



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

WTS WASHINGTON, DC CHAPTER

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Chapter Board and Advisors

Officers				
President	Vice President	Treasurer	Secretary	Immediate Past President
Neela Babu, WMATA	Katie Kraft, WMATA	Shelley Wynne, Dewberry	Katie Masetti, Mead & Hunt	Adrienne Ameal, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
Committee Chairs, Deputy Chairs, and Volunteers				
Communications, Newsletter and Social Media		Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship		Diversity
Chair Jennifer Flanery, <i>Stratacomm</i>		Chair Shelley Johnson, <i>Sharp & Company</i>		Chair Robyn Jackson, <i>DDOT</i>
Deputy Chair Amber Garnett, <i>Stratacomm</i>		Deputy Chair Cherie Gibson, <i>HNTB</i>		Deputy Chair Rebecca Moser, <i>Arlington County</i> Audra Bandy, <i>Fairfax County DOT</i>
		Volunteers Alyssa Saleh, <i>HNTB</i> Morgan Bassford, <i>Sharp & Company</i>		Volunteers Cipriana Thompson, <i>Toole Design</i>
Holiday Party		Legislative		Membership
Chair May ElKhattab, <i>Burns Engineering</i>		Chair Rachel Roberts, <i>British Embassy</i>		Chair Christine Sherman Baker, <i>Arlington County</i>
Deputy Chair Chetna Sinha, <i>Gannett Fleming</i>		Deputy Chair Kerry O'Hare, <i>O'Hare Infrastructure Strategies LLC</i>		Deputy Chair Anita Beier, <i>Retired</i>
		Volunteers Kate Roetzer, <i>WMATA</i>		
Mentoring		Professional Development		Program Logistics
Chair Lindsey Robertson Lentz, <i>Evans Consulting</i> Roxanne Feige, <i>Atkins Global</i>		Chair Cerasela Cristei, <i>EXP</i>		Chair Sophie Guiny, <i>InfraStrategies LLC</i>
Deputy Chair Ruochang Huang, <i>Jacobs Engineering</i>		Deputy Chair Khatereh Vaghefi, <i>Parsons</i>		Deputy Chair Elizabeth Patel, <i>FHWA</i> Ellie McCurdy, <i>VHB</i>
Volunteers Sara Henly-Thomas, <i>HDR</i>				
Recognitions		Scholarship and Fundraising		Transportation YOU
Chair Haley Peckett, <i>DDOT</i>		Chair Alanna McKeeman, <i>Foursquare ITP</i>		Chair Barbara Moreno, <i>WSP USA</i>
Deputy Chair Jamie Rosen, <i>WMATA</i>		Deputy Chair Ruby Lee, <i>WSP USA</i>		Deputy Chair Marie Louis, <i>WMATA</i>
		Volunteers Regis Stinson, <i>Dewberry</i>		Volunteers Margaret Akofio-Sowah, <i>WSP USA</i> Kyla D'Sa, <i>Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.</i> Jasmy Methipara, <i>HUD</i> Brandon Buckner, <i>FHWA</i> Laura MacNeil, <i>DDOT</i>
Advisors				
Margaret Ballard, <i>Retired</i> Avital Barnea, <i>California State Transportation Agency</i>		Cathy Connor, <i>Retired</i> Brittney Gick, <i>Texas A&M Transportation Institute</i>		Anne Stubbs, <i>Retired</i>

WTS-DC 2021-2022 Corporate Members

Thank you to the WTS-DC 2021-2022 Corporate Members! Your support helps sustain our chapter, including the programming and scholarships we offer!

2021-2022 WTS Washington, DC Chapter
Corporate Members

THANK YOU

GOLD LEVEL









SILVER LEVEL















BRONZE LEVEL








W/MBE/SWaM






Advancing women
Advancing transportation
> Washington DC

President's Message

Dear WTS-DC Chapter Members and Friends,

We at WTS-DC want to be part of the solution in improving our nation's transportation infrastructure. We do that by staying true to our mission of advancing both the transportation industry and the professional women who are a growing part of it. Our core values include being collaborative, being future-focused, being professional, and being inclusive, and those are just some of the ways in which we want to move the industry forward. At the same time, we strive to advance the careers of transportation professionals, and we do that by providing opportunities to our members to develop their own skill sets and to meet others within our community from whom they can learn and grow.

The year 2021 was no exception to these aspirations, though, like 2020, we were forced to operate under COVID pandemic conditions for most of the year. Still, WTS-DC was undeterred and continued to provide a variety of opportunities and events spanning the transportation industry for professionals at all levels in their careers.

As in previous years, we sustained strong outreach programs. The WTS-DC Mentoring Program paired 15 mentors and mentees, which lead to fruitful experience-sharing and learning from one another. The Mentoring Committee provided participants with the chance to engage in a larger group by hosting events and happy hours, and this was in addition to encouraging the program participants to meet in their pairs monthly. The Transportation YOU Program continued to serve three high schools in DC informing students about the breadth of careers and opportunities available to them in transportation. The committee held regular events with the students, and topics ranged from electric vehicles to racial equity in transportation, sustainability, and robotics. We hope to see these young students joining the transportation workforce in a few years!

We held several events throughout the year to discuss how to move the industry forward. In March, we had a conversation with Transurban's Pierce Coffee about critical infrastructure needs in the region and the public-private partnership model that is driving value for government agencies. In April, we discussed quick-build projects and how speedy redesigns are increasing street safety and effectiveness. In May, we heard from the MobilityXX initiative leaders about elevating and empowering women in transportation. In July, we engaged a panel of key transportation stakeholders from ASCE, AASHTO, APTA, NRDC, and ACI-NA to discuss how a Congressional legislative package could impact the industry. In August, we held our annual joint event with YPT and TRF to discuss the post-COVID

future of travel and land use in the National Capital Region. In September, we heard from a panel of experts about cybersecurity, the risk it poses to the safety of transportation infrastructure, and what steps can be taken to increase security and safety in the future. Also in September, we had a candid discussion with VDOT leaders on creating a workforce culture of inclusion that promotes diversity and equal employment opportunities. In November, WTS-DC welcomed three senior US DOT officials to talk about the accomplishments of the first year of the Biden Administration and to look ahead at upcoming priorities, goals, and the implementation of the historic bipartisan infrastructure bill.

We had coffee chat conversations with several leaders of the transportation industry: ITS America President and CEO Shailen Bhatt, Amazon's Director of Public Policy Ashleigh de la Torre, and US DOT Deputy Assistant Secretary for Safety Policy Robin Hutcheson. These coffee chat sessions allowed the WTS-DC audience to get to know our speakers on a more personal level.

Professional development and networking are another consistent theme in WTS-DC events as we strive to provide our members and friends with opportunities to grow in their own skills sets. To this end, we held two bike facility tours, which allowed attendees to gather in-person and bike outside to learn about bike infrastructure. We held two Executive Women's Roundtables to inform attendees how to grow their networks in COVID and how to get on boards. In May, we heard from our 2020 Recognition Award winners about their leadership development experience and how we too could learn to be successful leaders. We offered our members and friends an event on equanimity which taught them techniques for gaining mental calmness in a hectic world. In September, Elizabeth Suárez informed us how to expand our negotiation capacity; she provided individual feedback to each attendee on their preferred negotiation style(s) and then taught us how and when to use other styles to our own benefit. Then, in October, Tamika L. Butler spoke to WTS-DC and other WTS chapters about diversity and equity in which she informed the audience about what we could do to effect change within our networks.

While most of our events throughout the year were held virtually, we were able to hold our Holiday Party in-person! Over 260 guests joined us on Tuesday, December 7th in the Paris Ballroom of Hotel Monaco. Our guest speakers were US DOT Deputy Secretary Polly Trottenberg and FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez, who was formerly a WTS-DC board member. Our emcees for the evening were WMATA GM and CEO Paul Wiedefeld and TRIP II, Dulles Greenway CEO Renée Hamilton. As usual, during the holiday party, we presented our recognition awards to a prestigious group of transportation professionals, and we gave out scholarships to 12 deserving young women studying transportation-related fields. The party was a

huge success! Not only did we have the largest crowd we've ever had, we also gave out more scholarship money than ever before and, during the party we raised more money for scholarships than we ever have!

This successful year for WTS-DC is attributed to all twelve of our board committees who worked hard to host professional development events, throw holiday parties, organize logistics, manage communications, cultivate individual and corporate membership, keep us informed about Congressional legislation, encourage us to embrace diversity, provide mentorship, reward outstanding professionals, offer scholarships, and inspire the next generation of the transportation workforce. The contributions of our board members and our executive board led to us receiving a Gold Circle of Excellence Award from WTS International!

I personally want to thank our members, corporate members, and friends. I want to especially thank our advisors, board members, and Executive Board for their continued support and engagement with WTS-DC. This chapter is run entirely by volunteers, and I am so grateful for all of the time and effort you have given to WTS-DC.

Finally, as my term as WTS-DC President concludes, I want to say that it has been my honor to serve in this role. The future is bright for WTS-DC, and I am eager to see how this organization continues to benefit both the transportation industry and our community in the years ahead.

Sincerely,



Neela Babu, Ph.D.
2021 WTS-DC Chapter President

Treasurer's Report

Table 1 - Operations Budget as of December 31, 2021

Revenues	Actual 2021
Holiday Party Revenues	\$10,571.35
Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship: Corp. Membership Dues*	\$47,500.00
Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship: Program Sponsorship	\$5,000.00
Diversity Committee Revenues	\$338.08
Legislative Committee Revenues	n/a
Membership Committee Revenues	\$6,210.00
Professional Development Committee Revenues	n/a
Mentoring Committee Revenues	n/a
Other Programs Revenues	\$2,240.00
Total Revenues	\$71,859.43

Expenses	Actual 2021
Holiday Party Expenses	\$20,046.09
Communications/Outreach Expenses	\$636.00
Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee Expenses (to Scholarship Fund)	\$4,950.00
Corporate Membership Expenses (to WTS International)	\$2,075.00
Diversity Committee Expenses	\$1,000.00
Legislative Committee Expenses	n/a
Membership Committee Expenses	n/a
Professional Development Committee Expenses	\$3,035.44
Program Logistics Committee Expenses	n/a
Mentoring Committee Expenses	\$662.24
Recognitions Committee Expenses	\$954.81
Scholarship and Fundraising Committee Expenses	\$35.00
Transportation YOU Committee Expenses	\$210.00
Other Program Expenses	n/a
Administrative Expenses	\$3,999.51
2021 WTS International Conference and Leadership Training Expenses	\$1,355.00
Total Expenses	\$38,959.09

* does not include accounts receivable of \$19,000 as of 12/31/2021

Table 2 - 2021 Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet	January 1, 2021	December 31, 2021
Cash Balance:	\$103,441.37	\$134,474.56
Other Assets:		
Cash Reserve Account	\$98,985.00	\$98,985.00
PayPal	\$6,150.38	\$9,041.78
Accounts Receivables:	\$25,500.00	\$19,000
Accounts Payable:	\$263.58	\$256.88
Ending Balance	\$233,813.17	\$261,244.46

Table 3 - 2021 WTS-DC Scholarship Fund

Scholarship Fund	Balance
Starting Balance	\$51,395.73
Total Amount Raised*	\$22,907.59
2021 Corporate Member 10% Allocation**	\$4,500.00
2021 Transportation Rock Stars***	\$500.00
2021 Sponsored Scholarships****	\$12,500.00
2021 Holiday Party Scholarship Donations (Scholarship Tree)	\$4,507.59
Individual Contributions*****	\$900.00
Total Amount Distributed	\$24,000.00
Ending Balance	\$50,303.32

* pending accounts receivable as of 12/31/2021

** pending accounts payable as of 12/31/2021

*** includes a \$500 donation from 2020 that was received in 2021

**** includes an additional \$2,000 donation from 2020 that was received in February 2021

***** includes a 2020 donation that was received in 2021

Executive Board

The WTS-DC Executive Board is comprised of five members: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Immediate Past President. In 2021, the officers serving on the board were:

- President: Neela Babu
- Vice President: Katie Kraft
- Treasurer: Shelley Wynne
- Secretary: Katie Masetti
- Immediate Past President: Adrienne Ameal

As President, Neela Babu guided and led the organization. She set goals and objectives for the organization in conjunction with the Executive Board and the members. Neela was also responsible for presiding at meetings and events, and for communicating with the board and the membership. In general, the president provides leadership and direction for WTS-DC and has the authority to sign official documents on behalf of the organization. In 2021, Neela also managed the officer election process.



