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Advancing women  
Advancing transportation

# THE JERSEY CONNECTION

December 2022

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been a good year! We hosted over a dozen IN-PERSON activities. We encouraged new talent with our mentorship program as well as honed and showcased the professional development skills of our membership with other events. Everyone has something to offer in terms of experience. Please let us ([wtsnewjersey@gmail.com](mailto:wtsnewjersey@gmail.com)) know about your experiences.



Growth continues with the support of our Corporate Partners. Over 30 organizations and counting have committed the partnering with WTS NJ on the advancement of women in the industry. Chapter membership has blossomed to over 110 strong today. This year, we shined a light on our partners via social media and commemorated with an in-person Corporate Partner Showcase in October.

There was so much to join at a physical location this year. We were welcomed at three of our Corporate Partner locations - on April 6th, Michael Baker International opened their doors to us for our Mentoring Program "Speed Match" event; on April 13th, AECOM orchestrated a members only skill development event for members to gained some tips and tricks on how to work better with others, while networking in a small group; and on December 7th, WSP celebrated the 2022 Mentoring Program graduates. We also networked with several of our partners at the NJ TransAction Conference in Atlantic City, where the chapter sponsored a panel on "Moving Forward – Agency Actions."

In addition, we hosted our first "Swings for Scholarship" Top Golf Clinic in May, a Project Management Panel in June, a Paint-N-Sip in August and we continued "Swings for Scholarship" series during our first 18-Hole Golf Outing in September and a multi-agency Gateway Hudson Tunnel Project Discussion in September. Stay tuned for more to come - upcoming events schedules can be found at: [Upcoming Events | WTS](#).

We always make time to be in tune with the needs of our membership. Whether it is guidance on having difficult conversations; topical talks about aviation, rail, freight, bridges, sustainability, active transportation, operations, finance, the Gateway; insights about self-promotion, work-life balance, transitioning positions or careers; or checking in with your peers at a yoga class, with meditation techniques or at a painting session. Tell us what you will tune in for. This is your WTS NJ. We are listening.

Thank you for connecting!

Zenobia L. Fields



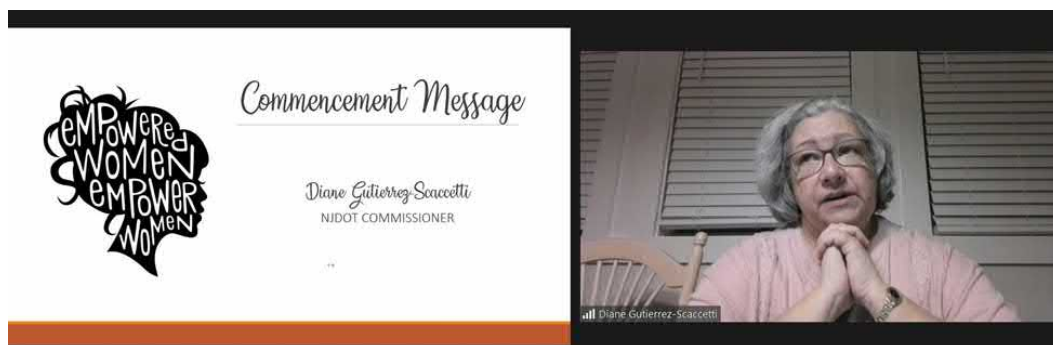
## CHAPTER CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

WTS NJ has come a long way since being ratified in November 2020. At the 2021 WTS Annual Conference, our chapter was awarded the Silver Circle of Excellence Status! A special thanks to our leadership team, members, and sponsors for making this happen. This year, we are looking to shoot for gold!



## CONGRATULATIONS TO 2021 and 2022 MENTORING PROGRAM GRADUATES!

Congratulations to the graduates of the 2021 and 2022 WTS NJ Mentoring Program! Throughout the duration of our Mentoring program, select apprentices are matched with a mentor of their choice and are able to benefit from one-on-one guidance, inspiration, and support from their mentor. Additionally, all of our mentoring program participants take part in monthly group mentoring virtual events, focusing on goal setting, strengths assessments, confidence, work/life balance, and the importance of being an ally. Special thank you to all of our 2021 and 2022 mentors, guest speakers, including our 2021 Graduation Keynote Speaker NJDOT Commissioner, Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti and our 2022 Graduation Keynote Speaker, Lisa Navarro!



