capital improvements needed along the border and eventually became part of the Library of Congress collection. Mark was also involved in the development of numerous cross border studies for the expansion of the border infrastructure facilities, securing more than \$750 million in funding for the region. Mark led the Caltrans District 11 Goods Movement Team by creating multi-county action plans for Southern California and the Trade Corridor Infrastructure Program including border infrastructure projects and access improvements to 10th Avenue Marine Terminal and facilities in National City and the bridge crossing at Harbor Drive at 32nd Street. These projects had special meaning for Mark as they improved access to the Barrio Logan neighborhood, adjacent to the Port of San Diego, where his mother grew up. Mark recently received the "Top 100 Leaders Award" during the 2021 International Transportation and Automotive Summit for his efforts in establishing the Imperial County/Mexicali Bi-National Alliance for the International Border Crossings. The Alliance supports diversity, opportunity, and inclusion for underserved communities.

Thank you, Mark, for your many contributions to the community and leadership in transportation industry!

# 2021 Employer of the Year

award winner

# Jacobs

Jacobs developed a formal Women's Network to promote an inclusive culture, where both women and men can thrive and feel valued. Its mission is to accelerate a cultural shift by empowering women and promoting gender equality, aiming to balance representation, development, retention, and promotion of qualified women, and to champion women leaders. Jacobs received honors from the 2020 Women on Boards for their commitment to Board diversity in having at least 20 percent women on their board of directors – ultimately achieving Board diversity of 45 percent.

Female employees at Jacobs are given a wide range of external and internal continuing education and professional development opportunities. Internally, Jacobs supports continuing education of female employees through a tuition reimbursement program and provides flexibility with work hours to allow attendance at classes at local colleges and universities. Partnering with many local universities, Jacobs promotes intern and graduate opportunities and collaborate with diverse campus organizations to introduce female students to STEM. Female employees at Jacobs are supported to be actively involved in external professional organizations focusing on career advancement, structured around inclusion, diversity, and conscious inclusion programs.

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# focus on inclusion



*"We have seen the benefits of a significant increase in gender diversity over the last several years and believe this next phase of our journey — delivering on the Justice and Equality action plan — is critical to our company's success."*

**Steve Demetriou** | Jacobs Chair and CEO

*Jacobs is proud to be the WTS San Diego County 2021 Employer of the Year  
View Jacobs' Global Action Plan for Advancing Justice and Equality*



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Jacobs is active in an “inclusion and diversity” campaign, offering “conscious inclusion” training to look at how our biases influence how we think and act, illustrating the importance of understanding our biases, how to improve our self-awareness, and how to mitigate these biases to benefit ourselves and others. This is crucial in improving the diversity in our lives and our company, while emphasizing the importance of consciously including everyone, especially those historically sidelined in our industry, women and people of color.

Jacobs is a strong supporter of WTS, locally, nationally, and internationally. They encourage chapter participation, pay for employee memberships, and provide support for WTS San Diego events and active participation – three Jacobs San Diego staff members currently serve in WTS San Diego leadership positions. Jacobs is also proud to be a WTS International - Trailblazer Partner and a WTS San Diego - Platinum Level Sponsor. At the WTS International level, Jacobs staff have served in leadership positions, such as the Board of Directors and the WTS International Foundation Secretary. Actively, Jacobs promotes the Transportation YOU outreach program, with Jim Starling from our San Diego office leading Transportation YOU for the WTS San Diego Chapter.

# 2021 Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership

award winner

**DANIELLE ZHANG**



**D**anielle Zhang has contributed significantly to promoting diversity, inclusion, and multi-cultural awareness. She is the first Canadian woman to be hired by Caltrans 20+ years ago, opening the door to other fellow Canadians to bring their unique education and diverse experience to Caltrans. During the early part of her career, Danielle worked on many international master planning and landscape architectural projects in China, Australia, and Singapore. Her ability to speak several languages, as well as her willingness to nurture and facilitate open dialogues promoted universal inclusion regardless of a person's country of origin, gender, skin color and religious belief system.