*Photo 1 - Neela Babu,
WTS-DC President*



*Photo 2 - Katie Kraft, WTS-DC Vice
President*

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

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



*Photo 3 - Shelley Wynne, WTS-
DC Treasurer*



As Secretary, Katie Masetti served as the guardian of all WTS-DC Corporate records. She was responsible for keeping the minutes for all meetings and for maintaining the website.

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

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

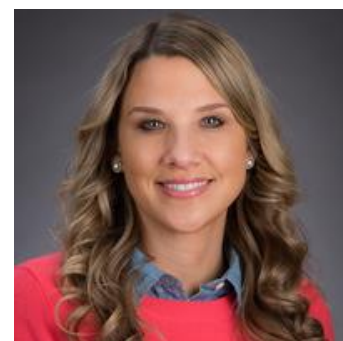


Photo 4 - Katie Masetti, WTS-DC Secretary

Photo 5 - Adrienne Ameal, WTS-DC Immediate Past President

Board Meetings

In 2021, WTS-DC board meetings were held on the following dates:

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

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chapter held all of its 2021 meetings virtually, via Zoom. The Executive Board and representatives from each committee were expected to attend at least eight of the 11 board meetings. For a quorum to be established, at least three of the five executive board members needed to be present and at least six of the committees needed to be represented. Committees submitted monthly committee reports before each meeting. The Treasurer also submitted the monthly report detailing the Chapter's finances. These reports were compiled along with the board meeting agenda and distributed by email prior to the meeting.

2021 Annual Meeting

The WTS-DC 2021 annual meeting was held at the start of our October board meeting. The primary business of the annual meeting was to vote on the WTS-DC 2020 Annual Report and the meeting minutes from the 2020 Annual Meeting. All members were invited to attend by Zoom (due to the COVID-19 pandemic); members also had the option to vote in advance or by proxy. Once a quorum was established, the membership voted to approve the annual report and annual meeting minutes. Members were invited to comment on any other business and then the meeting adjourned. The WTS-DC 2020 Annual Report can be found on the chapter website [here](#).

2022 Officer Elections

Every year, WTS-DC elects four officers for the following calendar year: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. In the fall of 2021, the Executive Board presented a slate of candidates for those four positions for 2022. To facilitate anonymous voting, the election was held using an online system called Election Runner, which emailed each chapter member (who had been a member in good standing for at least 30 days prior to the election) a unique link to their ballot. The ballot listed the candidate slate and, for each position, presented the option for a write-in. Members voted for one person for each position. Per the WTS-DC bylaws, at least 10 percent of the membership must vote to establish a quorum. The response rate in the election exceeded that threshold, and the membership voted on the following officers to lead WTS-DC in 2022:

- President: Katie Kraft
- Vice President: Sophie Guiny
- Treasurer: Shelley Wynne
- Secretary: Katie Masetti

Neela Babu will serve as Immediate Past President in 2022.

Committee Reports

WTS-DC has 12 committees that contribute to the overall function of the chapter. The responsibilities of each committee are described below along with a summary of their accomplishments in 2021.

The year started with an enthusiastic Strategic Planning meeting in late January. The committees assembled and set goals for the year.

Communications, Newsletter and Social Media Committee

In 2021, Jennifer Flanery (Stratacomm), as Chair, and Amber Garnett (Stratacomm), as Deputy Chair, led the Communications, Newsletter and Social Media Committee.

The committee continued to support ongoing e-blast and e-newsletter development. This included providing the Board with insights on what online content was garnering the most interest from chapter newsletters.

The committee also managed a bi-monthly content editorial calendar to track topics/themes and content draft deadlines. A total of six e-newsletters were sent in 2021. The newsletters in 2021 contained a wide range of transportation-related topics, summaries of Chapter member-wide or invitation-only events, recognition of various national issues, and recognition of members, scholarship recipients and award winners.

Lastly, the committee continued to manage and curate content for the chapter's social media channels, including Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, ensuring more consistent use of social media best practices.

Analytics for these efforts are as follows (as of December 31, 2021):

Emails:

- Total E-blasts sent: 39
- Total E-newsletters sent: 5

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

Social Media:

- Twitter: 49 tweets
- Facebook: 45 posts
- LinkedIn: 49 posts

Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee

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

The Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee was led by Shelley Johnson (Sharp and Company) as Chair and Cherie Gibson (HNTB) as Deputy Chair. Morgan Bassford (Sharp and Company) and Alyssa Saleh (HNTB) supported

the committee as volunteers.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the committee continued recruiting corporate members virtually, focusing on scholarships and virtual event benefits offered by the chapter. The committee recruited four new corporate members, exceeded the 2020-2021 corporate membership contribution levels, and secured \$5,000 in program sponsorship from Corporate Sponsor HNTB for the Holiday Party.

The WTS-DC 2021-2022 Corporate Membership offerings are shown in Table 4. The 2021-2022 WTS-DC Corporate Members are listed in Table 5.

Table 4 - 2021-2022 Corporate Membership Offerings

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

Table 5 - 2021-2022 Corporate Members by Membership Type (as of 12/16/2021)

Organization	Membership Type	Fee
AASHTO	GOLD	\$3,500
APTA	GOLD	\$3,500
Gannett Fleming	GOLD	\$3,500
HNTB	GOLD	\$3,500
Jacobs	GOLD	\$3,500
Transurban	GOLD	\$3,500
AECOM	SILVER	\$2,000
Burns Engineering	SILVER	\$2,000
Dewberry	SILVER	\$2,000
ITS America	SILVER	\$2,000
Mead & Hunt	SILVER	\$2,000
Thompson Coburn LLP	SILVER	\$2,000
VHB, Metro DC, LLC	SILVER	\$2,000
WRA	SILVER	\$2,000
WSP USA	SILVER	\$2,000
Guidehouse	BRONZE	\$1,000
HDR	BRONZE	\$1,000
InfraStrategies	BRONZE	\$1,000
RK&K	BRONZE	\$1,000
Stratacomm	BRONZE	\$1,000
STV	BRONZE	\$1,000
Toole Design	BRONZE	\$1,000
Delon Hampton & Associates	W/MDBE/SWaM	\$500
Foursquare ITP	W/MDBE/SWaM	\$500
Sharp & Company	W/MDBE/SWaM	\$500
TOTAL		\$47,500

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee was led by Robyn Jackson (DDOT) as Chair and Rebecca Moser (Arlington County) and Audra Bandy (Fairfax County DOT) as Deputy Chairs. Cipriana Thompson (Toole Design) served the committee as a volunteer.

The committee collaborated with four other WTS chapters – Central Virginia, Hampton Roads, North Carolina-Triangle, and South Carolina – to offer a virtual diversity and equity event featuring Tamika Butler. They also joined forces with the DC chapter of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) to host a three-part virtual event series titled “Making the Connection: The Transportation Industry and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).” These events are discussed in more detail in the “[Events](#)” section of this Annual Report.

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

Holiday Party Committee

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

In 2021, the Holiday Party Committee was led by May ElKhattab (Burns Engineering) as Chair and Chetna Sinha (Gannett Fleming) as Deputy Chair.

The Holiday Party Committee worked throughout the year to plan and execute the chapter’s annual holiday party, which ended up being the first indoor, in-person event hosted by the chapter since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee worked closely with the Executive Board to successfully manage the logistical challenges of hosting a large

event and develop a strategy to align the event with the evolving COVID restrictions in the Washington, D.C. area.

Given the ever-changing circumstances of the on-going pandemic and not knowing whether the chapter would have the opportunity to host the 2021 WTS-DC Holiday Party in person, the Holiday Party Committee created a chapter video that could serve as the centerpiece of the event, whether in-person or virtual. The committee envisioned, created, and produced a high-quality video collaboration – “Why WTS?” – to promote the mission, values and synergies of WTS. The video featured a mix of public and private, as well as senior and junior transportation professionals, and highlighted relationships formed before and during the pandemic. The 2021 WTS-DC Holiday Party ended up being in-person and was one of our most widely attended events. The premier of the chapter’s “Why WTS?” video was a highlight of the night.

The committee collaborated with the Scholarship and Fundraising Committee and the Recognitions Committee to showcase the chapter’s 2021 award winners and scholarship recipients at the event. They also worked with the Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee to secure \$5,000 in corporate member sponsorship from WTS-DC Corporate Sponsor HNTB to offset the event’s costs for the chapter.

Legislative Committee

The Legislative Committee was led by Rachel Roberts (British Embassy, Washington) as Chair and Kerry O’Hare (O’Hare Infrastructure Strategies, LLC) as Deputy Chair. Kate Roetzer (WMATA) supported the committee as a volunteer.

The committee kept the chapter abreast of legislative happenings in 2021 by providing content for the chapter’s newsletters. In all, the committee contributed five articles, including three legislative updates on hot button transportation issues in DC ([Biden Administration appointments](#), the [American Jobs Plan](#), and the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#)).

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

The committee also worked with the Executive Board to get letters of congratulations out to many of President Biden’s newly-appointed transportation nominees, including Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg and Deputy Secretary Polly Trottenberg as well as Deputy modal Administrators from the Federal Transit Administration, Federal Motor Safety Administration, Maritime

Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, and Federal Highway Administration.

The committee organized two events focused on legislative topics. On July 15, the committee hosted a key stakeholder panel for a discussion on President Biden’s American Jobs Plan, potential bipartisan infrastructure proposals, and the reauthorization of surface transportation programs. On November 15, the committee welcomed three senior female leaders at the U.S. Department of Transportation to share their perspectives on DOT’s accomplishments during the first year of the Biden Administration as well as a look ahead to upcoming priorities and goals. These events are discussed in more detail in the “Events” section of this Annual Report.

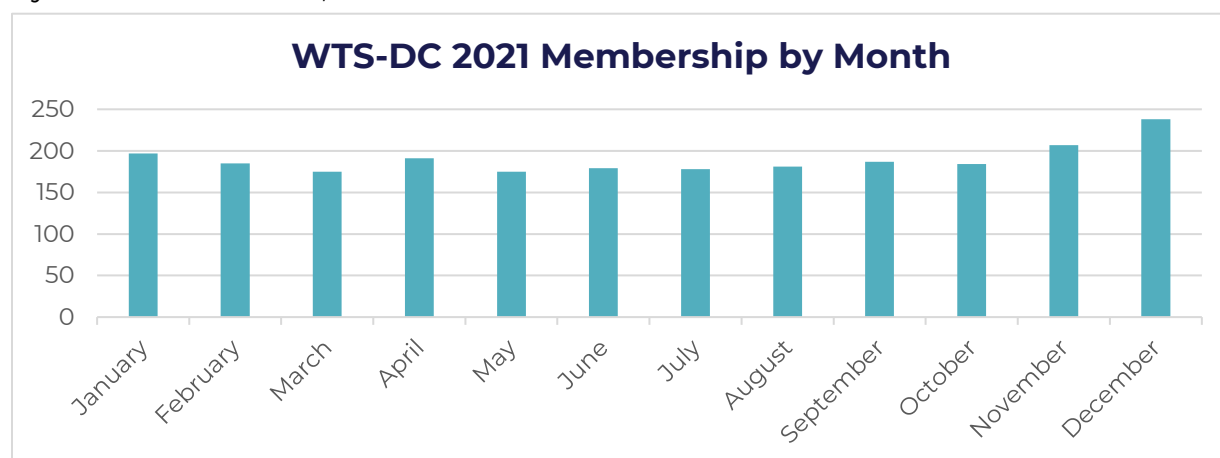
Membership Committee

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

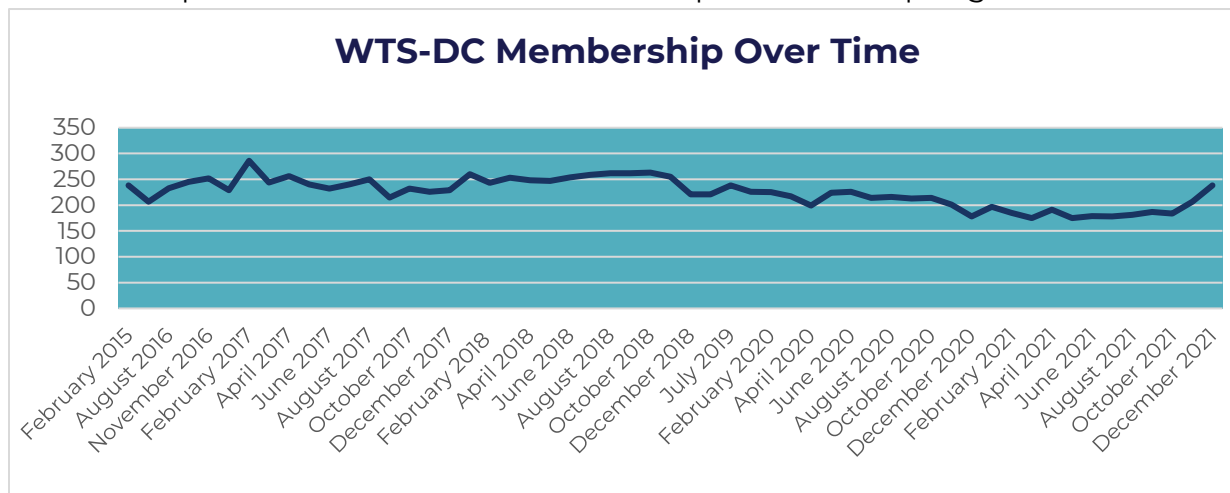
The Membership Committee was led by Christine Sherman Baker (Arlington County), as Chair, and Anita Beier (Retired), as Deputy Chair.