The WTSNJ Mentoring Program runs annually. Keep an eye out for our 2023 Kick-Off Event to learn more about our program and how you can get involved!

### 2022 Graduates

Elaine Hughes  
Mentor: Vanessa Rios

Gabriella Maggio  
Mentor: Bianca Skvirsky

Taylor Danson  
Mentor: Keri Pastore

Melissa Dawson  
Mentor: Joe Strafacci

Christina Chinnici  
Mentor: Beth DeAngelo

Samantha Samuel  
Mentor: Theresa Weldin

Karam in Nisa Choudhary  
Mentor: Raishea Haines

### 2021 Graduates

Elizabeth DeCarlo  
Mentor: Ana Tatoris

Vanessa Rios  
Mentor: Pallavi Lal

Marili Tapia  
Mentor: Helene Roberts

Mr. Syd Chan  
Mentor: Lois Goldman

Anusree Sreekumar  
Mentor: Aarti Gupta

Janki Patel  
Mentor: Asrah Khadr

Marwa Ayad  
Mentor: Jeannie Kwon

Keina Thorpe  
Mentor: Mary Lang

Bhumi Patel  
Mentor: Mojgan Mohtashami





## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS! (as of 12/2/2022)

Charlene Almase  
 Kruti Barot  
 Judith Bowen  
 Jon Carnegie  
 Susan Cohen  
 Taylor Danson  
 Malena Gordon-Ramos  
 Sarwat Izhar  
 Nia Joseph  
 Di Kang  
 Sheida Khademi  
 Kristi Latimer  
 Jennifer Marandino  
 Mojgan Mohtashami  
 Denise Peck  
 Hilary Porter  
 Valeriya Remezova  
 Vanessa Rios  
 Carol Russo  
 Myrna Sirleaf  
 Janie Tubito  
 Brooke Weinstein  
 Theresa Weldin

## 2022 ANNUAL EVENT

On November 16, 2022 WTS NJ held its Annual Event. With more than 150 attendees at the Nassau Inn, WTS NJ commemorated partnership, mentorship, promotions, networking, skill development and leadership and was coined as one of the most diverse chapters in WTS's history. WTS NJ honored Woman of the Year, Lisa Navarro (NJTA), for her leadership in the infrastructure industry along with the other award and scholarship recipients.

### WTS NJ LEADERSHIP



### EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR



WSP USA

### HONORARY MEMBERS



Jennifer Marandino (SJTPQ)  
 Valeriya Remezova (FHWA)

### WOMEN OF THE YEAR



Lisa Navarro (NJTA)

### MEMBER OF THE YEAR



Kyrra Hana Mosley (Jacobs)

### SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

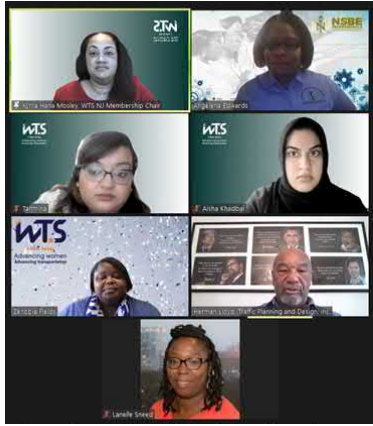


Taylor Danson (Stevens)  
 Alexa Karpus (TCNJ)





## 2022 EVENTS RECAP



The Future of Transportation and Its Inclusivity to All Engineers

Jan

Feb



Career Conversations: Women in Management



Mar

Moving Forward - Agency Actions (NJ TransAction)

DISC Assessment - Members Event (AECOM)

Apr

Swings for Scholarships (Top Golf)



May

June

July

Aug



Swings for Scholarships 18 Holer (Bedens Brook Golf)

Gateway Program (Moynihan Station)

Sep

Oct

Nov

Dec

Corporate Partner Networking (Rutgers)



Annual Event (Nassau Inn)



Holiday Party - Members Event (Harvest Moon)







## TRANSPORTATION YOU

Transportation YOU is a hands-on, interactive, mentoring program offering young women ages 13-18 an introduction to a wide variety of transportation careers. Through this program, the New Jersey Chapter is working on making a difference in the lives of these young women by introducing them to various topics that may encourage them to pursue a career within the Transportation Industry.