Ms. Zhang has exhibited extraordinary efforts in facilitating professional opportunities for women and minorities through the WTS San Diego Chapter. Her current role as the Diversity and Inclusion Committee Chair helps foster a culture where all voices are heard within WTS San Diego through the

chapter's daily operations, programs, and activities. Danielle served in 2018 and 2019 as the Nominations Committee Chair, helping to raise funds to encourage and support the younger generation of women to receive scholarships to study transportation-related fields. She helped to reintroduce the award category, "Pursuit of Excellence" to target recognition of mid-career women professionals in our industry. As an artist, Danielle donated her artwork and designed the 25th Anniversary Logo for WTS San Diego to help raise thousands of dollars in scholarship funds. She has also created mural artwork throughout San Diego County to bring social awareness to the importance of diversity.

Danielle has promoted opportunities for women and minorities through her project work, professional conference presentations, and mentorship program participation. As a contract manager at Caltrans, Danielle met an extremely aggressive deadline to deliver the 4 Minor B project which had direct impact in

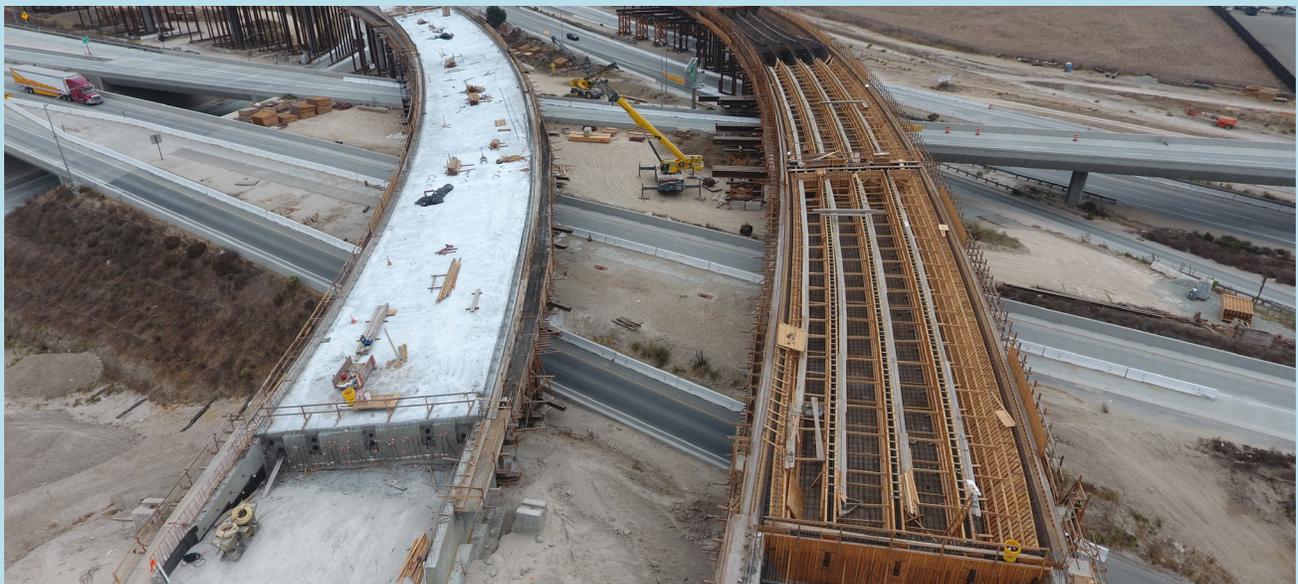
sustaining the economy during the pandemic by helping small local construction companies survive and thrive. Ms. Zhang continues to advocate for equality and equity to provide equal aesthetic treatments of varying demographic areas, promote unity, and fight segregation between different ethnic groups. At the WTSI Annual Conference in 2021, she presented, "From ZimRide to Lyft – How Multi-Modal Transportation Can Advance Equity Through Creative Innovation." She also presented at the 2013 international conference for the International Chinese Transportation Professional Association (ICTPA) about her experience as a woman minority designer. Danielle has contributed to the community as a mentor to junior high, high school, and college level girls, youth, and minority students through the First Lego League Challenge as well as the UCSD Designathon.

Thank you, Danielle, for connecting people, especially women and minorities, in our community!