In 2021, the committee learned the functionality of the new WTS-I website and the new membership database format by attending WTS-I trainings and coordinating directly with WTS-I staff. They also pulled membership

reports from the WTS International database on a semi-regular basis. The committee compiled information about the chapter’s monthly membership from data provided by WTS International, which is shown in the chart below.



The committee brainstormed ideas for events to attract or give back to members and developed and sent reminder emails to lapsed and/or lapsing members.



The committee conducted a historic WTS-DC membership summary to learn about how membership trends have changed over the past seven years. Overall, the chapter saw membership levels dip during the COVID-19 pandemic and then return to historic rates by the end of 2021. (Note: Membership numbers shown below are not consecutive and reflect the best historic data available at the time of analysis.)

Mentoring Committee

Roxanne Feige (Atkins Global) and Lindsey Robertson Lentz (Evans Consulting) served as Co-Chairs of the WTS-DC Mentoring Committee in 2021. Ruochang Huang (Jacobs) served as Deputy Chair. Sara Henly-Thomas (HDR) provided support as a volunteer.

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

Fifteen pairs participated in the 2021 program. The applicants were matched based on their work experience, interests, sector of employment, and personality-communication style. Each pair was encouraged to meet at least once monthly on their own and attend group events throughout the program. Mentors and mentees completed monthly check-in surveys to ensure the pairs were meeting regularly, continuing to build their partnerships.

The kick-off meeting for the 2021 Mentoring Program was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was held via Zoom on April 13. All mentoring program participants were highly encouraged to attend the kick-off meeting; this year, 24 participants were in attendance. At the kick-off meeting, the committee introduced the program and reviewed ground rules. The committee also presented a list of workshop/session topics to the group, and everyone was allowed to vote. The three most-voted topics were: negotiating for what you want, difficult conversations, and making short-term and long-term career goals.

On June 29, the committee held the event on difficult conversations. This was a virtual event hosted by professional speaker Sharon Podobnik Peterson. Sharon led an engaging presentation titled “Removing ‘Difficult’ from Difficult Conversations,” where she asked questions and encouraged audience participation. Sharon began by discussing why difficult conversations can be so challenging, including our lack of



Photo 6 - From left to right: Sara Zahedian, Sean Rousseau, Xiyu Li, Ruochang Huang, Sara Henly-Thomas, Lindsey Robertson Lentz, Kate Mattice, and Roxanne Feige

control over the outcome and how others may react. She pointed out that women, in particular, are often encouraged not to ask for things and to avoid difficult conversations. Sharon provided a personal anecdote on her struggles and experience with this topic. The rest of the presentation focused on creating a seven-step plan before heading into a difficult conversation and providing examples to ground the plan in reality. Sharon also set aside time for breakout groups so that participants could practice applying this plan to a difficult hypothetical conversation. Everyone enjoyed the workshop and felt comfortable opening up in a group setting.

The committee hosted its first happy hour event virtually on May 27. The event featured a trivia hour. Participants were divided into four teams (3-4 people per team with a mix of mentors and mentees from different mentoring pairs). Teams were moved into break-out rooms to create their team names and brainstorm the answers for each round. The virtual event was accessible for people away from DC, and the break-out room replicated the in-person chatting environment.

As more and more pairs met/wanted to meet in person, the committee shifted to in-person events for the remaining program happy hours on July 27 (at All-Purpose Pizza) and October 13 (at Mission Navy Yard). These informal events created an opportunity for socializing and networking with mentees and mentors.

On September 28, the committee hosted an open event with the Professional Development Committee titled “Unleash Your Potential – Communicating Effectively in Any Negotiation.” Elizabeth Suárez, the speaker, shared how leaders can increase their negotiation capacity to ask for what they need to advance their careers. The two-hour interactive workshop included pre-work where each participant completed the Bargaining Style Assessment to understand their preferred style when engaging in negotiation discussion. Elizabeth shared that, though we all have different negotiation strengths, no one type is better than another. To be an effective communicator, you need to employ all five styles: competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating. Within in small break-out discussion, the attendees shared their results and discussed what steps they would like to take to increase their effectiveness utilizing the other style. Elizabeth then highlighted the importance of self-awareness in the negotiation process – recognizing when you are reverting to your default style paying attention to the reactions and responses of those participating in the negotiation process. The workshop concluded by discussing the value of being an influencer within your organization and the importance of effective networking to build relationships and connections. Elizabeth shared that leaders need to develop relationships by “making communication exchanges as human as possible.”

For the final virtual session for the Mentoring Program year, the committee held a Goal Setting Workshop facilitated by Mentoring Committee Co-Chair Lindsey Robertson Lentz. The objectives for the November 11 session were to help mentors and mentees understand the skills that support goal setting, foster engagement and encourage dialogue around self-reflection, and begin setting a plan for what they want to accomplish in 2022.

The workshop began with an overview of emotional intelligence and how to better prepare for success when setting goals by strengthening your self-regard, self-actualization, and optimism skills. Many participants connected with the act of practicing gratitude as a way to help increase optimism and shared how they make intentional gratitude a part of their work and home lives. The participants engaged in a thoughtful discussion about career and personal goals and what they would like to accomplish in 2022, and what resources they need to realize those goals. The final point discussed by the group was the value of flexibility when it comes to goal

setting; even if your original goal has been derailed, how can you continue on a path that will make personal or professional progress?

Professional Development Committee

In 2021, Cerasela Cristei (EXP) and Khatereh Vaghefi (Parsons) served as the Chair and Deputy Chair, respectively, of the Professional Development Committee.

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

The committee worked to provide unique and useful professional development opportunities for area transportation professionals. The committee collaborated with other chapter committees for a number of events.

The committee offered educational opportunities. On April 22, the Professional Development Committee helped the chapter celebrate Earth Day by hosting a virtual event focusing on “quick build” solutions. On September 23, the committee hosted its seventh annual event with the Virginia Department of Transportation. The event explored VDOT’s long-standing commitment to creating a workforce culture of inclusion that promotes diversity and equal opportunity for all individuals. And on September 28, the committee co-hosted a two-hour workshop focused on increasing effectiveness in negotiations.

The committee also organized much-needed opportunities for members and non-members to get outdoors. On August 22, the committee hosted an outdoor bike event covering five miles of cycletrack (a protected two-way bike lane) in Washington, D.C. The committee collaborated with Board Member Christine Sherman to offer an outdoor equanimity event on September 8. And on November 20, the committee invited area transportation professionals to “brave the cold” and tour numerous bike facilities in the District of Columbia via bicycle, of course.

These events are discussed in more detail in the “[Events](#)” section of this Annual Report.

Program Logistics Committee

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

The Program Logistics Committee was led by Sophie Guiny (InfraStrategies, LLC) as Chair and Ellie McCurdy (VHB) and Elizabeth Patel (FHWA) as Deputy Chairs.

The committee provided logistical support for all public events hosted by WTS-DC that required tickets in 2021. The committee worked with the event planning committees, assisted with planning the events and determining the best hosting option for virtual

events. Committee members were responsible for registration on Eventbrite before events and ticket purchases and adjustments if needed after the program.

For in-person events, the committee assisted with event set up. For virtual events, the committee also worked with the planning committees to ensure Zoom meeting information was e-mailed to registrants before the event. They attended tech run-throughs for applicable virtual events when the WTS-I Zoom account was used.

Table 6 - WTS-DC 2021 Events (excludes Mentoring Program events, Transportation YOU programs, and Board meetings)

Date	Event	Description	Format	Number of Registrants
February 25	Coffee Chat with ITS America President Shailen Bhatt	Open Event	Virtual	23
March 16	Coffee Chat with Ashleigh de la Torre, Director of Public Policy at Amazon	Members Only	Virtual	23
March 18	A Conversation with Transurban's Pierce Coffee	Open Event	Virtual	39
April 22	Quick-Build Projects: How Speedy Redesigns Are Increasing Street Safety and Effectiveness	Open Event	Virtual	32
May 19	Fruits of the Vine – The Role and Importance of HBCU Alumni	Open Event	Virtual	n/a*

WTS Washington, D.C. Chapter

Date	Event	Description	Format	Number of Registrants
May 20	Many Paths, One Goal: WTS-DC 2020 Recognition Award Winners on Leadership	Open Event	Virtual	38
May 21	Executive Women's Roundtable: Growing & Advancing Your Network During COVID	Invitation Only	Virtual	33
May 27	MobilityXX: Elevating Women in Transportation	Open Event	Virtual	31
July 15	Infrastructure Summer: A Conversation with Key Transportation Stakeholders	Open Event	Virtual	46
August 11	After COVID: Travel and Land Use in the National Capital Region	Open Event	Virtual	n/a*
August 22	WTS-DC Bike Facilities Tour	Open Event	In-person (outdoor)	7
September 8	Exploring Equanimity	Open Event	In-person (outdoor)	12
September 15	Navigating the Cybersecurity Storm in the Transportation Sector	Open Event	Virtual	66
September 23	VDOT Leaders: A Candid Discussion on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Open Event	Virtual	19
September 28	Unleash Your Potential: Communicating Effectively in any Negotiation	Open Event	Virtual	37
October 5	Coffee Chat with Deputy Asst. Secretary for Safety Policy Robin Hutcheson	Open Event	Virtual	18
October 20	Diversity and Equity Event featuring Tamika L. Butler	Open Event	Virtual	75
November 12	Executive Women's Roundtable: Moving Up the Ladder: Boards and How to Get on Them	Invitation Only	Virtual	32
November 15	Building Back Better: A Conversation with Leading U.S. DOT Officials	Open Event	Virtual	54
November 20	Bike Facilities Tour of DC with DDOT's Bicycle Program Specialist	Open Event	In-person (outdoor)	12
December 7	Annual Holiday Party	Open Event	In-person	262

* registration handled by other organization

Recognitions Committee

The 2021 Recognitions Committee was led by Haley Peckett (DDOT) as Chair and Jamie Rosen (WMATA) as Deputy Chair.

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

In 2021, the Recognitions Committee solicited nominations for six award categories. The committee achieved its goal of at least two nominees in every category, with a total of 28 unique nominees, and some nominees received multiple nominations. The committee then organized a selection panel to review the nominees and select a recipient in each category. The WTS-DC Executive Board approved all of the selected recipients who were then notified of the awards. The Recognitions Committee also coordinated with other committees to collect materials for the program, coordinate complimentary tickets for the recipients, and address other party logistics. All of the recipients attended the 2021 Holiday Party where they were presented with the awards. The committee will also write a newsletter article in early 2022 about the recipients and complete the nomination forms to nominate all of the recipients for the WTS-I Recognition Awards.

In addition to meeting its annual goals, the Recognitions Committee held a panel event with five 2020 Recognition Award recipients via Zoom in May 2021. The panel featured successful leaders in the DC area talking about how they've built their careers and earned recognition, and how they've supported the professional growth of women along the way. The goal of the panel was to feature accomplishments and conversation with Recognition Award recipients. The committee also wrote a newsletter article about the event.

Scholarship and Fundraising Committee

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

In 2021, the Scholarship and Fundraising Committee was chaired by Alanna McKeeman (Foursquare ITP). Ruby Lee (WSP USA) served as Deputy Chair, and Regis Stinson (Dewberry) supported the committee as a volunteer.

The Scholarship and Fundraising Committee had a rewarding and record-

setting year. The chapter received \$10,500 in named scholarships from five generous sponsors organizations. After a highly competitive application review process, the selection panel that included seven board members and one volunteer selected to award scholarships totaling \$24,000 – the greatest amount ever awarded by the chapter – to a group of twelve deserving women.