During the 2020-2022 Academic School Years, the WTS New Jersey Chapter Transportation YOU has worked alongside the STEM Innovation Academy of the Oranges.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the subcommittee has been holding monthly meetings virtually with students. Through the program, students have been able to meet with various professionals to discuss what it is like to work in the transportation field. Speakers have included NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, Zenobia Fields of NJDOT, Alexa Gangemi of HNTB, and Ana Tatoris of HNTB. Students have also been able to interact with College Students as Transportation YOU held its first College Panel Discussion, and have also been introduced to technical topics as they relate to the field of transportation industry.

Most notably, students have been paired with mentors and given the opportunity to develop their first resumes. They also participated in mock interviews, discussed their goals and aspirations, and participated in a seminar on what it means to be a professional.

A special thank you to all mentors and volunteers who participated in the program including Aimee Jefferson, Carolyn Brazier, Chelsea Ramos, Danyella Brooks, Gabrielle Maggio, Ana Tatoris, Jeffery Arch, Jennifer Sneed, Joseph Strafaci, Margarita Restrepo, Raishea Haines, Sutapa Bandyopadhyay, and Yetunde Adelekan.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor or would like to participate in the program as a guest speaker, please reach out to Joseph Strafaci at [Jstrafaci@hntb.com](mailto:Jstrafaci@hntb.com).





## CORPORATE PARTNERS

We thank all of our steadfast Corporate Sponsors.

The generous donations of our Corporate Sponsors contribute to the success of our chapter's endeavors. Some of the benefits of sponsorship include recognition during our various events throughout the year, attendance at members-only events, recognition on our website and a hyperlink to the firm's website, and a complimentary annual membership for an employee of the firm.

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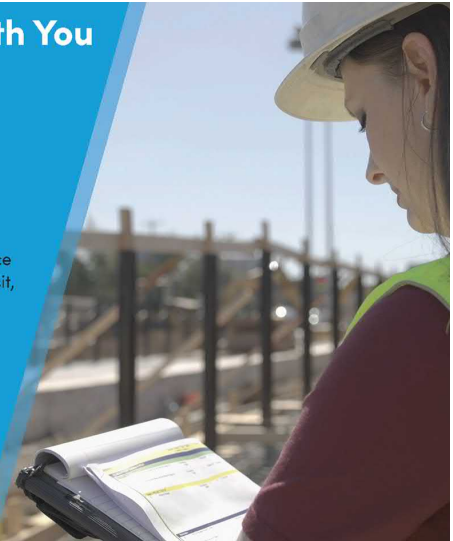


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## **2022 WTS INTERNATIONAL SIGNATURE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

Congratulations to Raishea Haines, Director at Large, and Vanessa Rios, Membership Committee Vice Chair, who attended the WTS International Signature Leadership Program this year!



I had an opportunity to attend the 2022 WTS Executive Leader Program which was held October 19-22, 2022. It was a powerful event that focused on enhancing and refining leadership skills. I had the opportunity to engage with several amazing female leaders

from various facets of Transportation! The training provided me with the ability to apply practical methods to developing my brand and a more strategic approach to change management. As leaders, we were all reminded to be the leader we always wanted and needed. Upon completion of the training, I've felt more empowered as I returned back to my day-to-day.

- Raishea Haines



I was accepted and given the wonderful opportunity to attend the WTS Mid-Career Leadership Program in Washington, D.C. from October 18-20, 2022. From the moment the agenda began it was clear this wasn't a general "goal setting" workshop. This

training gave me the tools I needed to look within myself and harness my strengths to become a better leader as well as to combat any mental barriers blocking me from reaching my full potential. And the cherry on top was meeting so many fantastic women from all over the country. Many of us have different paths, but sharing our stories of struggle trying to make it in the transportation industry were truly inspiring and made me feel like I was not alone in my journey. Amy Buford and Carrie Collins were fantastic facilitators, and I feel like I walked out as a better professional than I was when I came in. I hope to be able to pass on some of what I learned to others in my WTS NJ community.

- Vanessa Rios



Learn more about WTS International Signature Leadership Program [here!](#)