# **2021** **Innovative Transportation Solutions**

## **SR-11 SEGMENT 2A & SEGMENT 4 SOUTH COUNTY TRADE CORRIDOR PROJECT**



**Partners: SANDAG, CALTRANS, Federal Government  
and Mexico**

The Trade Corridor Project included a partnership between Mexico, the Federal Government, SANDAG, and Caltrans to create an international border crossing with a tolled highway. An unconventional and innovative Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) design as well as Border Wait Time Technologies and Information Systems were used to improve operations of the Trade Corridor to increase its operational efficiency. The project management team, composed of both Caltrans and SANDAG professional staff, including Jacqueline Appleton-Deane, Nicola Bernard, Maria Rodriguez-Molina, and Keri Robinson[FJ1], led the project toward a common purpose while keeping collective enthusiasm and motivation alive. While the DDI design and Border Wait Time Technologies are not common in the State of California, the project moved along at a steady pace due to the dedicated collaboration

of both internal and external project partners. Approximately 40 women were involved from start to completion including the design, right-of-way, environmental, project management, and the construction team.

The purpose of this project was to balance intersection safety and increased capacity needs. It also provided a continuous, reliable data source to support operations, security, and management at the border facilities at the local, regional, and national (U.S. and Mexico) levels. The SR 11 Segment 2A and Segment 4 Project segments provides connections to southbound SR-125 connectors, eastbound SR 11, southbound SR 905, and the future Otay Mesa East Port of Entry.

Female project managers were able to overcome several challenges during this project including scheduling requirements, and the acceptance of the DDI concept. Key elements for success on this

project were consistent stakeholder engagement, extensive planning activities within a strong labor force, and constant collaboration with designers to facilitate the innovative design. “You don’t want a new creative innovative idea, and it fails,” says Jacqueline-Appleton Deane.

The project is poised to provide improved traffic flow, congestion relief, and safety to California drivers along the busy bi-national route. As part of a larger purpose and transportation system in this corridor, this SR 11 Segment 2A and Segment 4 Project will satisfy the increasing demand for California-Mexico trade at existing border crossings. It will reduce the economic loss because of existing border wait times for both commercial and passenger vehicles. This will reduce the number of idling vehicles that have a negative impact on air quality. Globally, this will promote economic growth and innovation for the region.

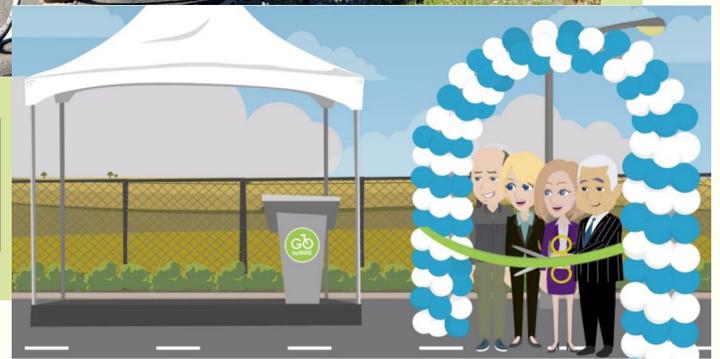


# 2021 Alternative Modes & Active Transportation

## INLAND RAIL TRAIL PHASE 2 PROJECT



**Partners: SANDAG  
and NCTD**



**P**hase 2 of the Inland Rail Trail is a multi-use path that runs three miles along the North County Transit District's (NCTD) right-of-way through parts of unincorporated San Diego County and the City of Vista. The project provides a safe route to school, encourages outdoor exercise, and provides other environmental and social benefits for the region.

A dedicated team, including many women from multiple disciplines, worked together to execute this successful project. At least six women managed key aspects of the project or made major contributions in various capacities, including; Linda Culp (SANDAG Bikeway Corridor Director), Tedi Jackson (SANDAG Manager of Outreach and Marketing), Brandy Sweitzer (SANDAG Senior Public Outreach Officer), Natalie Cushman (SANDAG Public Outreach

Officer II), Signe Wurtz (SANDAG Public Outreach Intern), Hope Reilly (Southwest Strategies Director of Public Affairs), and Terri Rodriguez (Anser Advisory Construction Administrator).