At the WTS-DC 2021 Holiday Party, due to the generosity of the attendees and thanks to the efforts of several WTS-DC board members who volunteered their time, the committee raised nearly \$4,800 in donations through the scholarship tree. We were thrilled to see so many previous scholarship winners at the Holiday Party and hope that this year's awardees will also stay involved with WTS-DC for many years to come. The chapter wishes them much success as they complete their education and embark on what we know will be impactful careers in the transportation industry.



Photo 7 - From front to back: Neela Babu, Alanna McKeeman, Lilia Yousefian, Regis Stinson, Samantha Dixon, Yi-Ting Lin, Laura Castro, Fatemeh Alimardani, Jennifer Hopkins, Rachel Redmond, Shihan Lin, Rachel Smith, and Jada-Mercy Aybebae

Table 7 - 2021 Scholarship Fundraising Sources

Source	Supporting Committee	Amount Raised
Transportation Rock Stars	Corporate Membership	n/a
Corporate Membership Dues Allocation	Corporate Membership	\$4,750.00
Holiday Party Scholarship Donations	Holiday Party	\$4,507.59
Named Scholarships	n/a	\$10,500.00
Other donations	n/a	\$800.00
Total		\$20,557.59

Transportation YOU Committee

The Transportation YOU committee was led by Barbara Moreno (WSP USA), as Chair, and Marie Louis (WMATA), as Deputy Chair. Margaret Akofio-Sowah (WSP USA), Kyla D'Sa (Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.), Laura MacNeil (DDOT), Jasmy Methipara (HUD), and Brandon Buckner (FHWA) provided invaluable support as committee volunteers.

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

In 2021, the committee set out to engage the community through social media and achieved 103 followers to the committee's Instagram account! (You can follow the committee at [@transportationyoudc](https://www.instagram.com/transportationyoudc).) They also sought to diversify their virtual program offerings by, among other things, developing digital materials for the committee. Thanks to the hard work of multiple committee members, the committee developed a Transportation YOU PowerPoint, as well as eye-catching flyers and college preparatory materials to share on Instagram.

Additionally, the committee organized five events throughout the year to support, educate, and mentor students in Washington, D.C. On March 10, Jasmy Methipara arranged for speaker Anthony Willingham of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to provide a local government perspective in the EV conversation happening at McKinley Technical High School. As the audience consisted of engineering students, Willingham was able to get into some technical details. “We talked about the difference between level 1, level 2, and level 3 EV chargers and how to properly care for a battery, so it doesn’t degrade over time. Additionally, I talked a bit about our plan for proliferating EV chargers across the District,” he said. “The reason we talked a lot about chargers and battery care was a question prompted by one of the students. So I was really happy to see that the students that participated were genuinely interested in the technology and what we had to say about it.”



Photo 8 - EV event at McKinley Technical High School

On March 25, Margaret-Avis Akofio-Sowah organized and hosted an event on racial equity in transportation for Dunbar High School featuring Dr. Stefanie Brodie (Research Practice Lead, Toole Design). More than 20 students attended this virtual event.



Photo 9 - Racial equity event for Dunbar High School

On May 19, Kyla D’Sa organized and hosted an introduction to transportation session at Cardozo Education Campus featuring Brandon Buckner (Deputy Division Administrator, FHWA DC Division Office), Sharada Strasmore (Micromobility Planner, DDOT), and David Samba (Transportation Engineer/Planner, Kimley Horn).

The event started with a brief introduction to the transportation field and careers lead by Kyla D’Sa. The next phase of the event included students rotating between three breakout rooms hosted by each of transportation speakers. In each virtual space, the speakers presented a brief elevator pitch about their role in the industry. They then opened up the conversation to answer questions from students and have an open dialogue. By

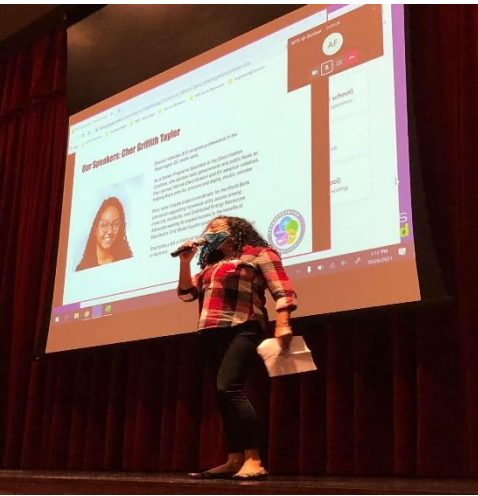


Photo 11 - Sustainability event at Dunbar High School

making the virtual rooms smaller, students could have personalized conversations with each of the speakers. Samba illustrated his path into the industry and showed some examples of transportation simulations that he uses in his role. Strasmore spoke with students about micromobility, including planning for and implementing the scooters students see and use in DC. Finally, Buckner, an alumnus of Cardozo High School, related to students and shared how he developed his career after

graduating from Cardozo High School. In addition, three Cardozo teachers, Terence Richards, Aris Pangilinan, and Christopher Frazier, attended the event, asked questions, and

helped facilitate discussion (though our speakers were quite engaging and the students had plenty of questions). Cheryl Rodgers and the IT team at Cardozo High School helped organize and coordinate the breakout rooms. Approximately 20 students logged into this virtual experience.

On October 26, Laura MacNeil hosted and organized a transportation event focused on sustainability at Dunbar High School. This was the committee's first hybrid event and its first event with an in-person component since March 2020. Angela R. Fogle (Surface Transportation System Funding Alternatives Program Manager, FHWA Office of Operations) and Cher Griffith Taylor (Senior Programs Specialist, Electrification Coalition) spoke to a group of approximately 30 students who gathered in the high school auditorium for the event. Fogle explained how FHWA's Value Pricing Pilot Program aims to support congestion pricing and travel demand strategies, reduce traffic congestion, and improve air quality. Taylor spoke about her career path and how she leveraged her education, interests, and international background to become a Senior Programs Specialist at the Electrification Coalition. As an electric vehicles program professional, Taylor advises local governments, including the District, regarding electric vehicle adoption. To wrap up the event, Barbara Moreno provided an overview of her work at DDOT's transportation demand management program, goDCgo, and its goals to promote sustainable transportation modes for students, commuters, and residents in the District. In-person attendees were treated to goDCgo hand sanitizer, erasers, and mini-wallet keychains (with the website included for more details).



Photo 10 - Introduction to Transportation session at Cardozo



Photo 12 - Robotics event at Dunbar High School

To round out the year, Laura MacNeil hosted and organized an event around robotics at Dunbar High School on December 7. The event took place in person and featured a discussion with Monica Laufer (Manager of Public Policy & Government Relations, Argo) and Greg Matlesky (Bicycle Program Specialist, DDOT). Over 50 students attended the session.

Events Throughout the Year

Coffee Chat with ITS America's Shailen Bhatt

On February 25, WTS-DC held a coffee chat with Shailen Bhatt, President and CEO of ITS America (ITSA). Bhatt is a leading voice in transportation on technology's ability to save lives and reduce crashes on U.S. roadways. He speaks extensively about the importance of vehicles communicating with each other and all roadway users as one of the best ways to improve safety and reduce congestion. He is also passionate about reducing transportation's carbon footprint and the need to provide seamless mobility and transportation choices to people no matter where they live. Prior to his role at ITSA, Bhatt served as executive director for the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and was cabinet secretary for the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT). He was also a presidential appointee at the U.S. Department of Transportation.



Photo 13 - Shailen Bhatt, President and CEO, ITS America

WTS-DC coffee chats are designed to be conversational, informal events where all attendees are able to sit around the virtual table and engage with the speaker. To facilitate that during this coffee chat, every attendee introduced themselves to Bhatt, who, during the discussion, referred to different fun facts that attendees had shared about themselves.

After introductions, Bhatt started by explaining how his previous experiences supported two of his current priorities: safety and the environment. During his time at DelDOT and CDOT, Bhatt was informed of the fatalities that occurred on the road system which he oversaw. This reality contributed to his belief that improved technology can support safety, thereby leading to fewer roadway fatalities. Bhatt has always been passionate about the environment and he advocates for reducing the carbon footprint caused by the transportation industry.

The remainder of the event focused on a Q&A session with questions from the audience. Topics included the FCC reallocation of the 5.9GHz spectrum, the impacts of COVID on transportation and outlook for the future, the importance of cybersecurity in transportation, and the importance of active mobility options.

WTS-DC and the coffee chat attendees are grateful to Shailen Bhatt for joining us for this event, and to ITS America for their support.

Coffee Chat with Amazon's Ashleigh de la Torre



Photo 14 - Ashleigh de la Torre

WTS-DC hosted a coffee chat with Ashleigh de la Torre, Director of Public Policy at Amazon on March 16. De la Torre has a career in Washington, D.C. that spans over two decades. In her current role, she leads Amazon's transportation and sustainability legislative and regulatory affairs team, supporting Amazon's U.S. operations, logistics, and delivery businesses including drones, air cargo, surface transportation, multimodal, and last mile delivery.

Some of the topics covered in the conversation included Amazon's recent FAA approval to conduct unmanned delivery of goods with its fleet of Prime Air drones, Amazon's mission for net zero carbon by 2040, Amazon's \$2 billion Climate Pledge Fund, Amazon's Scout Robot, and de la Torre's career path and advice.

She was interested in public policy from a young age and had a more traditional career path in D.C. from working on the Hill for a Kansas senator to working at the National Business Aviation Association and Airports Council International, North America. De la Torre discussed the importance of having strong mentors and explained how her mentors helped shape her career and life today. She also discussed the peculiar working environment at Amazon and how exciting and motivated she feels every day to work with a bright and interesting team. She even offered to provide mentorship for the group of women attending the event. A big thank you to de la Torre for agreeing to speak and support the WTS-DC chapter.

"Quick Build" Solutions with Nathan George

On April 22, Earth Day, the chapter hosted Nathan George of APA Virginia for a discussion of "quick build" solutions with panelists Alex Carroll, Urban Planner at City of Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services, Pat Shepherd, capital projects manager and bikeways coordinator with Montgomery County Department of Transportation, and Megan Kanagy, Bus Priority Program Manager with DDOT.

Over the past year, many of us have enjoyed outdoor dining in spaces that would otherwise have been car parks or part of the road. These spaces are one example of the temporary projects or “quick builds” that popped up to help cities around the world adapt to COVID. These quickly installed projects have met our changing needs for space within the public realm, to enhance active travel and recreation opportunities (i.e., walking or cycling), public gathering space and, of course, outdoor dining to help businesses serve their customers with indoor dining restrictions. The past year has made us more comfortable with experimenting and potentially paved the way for cities better to meet the challenges ahead. While these temporary projects “quick builds” were driven by the necessity for short-term fixes. At the end of the event the panelist encouraged women to enter the transportation field as professionals. The profession is very rewarding, and the most important part is to be a very good communicator. The consensus in the “room” was that women are really good communicators. Having diverse groups working together will result in better solutions to problems large and small. Regardless of sex and age it's really important to trust that you might bring a unique experience to the table even if you are in a room that may not look a lot like you.

Making the Connection: The Transportation Industry and HBCUs

Spearheaded by the efforts of the Diversity Committee, the chapter joined forces with the DC chapter of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) to host a three-part virtual event series titled “Making the Connection: The Transportation Industry and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).” WTS-DC led the second panel, “Fruits of the Vine – The Role and Importance of HBCU Alumni,” on May 19.

HBCUs were established in the United States in the early 19th century to provide undergraduate, and eventually, graduate-level educational opportunities to people of African descent. Black students were unwelcome at existing public and private higher education institutions, even after passing specific legislation, resulting in a lack of higher education opportunities. Because of that, in the 1800s and early 1900s, HBCUs were primarily the only viable choice for Black students when it came to higher education. Now, while the educational selections are much broader, HBCUs still stand strong as primary educators of Black students and producers of Black graduates, particularly in the STEM fields.

As our society and the transportation industry struggle and strive to evolve into more equitable and diverse spaces, we want to seek ways to advance the

conversation and action needed to make that happen. How do we better connect these institutions educating and graduating these talented STEM students of color with the industry that desperately needs their skills, contributions, and diverse perspectives? In part, we do that by developing and strengthening the relationships between the two. We connect and encourage the industry not just to seek talent from HBCUs but to genuinely develop meaningful relationships with HBCUs and other minority-serving institutions that are long-standing and mutually beneficial. We talk about mentorship, internship, scholarship, and sponsorship. We talk about how to create a space that is educational, fruitful, and welcoming.