The overall goal of the program is to provide a comfortable environment for people of all ages and abilities to ride their bikes. The new western extension of the Inland Rail Trail improves active transportation connections to many local destinations. People biking and walking do not have to interact with motor vehicle traffic, significantly increasing safety throughout the project corridor. Key elements of the project included use of existing railroad right-of-way, drainage design, the construction of a bridge over Buena Creek, new pedestrian crossings, and the installation of other design elements, as well as

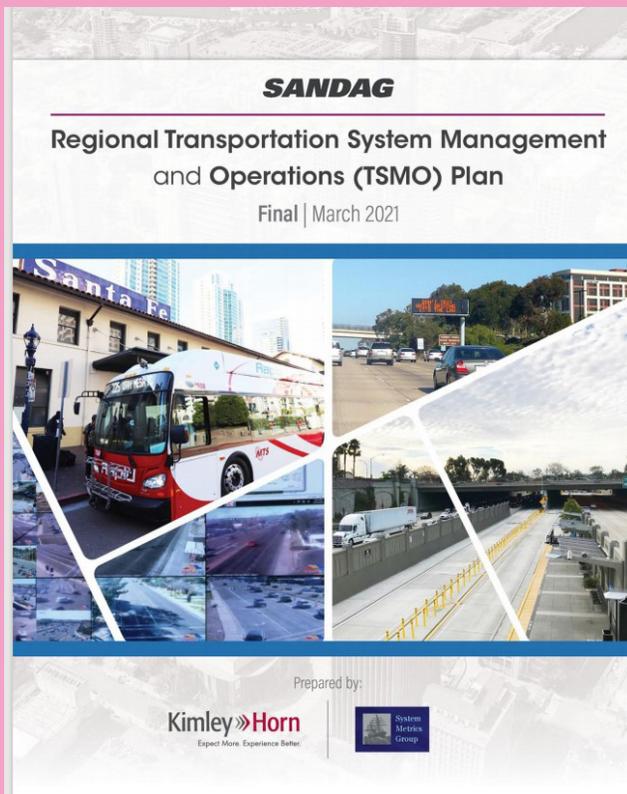
community outreach efforts.

The project team was able to overcome several challenges and successfully meet its overall goals. Challenges included changes in field conditions between design and construction, delays related to utility relocations, complexities of working near a live railroad, and coordination with nearby private property owners. However, at each of these turns, the project manager and team were able to find solutions that resulted in successfully opening a major transportation improvement to the public and continuing to create a regional network. Since opening, [FJ1] the project team has observed consistently heavy usage along the trail during site visits. Commuters, recreational riders, runners, dog-walkers, and pedestrians have all been using and enjoying the completed pathway.



# 2021 Technology for Transportation

## SANDAG REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS (TSMO) PLAN



**Partners: SANDAG And  
Kimley-Horn**

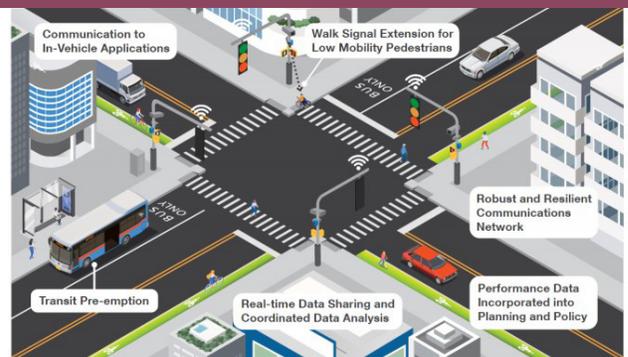


Figure 10. Urban Level 4 Maturity

This is the first regional TSMO plan in the state of California. It provides a framework for transportation agencies in the San Diego region to integrate TSMO and technology concepts such as curbside management, smart intersection systems, performance-based management, and technology requirements for integration. This Plan integrates SANDAG’s emerging 5 Big Moves into an actionable plan, with comprehensive input from a wide variety of stakeholders from transit agencies to local cities to regional agencies (Caltrans and SANDAG). It also incorporates the needs of stakeholders from municipalities, transit agencies, and community-based organizations like advocates for seniors, non-native English speakers, and the disabled community.

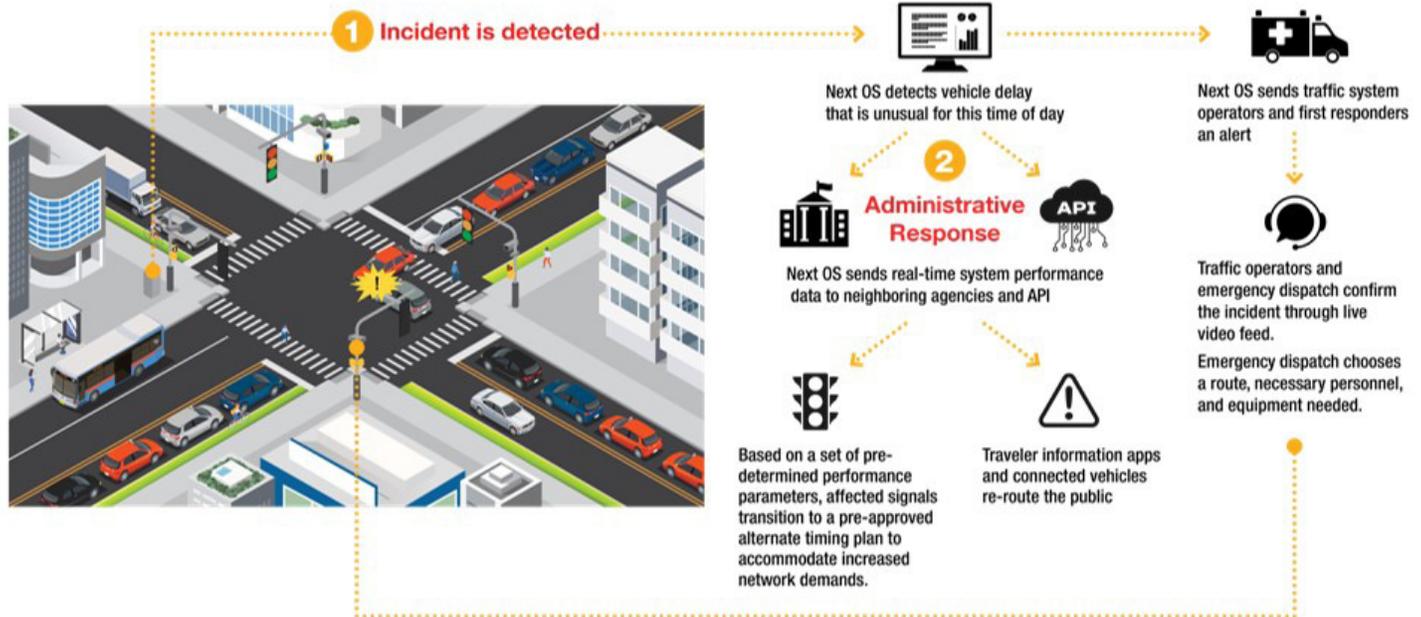
The prime consultant team was entirely comprised of women; Alyssa Phaneuf, Caralee Jaeckels,

Lisa Burgess, Tiffany Huang, Melissa Hewitt, Maya Bouchet, Amanda Good, and Katie Bruck. [FJ1] The team developed an innovative approach to implementing technology and TSMO-based solutions for the San Diego region. The all-female team of eight women organized stakeholder meetings, produced deliverables, and responded to the evolving regional 5 Big Moves. The team proved to be supportive and collaborative to overcome the frequent change in the scope of the project, and the schedule constraints due to funding. The team embraced changes and helped solidify the vision by advancing the 5 Big Moves with cost estimates, stakeholder outreach, and Concept of Operations. Due to the pandemic, the team was particularly adept at explaining technology-based solutions to stakeholders and provide solutions that made the TSMO Plan that much stronger and

more applicable to a wider range of community needs.

The TSMO Plan developed a Concept of Operations for a smart intersection system, which describes multiple variations of a smart intersection depending on the needs of the stakeholders. A Concept of Operations was also developed for curbside management to describe the operations of using technology for dynamic curb operations in multiple locations throughout the San Diego region. Both documents will be used to develop requirements for specific use cases of the Next OS, a data sharing platform. In addition, the TSMO plan included a toolbox to be used by stakeholders to help them utilize technology for improving operations. The SANDAG Regional Transportation Systems Management Operations Plan implements important tools and actions for solving mobility challenges in the region.