This panel discussion allowed for an impactful conversation with the panelists who are all graduates of HBCUs and are engaged with the transportation industry. The panelists included Serese Aranha-Scott, PE, PTOE (HDR – Senior Program Manager for MD/DC, North Carolina A&T State University), Keith Foxx, PE, PMP, CCM (FOXXSTEM – Principal, Howard University), John Henry, CPA, CTP, MBA (American Public Transportation Association – Chief Financial Officer, Virginia State University and Howard University), Tomika Monterville, MSP (City of San Antonio DOT – Director, Howard University), Chris Shorter (City of Baltimore – City Administrator, Florida A&M University), and Linda Washington (The Washington Consulting Team – President and CEO, Morgan State University). WTS-DC Diversity

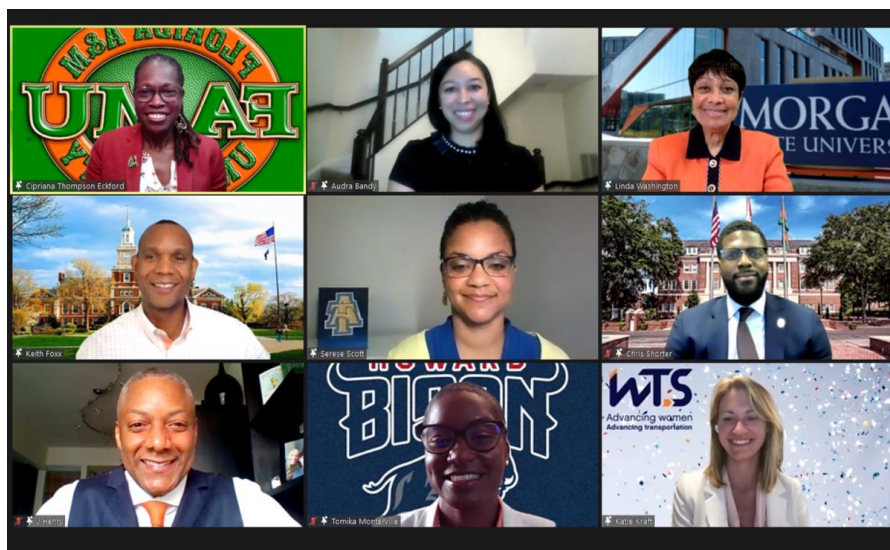


Photo 15 - Zoom screenshot from HBCU event

Committee members Audra Bandy, PE, PTOE (Fairfax County DOT – Senior Transportation Planner/Team Lead, Washington University in St. Louis) and Cipriana Thompson, PE, PTOE (Toole Design Group – Mid-Atlantic Regional Operations Director, Florida A&M University) moderated the discussion.

The panelists shared their experiences at their respective HBCUs and emphasized the difference that their HBCUs made in their lives. They spoke passionately about the impacts that HBCUs have on their students, how well they prepare them to be strong contributors to society, and the critical role they occupy and can continue to play in bolstering the talent and diversity in the STEM fields. Similar to the groups of panelists (from academia and the industry) in the other panels in the series, these

proud alumni stressed the importance of the industry developing meaningful relationships with HBCUs that extend beyond just hiring graduates. There is much work to be done, and conversations like these are a great start!

Many Paths, One Goal: A Virtual Conversation with WTS-DC Recognition Awardees

Each year, WTS-DC selects individuals, projects, and entities to honor with one of six Recognition Awards. These awards are presented at the annual WTS-DC holiday party in December. And on May 20, the 2020 Recognition Award winners participated in the panel event "Many Paths, One Goal: WTS-DC 2020 Recognition Award Winners on Leadership." Cathy Connor of WSP USA moderated the panel, and the 2020 award winners served as panelists for this virtual event that explored leadership personally and professionally.



Photo 16 - Speaker photos, 2021 Recognitions panel event

The panelists included:

- Nicole Nason, Chief Safety Officer and Head of External Affairs at Cavnue and former Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – Woman of the Year
- Paul Skoutelas, President/CEO of the American Public Transit Association (APTA) – Employer of the Year
- Jerry Mrykalo, Senior Associate at Dewberry – Honorable Ray LaHood
- Anna Chamberlin, Director of DDOT's Planning and Sustainability Division – Innovative Transportation Solution
- Cherie Gibson, Mid-Atlantic Communications Director at HNTB and Chair of the WTS-DC Corporate Relations and Program Sponsorship Committee – Member of the Year

During the panel, the award winners discussed many topics, including how they first thought of themselves as a leader, how they approach setting career goals, the advice they've received from mentors, and how to handle working outside of their comfort zone. One panelist recalled the sense of responsibility she felt the first time she testified as a principal engineer. At the same time, another reflected on how her upbringing as the oldest child instilled her with a sense of leadership from an early age. The topic of professional leadership was explored further, specifically how being a leader is not tied to a position but instead comes from being the person people go to for advice or with questions. The panelists emphasized the importance of

adapting the career goals you set for yourself, being open to new opportunities, and building your professional network.

"Many Paths, One Goal" provided a space to explore different aspects and approaches to leadership and what leadership can look like in the transportation field. Through the Recognition Awards and this panel, WTS-DC celebrates the contributions the award winners have made in the transportation community while looking forward to new opportunities for leadership in transportation.

We are grateful to our 2020 recognition awardees for their leadership in the transportation industry!

Executive Women's Roundtables

President Neela Babu organized two Executive Women's Roundtables (EWR) in 2021 as virtual events due to the continuing pandemic.

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

On May 21, WTS-DC held the first EWR of 2021. The topic of "Growing and Advancing Your Networks During COVID" provided the attendees with the opportunity to share how they have been maintaining and growing their professional networks and advancing in their current roles throughout the past year plus. The discussion also included finding a new job during the pandemic.

While the effects of working from home and the additional pressures from the COVID-19 pandemic created challenges, the attendees found ways to pivot and adapt and discovered new ways to network, communicate, and successfully manage the workplace. Professional organizations such as WTS-DC proved helpful to continue growing and cultivating networks and even broadening to national and international outreach. This group of women leaders also recognized that their roles allowed them to review communication methods and assess internal company networks, which was extremely important as people needed to easily access technology and feel secure they would be able to do their jobs in the remote environment.

WTS-DC's ongoing Executive Women's Roundtable (EWR) series met again virtually on November 12 to discuss the topic of "Moving Up the Ladder: Boards and How to Get on Them." Diane Woodend Jones, Chairman and Executive Vice President of Lea+Elliott, Inc., and Jannet Walker-Ford, Senior Vice President and Principal Director National Transit and Rail Business Line Leader at WSP USA, led the session. Both Jones and Walker-Ford have served on various corporate, industry association, and foundation boards—including WTS-I—during their careers.

The session kicked off with an invitation for participants to share their own experiences as members of boards and how they would like to be involved in the future. Jones and Walker-Ford then shared their experiences across various roles, covering the expectations and responsibilities, including the time and financial commitment of various board positions and how they balance work, home, and board position responsibilities. The session provided ample opportunity for open discussion and information sharing among all participants about how to best position yourself for board service, how to decide which board position is right for you, and lessons learned once you make it to the boardroom.

WTS-DC thanks Diane Woodend Jones and Jannet Walker-Ford for generously sharing their experiences with the group!

Empowering Women in Transportation

The topic of women in transportation is a priority for the WTS brand, and this event focused specifically on empowering women in the transportation industry. Three organizations—WTS International Foundation, ITS America, and The Ray—are collaborating on an initiative they call MobilityXX. The MobilityXX initiative will empower women's decision-making, leadership, and innovative policy-making to advance economic opportunities for travelers systematically disadvantaged by the transportation system. On May 27, WTS-DC was joined by one speaker from each organization: Sara Stickler, Executive Director, WTS International; Laura Chace, Chief Operating Officer, ITS America; and Allie Kelly, Executive Director, The Ray.

To kick off the discussion, the panelists discussed the challenge facing women in the workforce. Even before COVID, women are provided less opportunities than men to progress in entry-level positions, and



Photo 17 - From left to right: Sara Stickler, Laura Chace, and Allie Kelly

that disparity continues up through the corporate ladder. A Mineta Transportation Institute study from 2019 found that women comprise only 15% of the 14.8 million transportation workforce and less at decision-making levels. COVID compounded the challenge faced by women in the workforce. Studies have shown that women leave the workforce at alarming rates or "downshift" their careers at rates much higher than men.

The inequity of women in the workforce is then carried out into the industry, where transportation options favor the needs of men over the needs of women. Access to transit is correlated with economic opportunity, and transit that puts women at a disadvantage is considered the "pink tax" because women spend more on transportation than men as they balance work, home, and family trips.

MobilityXX strives to reverse these inequities. The MobilityXX Action Plan includes a pledge to galvanize the broader transportation industry around taking meaningful action to attract, promote and retain a more diverse workforce. It also includes a webinar series to educate on women's inequities in transportation and how diversity is a strength that leads to better outcomes. Essentially, the focus of MobilityXX is the recognition that empowering women in transportation will empower all women.

There are multiple ways for you and your organization to get involved. Companies can work to make work flexible and sustainable. They can also promote collective goals of transportation (which draws women into an industry), promote educational and career opportunities, and encourage employees to participate in professional organizations. Individuals can take it upon themselves to broaden their networks, set a path for career advancement for young women, ask for direct feedback, and be an ally to other women.

For more information on the initiative and how you or your company can help, check out the [MobilityXX website](#)!

Infrastructure Summer: A Conversation with Key Transportation Stakeholders

On July 15, with a significant infrastructure legislative package on the minds of everyone in Washington, WTS-DC held a conversation with key transportation stakeholders to discuss prospects for action and how a package could impact the transportation stakeholder community.

Emily Feenstra, Managing Director of Government Relations and Infrastructure Initiatives at the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), moderated the panel

and started the day off with a discussion of ASCE's Report Card for America's Infrastructure, which rated America's 2021 infrastructure at a cumulative grade of C-.

She introduced the panel, consisting of four cross-modal stakeholders: Susan Howard, Program Director for Transportation Finance at the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO); Ward McCarragher, Vice President of Government Affairs at the American Public Transportation Association (APTA); Stephanie Gidigbi Jenkins, Director of Policy and Partnerships, Healthy People and Thriving Communities Program at the Natural Resources Defense Council; and Annie Russo, Senior Vice President of Government and Political Affairs, Airports Council International-North America (ACI-NA).

After introductions, the panelists tackled modal specific questions on infrastructure investment needs across the transportation spectrum, including touching on ACI-NA's Infrastructure Needs Study and the State of Good Repair needs across modes. The panel also discussed the new post-COVID normal in transportation and what challenges and changes are coming for the future. Finally, they discussed the Congressional and Presidential infrastructure proposals and how those packages will (and should) be funded.

Panelists highlighted that all modes need funding and that the shortfall has been there for years. While the future of transportation is unpredictable and usages and travel habits have changed since COVID, the funding needs are not going away. Congress and the Administration need to look at long-term funding sources.

WTS-DC and the attendees are grateful to our moderator and panelists for joining us and their support of WTS-DC.

After COVID: Travel and Land Use in the National Capital Region

On August 11, a lively crowd of members and friends of WTS-DC, the Transportation Research Forum (TRF-DC), and Young Professionals in Transportation (YPT-DC) gathered together for the 12th annual WTS-TRF-YPT summer event. The virtual event featured 45 minutes of "break-out room" networking followed by a moderated panel discussion.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. saw some of the sharpest changes in travel patterns in our nation's history. Almost overnight, personal daily driving declined by 45% and transit ridership declined by more than 90%. As Americans were forced to stay home and social distance, everything from paper towels to office chairs were in short supply, making the nation's logistics industry more important than ever. At the same time, virtual (or remote) work exploded, and living patterns in urban and

suburban areas began to change. Against this backdrop, the panelists discussed the many issues and impacts brought about by the country's adjustment to life during a pandemic. They also fielded questions about what we might expect in the National Capital Region as travel patterns and land use trends shift to accommodate our post-pandemic reality.

The participants were pleased to hear from panelists Miriam Brodie and Alan E. Pisarski. Brodie is Vice President of National Private Clients at Kimley-Horn. She co-chairs the firm's National Private Client Committee, partnering with project managers on strategies, developing and promoting best practices, delivering results to clients, and creating new opportunities for Kimley-Horn. She also serves as a Board Director with Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW) DC, providing strategic oversight, insight, guidance, and connections. Brodie contributes substantially to CREW DC's focus and progress on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Pisarski is an independent writer and consultant in the fields of transportation research, policy and investment analyses. He served in the Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation. He has been honored as an Academy Associate of the National Academy of Sciences and by the Transportation Research Board as the Distinguished Lecture in 1999 and with the WN Carey Award in 2007 for Lifetime Distinguished Service and Leadership in Transportation Research. John Hillegass, Manager, Regional Mobility & Infrastructure at Greater Washington Partnership, moderated the conversation.