### SIS Incident Management Scenario



# Pursuit of Excellence

award winner

## CAROLYN CRULL

Carolyn Crull is a registered civil engineer with over 12 years of engineering experience, 11 of which have been at AECOM. She is known for her acute attention to detail, honesty, professionalism, and responsiveness. Carolyn has served as a project manager for the City of San Diego's Facilities Benefit Assessment (FBA) Cost Verification and Project Audit Program from 2010-2020, the Poway Unified School District Community Facilities District 15 Services contract, and the HomeFed Corporation's SR 52 Operational Improvements Project Initiation Document (PSR-PDS) and Project Approval/Environmental Document projects. She consistently receives the highest overall ratings from her clients on satisfaction surveys.

Carolyn demonstrates the ideals of WTS with her commitment to excellence within the transportation industry, advocacy for professional development, promotion of gender equality practices, and

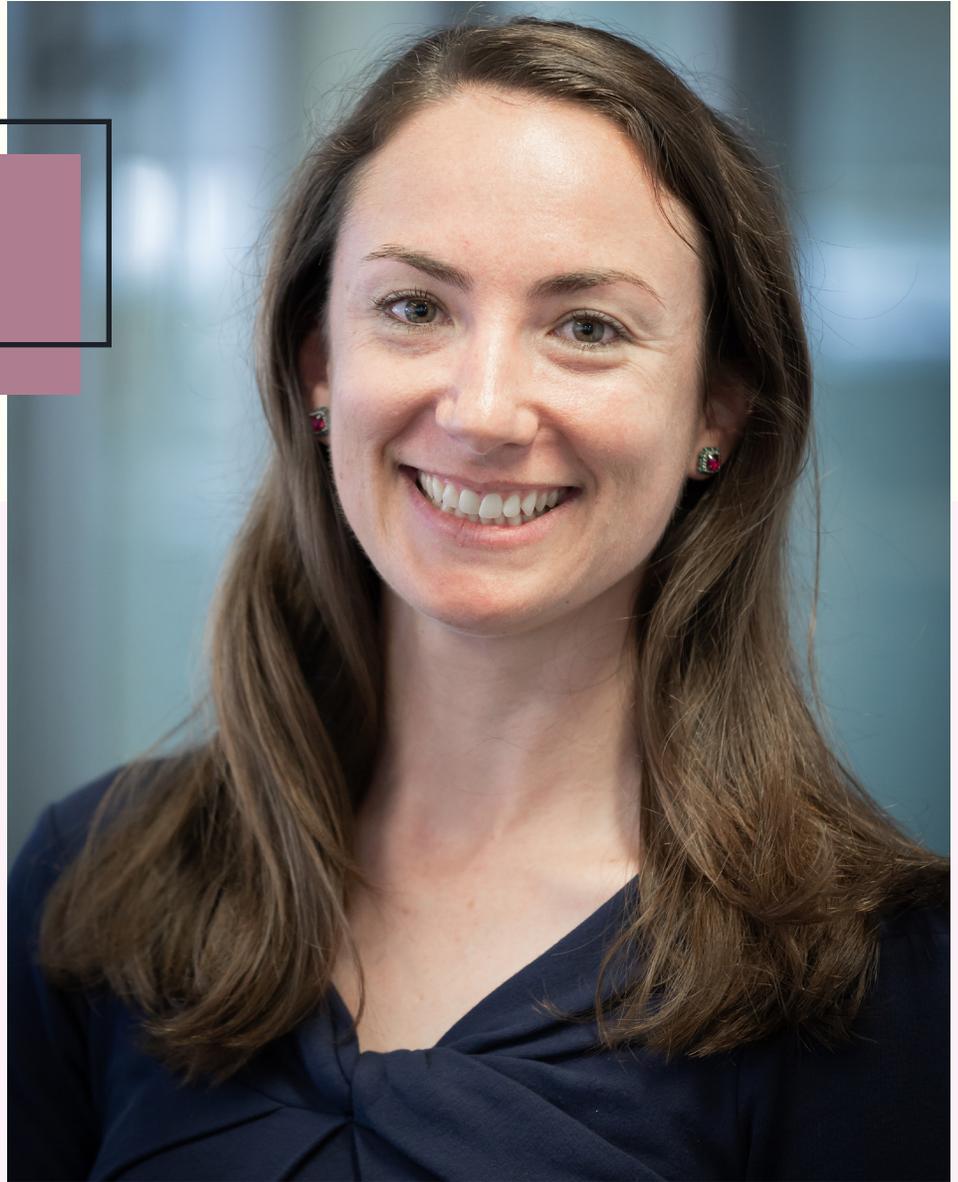
encouragement of women students to enter the transportation field. Ms. Crull has demonstrated achievement in transportation through her innovative approaches to project delivery and by being an active participant in AECOM's Data Science Group. Carolyn developed a proven effective approach to delivering quality designs for various local agencies and Caltrans. She also developed and implemented supplemental quality procedures that extended AECOM's quality management system specific to the contracted scope of services. The methodologies she created to review developer reimbursement requests have proven to be extremely beneficial to the program and the City. Within AECOM's Data Science Group, Carolyn recently completed coursework for "Deep Learning Artificial Intelligence," and is at the forefront of this emerging technology.

Carolyn has had a positive impact and commitment to the local

community. In 2013, she was a mentor for the Patrick Henry High School Academy of Engineering. Since then, she has participated in gender awareness training and AECOM sponsorship events with local schools to interest children in the engineering profession. Recently, when AECOM was scaling down resources due to the pandemic, she personally collected hundreds of binders and notebooks to be thrown away and donated them to local schools and churches. In her dealings with the community, Carolyn is always honest, professional, and truly invested in her support and efforts to improve the quality of life through engineering and education.

At AECOM, Ms. Crull provides clear and consistent training for her staff that enables their professional growth. Her success can be measured by the feedback from her FBA client who stated, "the project team of Carolyn Crull has always been outstanding and a pleasure to work with." This project team

# 2021



consisted of first year employees out of college who she trained to successfully perform the project tasks. Carolyn supervises a team of 7 employees, 5 of which are women. She provides individual mentorship to staff on her own time, especially young female staff and encourages and endorses other women in leadership roles. For each of her staff and mentees, Carolyn develops personal career plans tailored to their individual goals and interests, and checks in with them twice a month to ensure they have the opportunities they need to progress their individual careers. She actively supports WTS by volunteering at student chapter events, such as mock interviews. She also recruits interns from WTS, the Society of Women Engineers, and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers to offer students experience by working at AECOM. Ms. Crull's diligence, professionalism, and commitment to the advancement of her staff, community and the transportation engineering profession furthers the

mission of the WTS.

Thank you, Carolyn, for your active engagement and support with the community and transportation industry!

**“We create opportunity.”**

# Woman of the Year

award winner

## KATY COLE

**K**aty Cole is the office leader of the Fehr & Peers San Diego office, is an active member of WTS, chairs the ITE San Diego Chapter Travel Demand Modeling Sub-committee, and serves on the ITE San Diego Chapter SB 743 sub-committee. She has made a substantial contribution to our regional transportation industry through her expertise in Senate Bill 743 (SB 743); helping the region navigate the major change to how transportation impacts are evaluated for CEQA. In coordination with the ITE sub-committee, Katy invested an enormous amount of volunteer time helping to develop guidance for how agencies in the San Diego Region can implement the requirements of SB 743.

As a consultant, she has also assisted several jurisdictions (including the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, City of Vista, City of Carlsbad, and City of Encinitas) developing and implementing their own CEQA guidance documents and thresholds