Photo 18 - Speakers for "After COVID" Joint Event

Seventh Annual WTS-DC Bike Tour

Bicycle infrastructure in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area is making the streets safer, one bike lane at a time.

On August 22, a small group met on a cloudy but warm morning in front of the Capitol building and embarked on an approximately 5-mile bike ride. After introductions, and a safety discussion and equipment check, the “magnificent seven” left the Capitol and took the cycle track on Pennsylvania Avenue toward 11th Street. Margaret Ballard, WTS-DC advisor, was our expert tour guide who peppered the tour with historical facts.

What are Complete Streets and Great Streets?

Complete streets are designed and operated to be safe and accessible for all modes of transportation and abilities. Not every street requires bike lanes or transit stops to be complete, but every complete street accommodates pedestrians of varying age and ability safely and comfortably. Great Streets is the District's commercial revitalization initiative, led by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED), designed to support existing small businesses, attract new businesses, increase the District's tax base, create new job opportunities for residents, and transform emerging corridors into thriving and inviting neighborhood centers. Great Streets are expanded versions of complete streets, and include multimodal travel, streetscape enhancements and environmental stormwater measures.



Photo 19 - Professional Development bike event

Benefits of Complete and Great Streets:

- Safety – reduced pedestrian and cyclist fatalities
- Livability – accessible streets improve sense of community and street activity
- Health – walking and cycling lead to better health outcomes (higher levels of fitness through routine daily activity)
- Economic – increased pedestrian and cycling traffic on urban streets are associated with retained spending and higher property values

Characteristics of a Great Street include:

- Provides orientation to its users, and connects well to the larger pattern of ways.
- Balances the competing needs of the street—driving, transit, walking, cycling, servicing, parking, drop-offs, etc.
- Fits the topography and capitalizes on natural features.

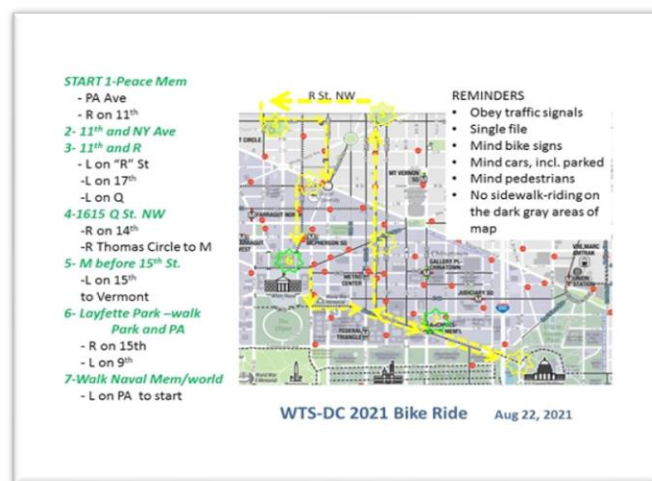


Photo 20 - Map of 2021 bike ride

- Is lined with a variety of interesting activities and uses that create a varied streetscape.
- Has urban design or architectural features that are exemplary in design.
- Relates well to its bordering uses—allows for continuous activity, doesn't displace pedestrians to provide access to bordering uses.
- Encourages human contact and social activities.
- Employs hardscape and/or landscape to great effect.
- Promotes safety of pedestrians and vehicles and promotes use over the 24-hour day.
- Promotes sustainability through minimizing runoff, reusing water, ensuring groundwater quality, minimizing heat islands, and responding to climatic demands.
- Is well maintained, and capable of being maintained without excessive costs.
- Has a memorable character.

The tour route was designed to incorporate various complete street elements:

- Bicycle infrastructure – road diet, bike lanes, protected bike lanes (cycle tracks), contra-flow travel, sharrow, bike box, green zone
- Pedestrian infrastructure – wide sidewalks, patterned crosswalks, refuge islands, ped-activated signals
- Transit infrastructure – shelters, accessibility
- Vehicle infrastructure – signage, reverse angle parking
- Environmental enhancements – street trees, stormwater planters
- Floating bus stops



Photo 21 - 2021 bike tour group photo in front of the White House

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) implemented a complete streets policy in October 2010, which required DDOT to consider additional modes of transportation in design, construction, and maintenance of its streets. By 2014, DDOT had completed 69 miles of bike lanes! Data collection and level of service measurements are now used to verify project performance, and many complete streets include environmental enhancements such as tree space and green infrastructure.

Pennsylvania Avenue is a great example of complete street. The street has multiple traffic lanes for personal vehicles and buses, a protected two-way bike lane (cycle track) for two-way cyclist traffic, parking lanes on the right, and wide tree-lined sidewalks for pedestrians on both sides. While most were familiar with the Pennsylvania Avenue cycletrack, not everyone knew that it went through multiple design iterations to bring it to the level of safety it now offers to riders of all levels of experience.

The group noticed the turning lanes and how the bike traffic flow is organized to keep everyone moving safely. The tour group benefited from a "talk stop" about it, and even so, sometimes were startled with on-coming bike traffic. Other innovative bike provisions similarly were critiqued at "talk stops" by the group.

Buffered bike lanes were installed in the center median of the Pennsylvania cycle track in June 2010. Bicycle lanes are five feet wide with three-foot buffers on each side. At intersections, the approaching bicycle lane splits to provide a turn lane and a through lane. Turning bicyclists wait in the middle (between the through bicycle lanes) while through cyclists follow the traffic signal for through motorists. To complete turning movements, cyclists wait for the pedestrian signal and cross in the crosswalk.

15th Street Cycle Track/Separate Bike Lanes

15th Street, running between Pennsylvania Avenue and V Street, was selected as a suitable location to pioneer and experiment with the capital's first protected bike facility on account of its extra roadway capacity and central location. In 2010, the city installed a one-way southbound, protected contra-flow cycle track. After observing cyclists using the protected facility in both directions, the route was converted to a two-way cycle track. The bikeway is separated from the road by a floating parking lane, buffer, and intermittent yellow plastic pylons. A bicycle signal was also put in place at the intersection with Pennsylvania Avenue to ease the passage of crossing cyclists. According to a 2010 follow-up study by DDOT, the cycle track has increased levels of cycling, decreased riding on the sidewalk, and diminished the number of vehicles per day.

The various bicycle facilities in the city are excellent examples of facilities well designed and well-constructed.

Exploring Equanimity Through Yoga



Photo 22 - Christine Sherman Baker

In a world of back-to-back meetings, full inboxes, and constant pressure for professional success, it can be difficult to prioritize mental and physical health.

To keep the importance of mindfulness at the forefront for our members, the chapter hosted an event on Exploring Equanimity on September 8. Equanimity means mental calmness, composure, and evenness of temper, especially in a difficult situation. To explore equanimity, a small group gathered at Gateway Park in Rosslyn, a park that reclaimed space on a bridge deck atop I-66 (just south of Washington, D.C.).

Christine Sherman Baker hosted the event, which began with a conversation amongst participants of their current challenges and successes followed by an all-levels yoga class focused on using breath to gain mental calmness. For over a decade, she has balanced her transportation planning career with her work as a fitness instructor—teaching yoga and other various group exercise classes. Sherman Baker considers her work in fitness to be an outlet to empower each person on their own health journey—including herself. The hour passed quickly, leaving a calm, composed group—ready for facing challenges ahead.

Navigating Cybersecurity Risks in the Transportation Sector

Operational cybersecurity is one of the greatest risks to the safety of our transportation infrastructure and our national security today. As we increase our interconnectivity and reliance on technology, our transportation systems are increasingly vulnerable to cyber-attacks that could disrupt the movement of people and goods, bringing with it national and homeland security risks. Transportation is one of the core 16 Critical Infrastructure sectors designated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and is increasingly a focus by Congress and the administration to address cyber risks.

On September 15, WTS-DC tackled this important topic in a panel discussion with professionals leading cyber protection efforts in the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).



Norma Krayem, Vice President and Chair, Cybersecurity, Privacy & Digital Innovation Practice Group, Van Scoyoc Associates (and former Deputy Chief of Staff at the U.S. Department of Transportation), moderated the conversation. Bob Kolasky, Director of the National Risk Management Center, CISA, Kyle N. Malo, Sr. Director, Cybersecurity & CISO, WMATA, Sonya Proctor, Associate Administrator for Surface Transportation, TSA, and Polly Hanson, Senior Director Security, Risk & Emergency Management, APTA, rounded out the panel.

Photo 23 - Screenshot of Zoom panel, WTS-DC cybersecurity event

Following an introduction and short discussion by each of the panelists, Krayem elicited the panelists' views on a variety of topics, including supply chain security risks, the importance of security by design, the impact of recent security directives for the pipeline industry, and the need to establish cyber risk as an enterprise risk management concern for the transportation sector.

Panel members emphasized the need for buyers of transportation technologies to demand high-quality, trustworthy, secure software from vendors. They also discussed the need for transportation operators to think about all the places technology is hiding in a project or an asset that itself is not traditional hardware or software, like a train station or a rail car.

Using the pipeline industry as an example, the federal panelists highlighted the importance of sharing information about vulnerabilities, conducting self-assessments, and putting in place measures to mitigate identified vulnerabilities.

Attendees enjoyed a stimulating conversation, gained insight into the cyber challenges facing the transportation sector, and learned what steps the government

and industry are taking to increase security and safety on transportation modes going forward.

WTS-DC is grateful to all the panelists for sharing their time and knowledge with the WTS-DC community. WTS-DC thanks in-kind program sponsors, Van Scoyoc Associates and Kimley-Horn, for their support of this program.

VDOT Leaders: A Candid Discussion on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

On September 23, WTS-DC hosted our 7th annual event with the NOVA District of Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). This year's topic focused on VDOT's long-standing commitment to inclusion in the workplace. The panel conversation highlighted VDOT's efforts to create a workforce culture of inclusion that promotes diversity and equal employment opportunity for all individuals, as well as VDOT's recognition that inclusion stimulates productivity and growth. This event provided attendees the opportunity to learn about a facet of VDOT not often seen by the public.

Cerasela Cristei, WTS-DC Professional Development Committee Chair, moderated the conversation among six panelists:

- John D. Lynch, P.E., District Engineer
- Bill Cuttler, P.E., Deputy District Engineer
- Lauren C. Mollerup, P.E., CCM, Assistant District Administrator for Maintenance
- Leslie Martin, District Civil Rights Manager
- Aleksandra Tuliszka, P.E., Assistant Director for Transportation and Land Use
- Richard Burke, Transportation & Land Use Director for Prince William County

The panelists answered questions posed by WTS-DC members. Some of the questions and responses from the event are summarized below.

How do you recognize and remove barriers to design a diverse and inclusive workplace?

- Keep the lines of communication open and be a good listener. This builds trust and removes perceived barriers within any team. It also encourages courageous problem-solving and finding the best alternate solution to any problem.
- Inclusion tends to be a personal perspective. Open channels of communication help both parties find out why someone does not feel included and what can be done to change that perspective.

- In a government agency with a hierarchy of decision-making, someone new to the agency may not be able to sit at the table with the executive staff and help make decisions. VDOT has an innovative program where employees can contribute ideas on how to do things better. This “lab” forms purposefully diverse teams to develop ideas and post them on the internal website, where anyone in the agency can add their contributions to make the concept even better. This puts every contributor on even footing because all ideas count, and there are no barriers.
- VDOT also fields employee surveys on a regular basis.
- A statewide effort that is currently being implemented is a training program called “Road to Cultural Competency.” This program broadens people’s horizons about other people’s perspectives and teaches them to stop and listen to what people are saying and determine what actions they can take to help.

There are many ways to define diversity, but what percentage of women and people of color are in leadership positions in the NOVA District? And what is VDOT doing to place individuals who are historically underrepresented in positions of leadership?

- The percentages are only comparable within our area as the general population percentages within those categories vary sufficiently even within one state. The first step is to mirror the census percentages as close as possible, and while VDOT falls slightly below the statewide numbers, efforts to more closely align VDOT’s percentages with the statewide numbers are being implemented. Those efforts consist of reaching out to women’s organizations and looking at why people are not applying for certain positions. The leadership team is 50% men and 50% women, making gender diversity a model.
- The hiring process at VDOT is included in the Strategic Plan to be presented to the Governor and will be implemented to bring more diverse employees into the team.