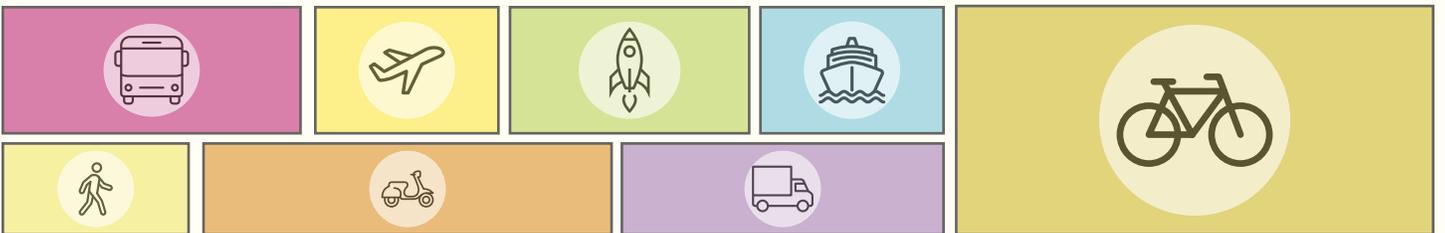
in accordance with SB 743. She has been on the forefront of this major change in the transportation industry, providing innovative, practical advice for handling the many challenges that have come with this new territory. She has helped shape how the San Diego Region will evaluate and respond to transportation impacts through the new SB 743 lens.

As part of her role as Operations Manager and Office Leader at Fehr & Peers, Katy's responsibilities include empowering young professionals to take on project management roles and nurturing office culture. She has provided leadership opportunities to many other women at Fehr & Peers, and personally invested in their success by encouraging and guiding them through their transitions into leadership roles. Katy's responsibilities also include overseeing the hiring process. As a result, nearly 75 percent of the current San Diego office staff are women.

Katy has also contributed widely to the field by organizing and leading the APA student session entitled, "I Have a Planning Degree, Now What?". In this session she shared transportation-oriented career advice and provided inspiration to young planners and engineers. Katy has also lectured at the University of California, San Diego; UCSD Extension; and the University of Nevada, Reno, modeling to students that women can, should, and do rise to leadership roles and can be recognized as experts in the field of transportation.

Thank you, Katy for your contributions to the transportation industry and young professionals!

# 2021



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# Diversity & Inclusion Committee

This year we re-established the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Chaired by Danielle Zhang with Caltrans and Kena Teon with the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System, the chapter is extremely proud and honored to introduce the committee members:

- **BRIANNA PILKINTON, ERM**

Executive Board Liaison

- **LATOSHA HARDAGE, MTS**

Committee Member

- **ANNIE MERRITT, JACOBS**

Committee Member

- **AKBERET 'AKI' GHEBRE, NV5**

Committee Member

- **VASSILENA LERINSKA, MTS**

Committee Member

- **ROSA LOLOEE, SELECT ELECTRIC**

Committee Member

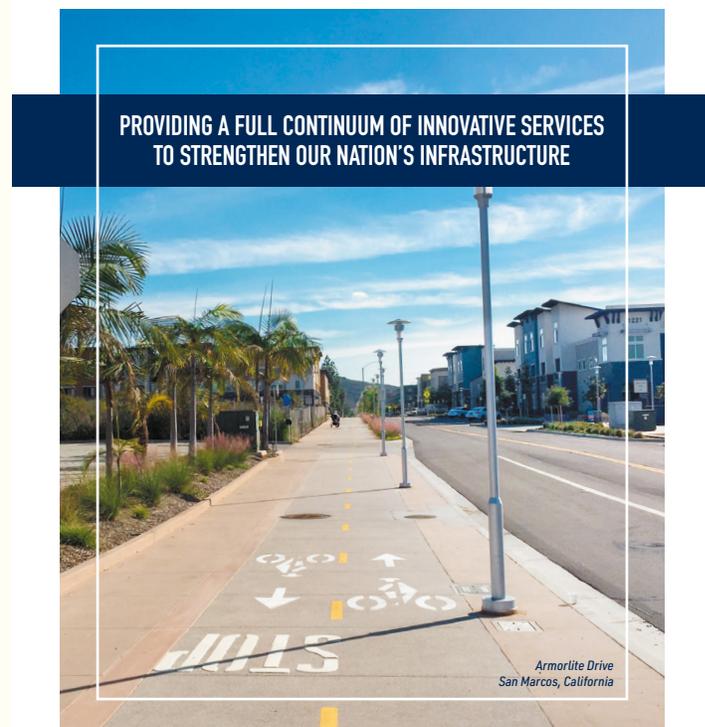
- **DEBBIE LEUNG, IBI GROUP**

Committee Member

- **THET "TYKE" HTIKE, WSP**

Committee Member

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