What event or thing triggered you to see, understand, and help maintain the diversity of our society within the agency?

- In the late 1980s, there was a massive influx of professionals from other countries. Employees had to learn new ways to interact with their new colleagues. Panelists talked about their own experiences with accommodating different cultures, the importance of learning about other

cultures, and weaving different cultures together to create a harmonious work environment.

- For the past eight years, Leslie Martin and Bill Cuttler have co-chaired VDOT's Unity Day, a gigantic picnic featuring flags of all represented nations strewn across the pavilion. Through Unity Day, VDOT celebrates diversity, encourages learning about other cultures, and enables staff to develop sensitivity and respect for their colleagues. Attendees learned that VDOT staff were asked to place dots on a map of the world to represent their place of origin. At the end of the day, there were dots in 49 states. And beyond the U.S., the dots marked the Silk Road.
- Northern Virginia is extremely diverse, and we need to embrace all cultures and backgrounds and come together to continue building our community.
- One of the panelists shared that building and maintaining a diverse workplace may mean figuring out how to retain the employee and welcome the original culture of the employee. Additionally, attendees heard that we all must learn how to communicate and appreciate diverse talents and abilities so that we all may continue to grow.

WTS-DC thanks VDOT for its continued partnership with our chapter and expresses its appreciation to the VDOT leaders who shared their time, perspectives, and experiences with members and friends of WTS-DC.

Negotiations Unleashed: An Interactive Workshop on Developing Negotiation Skills

According to the Harvard Business Review, at least 20% of women have never negotiated at all, and almost half of employees in the U.S. do not feel confident with their negotiation skills. Elizabeth Suárez, leadership and negotiations strategist and author of *The Art of Getting Everything*, joined members of WTS-DC on September 28 to share how we can expand our negotiation capacity and ask for what we need to advance our careers. Attendees learned the importance of remaining dynamic in one's communications, especially within negotiations, and being prepared to switch sides (from passenger to driver) in any discussion. Attendees also learned that, though we all have different negotiation strengths, no one type is better than another. To be an effective communicator, you need to employ all five styles: competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating. Suárez highlighted the importance of self-awareness in the negotiation process, which enables you to recognize when you are reverting to your default style and to pay attention to the reactions and responses of those participating in the negotiation process.

In advance of the two-hour interactive workshop, each attendee completed the Bargaining Styles Assessment (BSA) to understand their preferred negotiation style(s). This assessment informed the skill-building, group discussion, and break-out conversations during the workshop.

In small break-out discussions, attendees shared the results of their own BSAs and discussed what steps they would like to take to increase their effectiveness utilizing the other negotiation styles.

The workshop concluded with a discussion of the value of being an influencer within your organization and the importance of effective networking to build relationships and connections. Suárez reminded attendees that leaders cannot operate in a vacuum and emphasized the importance of developing relationships by “making communication exchanges as human as possible.”

WTS-DC thanks its Mentoring and Professional Development Committees for organizing an informative and productive event!

Virtual Coffee and Conversation with Deputy Assistant Secretary Robin Hutcheson



Photo 24 - Deputy Assistant Secretary for Safety Policy Robin Hutcheson

On October 5, a group of local transportation professionals gathered virtually over Zoom for WTS-DC’s Coffee Chat with Deputy Assistant Secretary for Safety Policy Robin Hutcheson. Attendees participated in a lively round of introductions and listened to DAS Hutcheson talk on a variety of topics ranging from the current administration’s safety policy priorities to the American Jobs Plan and the impact of COVID.

DAS Hutcheson is a “Day 1” appointee of the Biden-Harris Administration. Prior to her current role, she served as the Director of Public Works for the City of Minneapolis, where she focused on leveraging public right-of-way investments for broader equity, environmental, and economic outcomes. She also served as the Transportation Director for Salt Lake City, Utah, working to improve all modes of transportation. Her private sector experience includes work in cities throughout the western United States, in London and France, and for the European Union Commission on Sustainability. She spent seven years on the Board of Directors of the National Association of City

Transportation Officials (NACTO), most recently as President of the Board. She was

the founder and inaugural President of the Salt Lake City Chapter of WTS and participated with WTS Minnesota.

In her remarks, DAS Hutcheson outlined the pending infrastructure bill's comprehensive investment in safety, from programs intended to support local government efforts to increase street safety to funds for improving data collection and grade crossings. She also spoke about her work leading the COVID response for the Office of the Secretary and current efforts to incorporate "lessons learned" from the pandemic.

DAS Hutcheson actively engaged the attendees in the conversation. She responded to multiple questions on a variety of topics, including how she became involved with safety, how to encourage equity and safety as priorities, how to influence decision-making even when you are not the decision-maker, and what publications she reads to stay informed and generate ideas. She encouraged attendees to have confidence in their strengths, build diverse teams, and seize professional opportunities.

WTS-DC is grateful to DAS Hutcheson for sharing her time and insight with WTS-DC members and friends. Thank you DAS Hutcheson for your support of WTS-DC and women in transportation!

Diversity and Equity Event Featuring Tamika L. Butler

On October 20, five WTS chapters, representing Central Virginia, DC, Hampton Roads, North Carolina-Triangle and South Carolina, hosted a virtual diversity and equity event. The WTS chapters were thrilled to offer attendees an opportunity to hear from Tamika Butler on diversity vs. inclusion, intentional inclusion and action-based

plans, bystander intervention, industry-centric employee relations, and the retention rate of women and women of color in the industry. Butler is a national expert and speaker on the built environment, equity, anti-racism, diversity and inclusion, organizational behavior, and change management. As the Principal and Founder of Tamika L. Butler Consulting, Butler focuses on shining a light on inequality, inequity, and social justice. Most recently, Butler was the Director of Planning, California, and the Director of Equity and Inclusion at Toole Design. Previously, Butler served as the Executive Director of the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust, a non-profit organization that addresses social and racial equity and wellness by building parks and gardens in park-poor communities across Greater Los Angeles.



Photo 25 - Tamika L. Butler

To kick off the discussion, Butler proposed various questions to attendees on the topic of white spaces and if they felt that their industry, workplace, and even WTS was a center for white spaces. When asked to define “white space,” Butler encouraged attendees to think about “white space” as any predominately white space without diversity and inclusion. Butler also spoke about intersectionality, or how the effects of different forms of discrimination combine, overlap, and intersect. Butler emphasized the importance of this concept in creating access to affordable, reliable, and good-quality transportation and how we must consider the impact of various forms of discrimination (class, gender, ability, race, age) on transportation access. As an example, Butler pointed out that new roadway infrastructure and highways can cut off access to neighboring communities instead of providing a real transportation benefit to those communities. New highway infrastructure does provide access for commuters traveling regionally, but what about the effects on individuals without vehicles? How will they travel without a vehicle from the community where they live to the community where they work if a new highway cuts off their direct access?

Butler also talked about the importance of effecting change from positions of power and leadership within the industry. She emphasized the value and power of specific conversations and policies related to diversity and inclusion. Butler cautioned that we may want to ignore racism’s role in our industry, but that won’t make it go away. She discouraged attendees from being bystanders and encouraged them to effect change by putting anti-racism ideals into daily practice.

WTS-DC thanks its sister chapters in Central Virginia, Hampton Roads, North Carolina-Triangle, and South Carolina for joining forces to offer this event.

Building Back Better: A Conversation with Leading U.S. DOT Officials

On November 15, WTS-DC welcomed three senior officials from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to a virtual panel to talk about the department’s accomplishments during the first year of the Biden Administration as well as to look ahead to upcoming priorities, goals, and implementation of the historic bipartisan infrastructure bill. The panelists included Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Acting Administrator Stephanie Pollack; Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) for Safety Policy Robin Hutcheson; and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Senior Advisor Veronica Vanterpool. The wide-ranging conversation was moderated by Joan DeBoer who was chief of staff to former DOT Secretary Ray LaHood and current Vice Chair of the Board at Building America’s Future.

As the virtual program took place on the day that President Biden signed the massive bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) into law, DAS



*Photo 26 - Acting FHWA
Administrator Stephanie
Pollack*

Hutcheson called it a “day of reflection” to recognize the hard work and determination that went into crafting, negotiating, and approving the IIJA. The officials acknowledged that the focus now turns to implementing the new law and, that unlike the 2009 stimulus bill that focused on shorter-term shovel-ready projects, the IIJA represents a longer-term vision that will emphasize “fixing-it-right” with a focus on safety, equity, and resilience. DOT has already started coordinating with the White House and other agencies on implementation planning. They will work closely with the newly appointed Task Force to be chaired by National Economic Council Director Brian Deese and former New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu.

The officials noted that, while much of the IIJA money will be distributed via established funding formulas, there will be several competitive grant opportunities, including a handful of new opportunities. Some of the IIJA’s programs highlighted by the speakers include a new program to reconnect communities separated by transportation projects decades ago; Safe Streets for All to address roadway design to better protect all road users including vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists; a new \$40 billion program for bridges; a 77% boost for transit over current funding levels; and funding for the construction of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. DOT will be enhancing its public engagement efforts and will endeavor to level the playing field to ensure smaller communities will have an equal opportunity to apply for grants.



*Photo 27 - Deputy Assistant
Secretary for Safety Policy
Robin Hutcheson*



*Photo 28 - FTA Senior Advisor
Veronica Vanterpool*

Prior to the discussion of IIJA implementation, the panelists reflected on the challenges facing the transportation network during the COVID-19 pandemic. FHWA Acting Administrator Pollack noted the drop in gas tax revenues due to decreased driving during the first few months of the pandemic and how that impacted transportation budgets at the state and local levels, although traffic and revenues have already rebounded. FTA Senior Advisor Vanterpool spoke about the impact on transit and how the COVID response bills passed by Congress provided a critical lifeline to keep systems operational, but that transit agencies also demonstrated tremendous flexibility and innovation while continuing to serve their communities throughout

the pandemic. She remarked that to date, the FTA has awarded 1400 grants and over \$40 billion in funding to transit systems around the nation.

There was also discussion about the challenges and changes that may take place with regard to transportation as the nation emerges from the pandemic. From a safety perspective, DAS Hutcheson spoke about the escalation in speeding that caused more accidents and pedestrian deaths. She said that a national roadway safety strategy has been under discussion at DOT to address this with a document expected to be released in January. Senior Advisor Vanterpool talked about how the transit community is looking to address the shifting travel patterns and exploring reduced-fare or free-fare programs for some users. FHWA Acting Administrator Pollack is enthusiastic about new technologies to improve safety such as automated emergency braking for trucks, and all expressed enthusiasm about the staying power of community efforts to reshape roadways and ensure streets are safe for all users.

WTS-DC and all of the attendees are grateful to our moderator and panelists for joining us and for all their support of WTS-DC.

Bike Facilities Tour

On November 20, a group of 14 people braved the cold weather for a two-hour tour of the most relevant bicycle facilities within the District of Columbia. Mike Goodno, DDOT's Bicycle Program Specialist joined the tour and shared a tremendous amount of information about the history of the bike facilities toured.

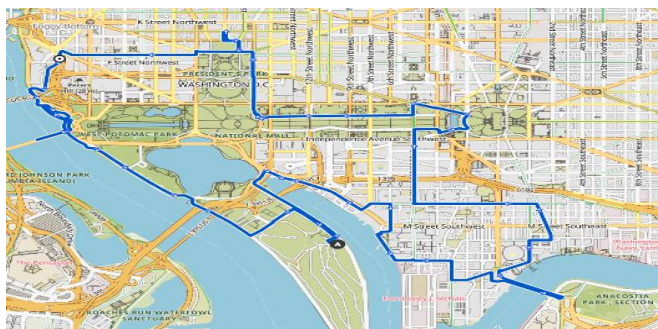


Photo 30 - Bike route



Photo 29 - Bike event tour group photo

Annual Holiday Party

The annual WTS-DC Holiday Party was held at the Ballroom at Hotel Monaco (Washington, D.C.) on Tuesday, December 7, 2021. With over 260 tickets sold (the highest to date for the Annual Holiday Party), the Chapter welcomed many members, friends, and guests from throughout the transportation industry.

The highlights of the night included the world-premiere showing of the video “Why WTS-DC”, remarks from the Honorable Deputy Secretary Polly Trottenberg and FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez, and presentation of the 2021 Recognition Awards and Scholarship Awards by Paul J. Wiedefeld, General Manager and Chief Executive Officer at Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and Renée Hamilton, Chief Executive Officer of TRIP II, Dulles Greenway, respectively.



Photo 31 - From left to right: Polly Trottenberg, US DOT Deputy Secretary, Nuria Fernandez, FTA Administrator, Paul J. Wiedefeld, WMATA General Manager and Chief Executive Officer, and Renée Hamilton, TRIP II Dulles Greenway Chief Executive Officer

Additional special guests included Veronica Vanterpool (Senior Advisor to the FTA Administrator), Mort Downey (former US DOT Deputy Secretary), Sherry Little (former FTA Deputy Administrator), Nicole Nason (former FHWA Administrator), K. Jane Williams (former FTA Acting Administrator), Denise Roth (former GSA Administrator), Jim Ray (former FHWA Deputy Administrator, HNTB), Paul Skoutelas (APTA President and CEO), Monica Backmon (Northern Virginia Transportation Authority Executive Director), and Kate Mattice (Northern Virginia Transportation Commission Chief Executive Officer).

WTS Washington, D.C. Chapter

The Chapter honored the following individuals, companies, and projects with WTS-DC's 2021 Recognitions Awards:

- [Rosa Parks Diversity Award](#) - Diana Mendes, Corporate President of Infrastructure and Mobility Equity, HNTB
- [Employer of Year](#) - Jacobs Engineering Group
- [Innovative Transportation Solutions](#) - Commonwealth Avenue Complete Streets Project, Alexandria, Virginia
- [Honorable Ray LaHood](#) - Matt Welbes, Executive Director, Federal Transit Administration
- [Member of the Year](#) - Adrienne Ameal, Past President of WTS-DC, Senior Transportation Engineer, Kimley Horn and Associates, Inc.
- [Woman of the Year](#) - Elizabeth Field, Vice President of Project Implementation and Construction, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority



Photo 32 – From left to right, First Photo: Paul J. Wiedefeld (WMATA), Neela Babu (WTS-DC), Diana Mendes (HNTB), and Haley Peckett (WTS-DC); Second Photo: Paul J. Wiedefeld (WMATA), Neela Babu (WTS-DC), Jennifer Duval (Jacobs), and Haley Peckett (WTS-DC); Third Photo: Neela Babu (WTS-DC), Alexandria Carroll (City of Alexandria), and Haley Peckett (WTS-DC)



Photo 33 - From left to right, First Photo: Neela Babu (WTS-DC), Adrienne Ameal (Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.), and Haley Peckett (WTS-DC); Second Photo: Neela Babu (WTS-DC), Matthew Welbes (FTA), and Haley Peckett (WTS-DC); Third Photo: Paul J. Wiedefeld (WMATA), Neela Babu (WTS-DC), Elizabeth Field (WMATA), and Haley Peckett (WTS-DC)

These individuals and organizations made extraordinary contributions to the transportation industry as leaders, role models, mentors, and benefactors, and they generously support WTS in a variety of ways. Please see the [“Recognition Awards”](#) section of this Annual Report, below, for more details on our awards and our awardees.

In addition to honoring our award winners, we also recognized twelve deserving students as recipients of WTS-DC Scholarship Awards. These scholarships are funded through the annual WTS-DC Scholarship Donation Tree, fundraising programs over the course of the year, and direct contributions from members and industry partners (North American Transit Alliance, Dewberry, HDR, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., and WSP USA). These scholarships are a way to support our industry’s future. Please see the [“Scholarship Awards”](#) section of this Annual Report, below, for more details on our scholarship awardees.

The Scholarship and Fundraising Committee and its volunteers worked with great enthusiasm to raise donations throughout the evening at the annual appearance of the Scholarship Tree. Nearly \$4,800 was raised for the Chapter’s Scholarship Fund, the highest amount since the start of the Scholarship Tree. WTS-DC would like to thank the organizations and individuals for their contributions. This support allows us to continue providing scholarships to deserving female students in transportation related disciplines at area universities and colleges.

Recognition Awards

WTS-DC honored the following individuals, entities, and transportation projects this year. The Recognition Award recipients received their awards at the WTS-DC Holiday Party on December 7, 2021.

Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award

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

In 2021, WTS-DC honored **Diana Mendes**, Corporate President for Infrastructure and Mobility Equity at HNTB, with the Chapter's Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award. The chapter honored Diana for her commitment to social justice and equity issues associated with infrastructure investment.

Employer of the Year Award

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

WTS-DC honored **Jacobs Engineering** as the recipient of the Chapter's Employer of the Year Award. Jacobs Engineering has excelled in its efforts as an employer to prioritize inclusion and promote women to the highest levels of the organization. Jennifer Duval, Vice President at Jacobs Engineering, accepted the award.

Innovation Transportation Solution Award

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

WTS-DC honored **Commonwealth Avenue Complete Streets Project** in the City of Alexandria, Virginia, as the Chapter's 2021 recipient of the Innovative Transportation Solution Award. The Commonwealth Avenue Complete Streets Project involved robust stakeholder coordination to design and implement pedestrian safety, mobility, and access improvements on a key neighborhood corridor. The improvements reduced crossing distances by up to 70 percent, and many residents, including children, reported feeling safer along the corridor. The project manager, Alexandria Carroll, accepted the award.

Honorable Ray LaHood Award

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

WTS-DC honored **Matthew Welbes**, Executive Director, Federal Transit Administration, as WTS-DC's 2021 Honorable Ray LaHood Awardee. Matt has prioritized recruiting and advancing women and minority leaders at the Federal Transit Administration over the past two decades.

Member of the Year Award

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

The chapter celebrated **Adrienne Ameel** as WTS-DC's 2021 Member of the Year. Adrienne exemplifies dedication to the chapter and WTS. She has served on the chapter board for many years, most recently as Immediate Past President and chapter representative on the WTS International NE Region Council. She continues to lead the chapter by mentoring chapter leaders, organizing events, and supporting members at all levels.

Woman of the Year Award

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

WTS-DC honored **Elizabeth Field**, Vice President-Project Implementation at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, as the Chapter's 2021 Woman of the Year. Liz models exemplary leadership and advancement of women in the transit construction industry by empowering her employees and emphasizing inclusivity and positivity on her teams.

Scholarship Awards

Junior College Scholarships

Samantha Dixon received a \$2,000 scholarship from the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund. Samantha is pursuing a GIS Certificate at the Northern Virginia Community College. Samantha is the Transportation Team Lead at ISpatial, where she works with state and federal government agencies to improve the management, integration, and accuracy of their geospatial data. Samantha is also being recommended for the WTS-International Junior College/Trade School Scholarship.



Photo 34 - Samantha Dixon

Undergraduate Scholarships

Lilia Yousefian received a \$2,500 scholarship sponsored by the North American Transit Alliance. Lilia is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Maryland. Lilia serves as a chapter president of ASCE and served as the mentor coordinator for the Women in Engineering Mentorship Program. Following her graduation, she plans to work as a transportation engineer and



contribute to the shift toward sustainable transportation systems. Lilia is also being recommended for the WTS International Molitoris Leadership Undergraduate Scholarship.



Photo 35 - Lilia Yousefian

Jada-Mercy Ayebae received a \$2,000 scholarship sponsored by Kimley-Horn. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Maryland. Jada-Mercy's career goals include making the nation's transportation infrastructure more sustainable, inspiring people of color to become involved in transportation engineering, and advocating for underrepresented people in her work.



Photo 36 - Jada-Mercy Ayebae

Rachel Smith received a \$2,000 scholarship sponsored by HDR. Rachel is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from George Mason University. Rachel's career goal is to become a project manager for large-scale transportation construction projects.

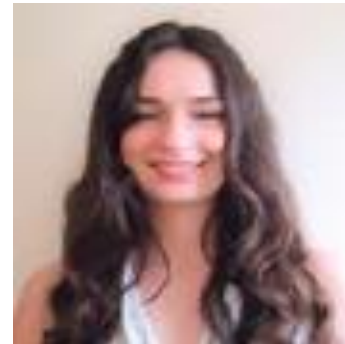


Photo 37 - Rachel Smith

Yassmine Khiri received a \$2,500 scholarship from the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Howard University. Yassmine is a member of the Steel Bridge Team and also served as the Public Relations Officer of her American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) chapter. Following graduation, Yassmine plans to work as a roadway design engineer and help to improve infrastructure and transportation systems. Yassmine is also being recommended for the WTS International Sharon D. Banks Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship.



Photo 38 - Yassmine Khiri

Graduate Scholarships



Fatemeh Alimardani received a \$2,000 scholarship sponsored by Dewberry. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering with a research focus on Transportation Engineering from the University of Maryland. The theme of Fatemeh's research is dynamic management of highway traffic with a mixed population of autonomous and human-driven cars, with an eye toward the efficiency of the traffic networks without needing to change roadway infrastructure.



Photo 39 - Fatemeh Alimardani



Karen Armendariz received a \$2,000 scholarship from the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund. She is pursuing a master's degree in Sustainable Urban Planning from The George Washington University. Karen's professional focus is on enhancing transportation system resiliency to prepare for future challenges and a more sustainable future, as well as enhancing equity in transportation access. Karen was recommended for the WTS International Helene M. Overly Memorial Graduate Scholarship.

Photo 40 - Karen Armendariz



Photo 41 - Rachel Redmond

Rachel Redmond received a \$2,000 scholarship from the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund. She is pursuing a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning at Georgetown University. Rachel's career goal is to become one of the first 600 registered Black female architects in the U.S. as well as a certified planner. She hopes to create positive change in the field of aviation, creating greater opportunities for safe and sustainable global connectivity. Rachel was recommended for the WTS International Leadership Legacy Graduate Scholarship.

Shihan Lin received a \$2,000 scholarship from the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in Transportation from the University of Maryland. Her professional focus is advancing the practice of travel demand analysis using big data, applied econometrics, environmental systems, and survey methodology. Her long-term goal is to pursue a career in academia to sustain her passion for data-driven transportation research.



Photo 42 - Shihan Lin



Photo 43 - Yi-Ting Lin

Yi-Ting Lin received a \$2,000 scholarship sponsored by WSP. Yi-Ting is pursuing a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland with a focus on traffic control and safety. Her recent projects have involved development of a traffic management decision support tool for freeway incidents, and the use of information about pedestrian behaviors to enhance their safety through newly designed pedestrian waiting time and countdown signals. Her career goal is to become a leader in traffic control and safety.



Laura Castro received a \$1,500 scholarship from the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund. She is pursuing a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Tech. Laura's career goal is to lead large-scale safety- and equity-oriented transportation projects that have positive long-term impacts. She also aspires to support increased diversity in the transportation planning field and mentor the next generation of planners.

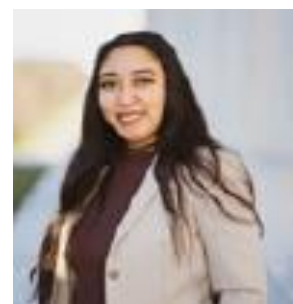


Photo 44 - Laura Castro



Photo 45 - Jennifer Hopkins

Jennifer Hopkins received a \$1,500 scholarship from the WTS-DC Scholarship Fund. She is pursuing a master's degree in GIS Management from Salisbury University. Jennifer is a transportation planner who is pursuing this degree to further strengthen and unify work across the GIS and transportation industries, identifying opportunities for efforts to be combined to offer high-quality solutions.



Photo 46 - Scholarship award recipients with WTS-DC Scholarship and Fundraising Committee Chair Alanna McKeeman (left), and Renée Hamilton, Chief Executive Officer of TRIP II, Dulles Greenway (right)

WTS International Scholarship Awards

In December 2020, Nneoma Ugwu received the HDR \$2,000 named scholarship at the WTS-DC Holiday Party. In 2021, Ugwu was awarded the 2020-2021 WTS Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship recipient through WTS International.

The WTS Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship was established in 1981 by WTS International to encourage women to pursue career paths in transportation. The \$10,000 scholarship is awarded to women pursuing graduate studies in transportation or a related field. Ugwu is pursuing a master's degree and Ph.D. in civil engineering with a concentration in transportation planning and policy and project management at the University of Maryland. Her research projects include the impact of COVID-19 on travel demand and congestion in Maryland and an electric vehicle (EV) parking and charging study at the University of Maryland. She grew up in Nigeria and her long-term goal is to return home to Nigeria and work with the Ministry of Transportation to develop the failing road infrastructure. Ugwu was recognized on May 13 at the 2021 WTS International Annual Conference that was held virtually in Richmond, VA.

Other Chapter Activities

WTS International Annual Conference

In support of chapter members' continued professional development, each year WTS-DC provides an opportunity for board members to apply for funding to attend the WTS Annual Conference. The Chapter sent three board members to the 2021 WTS-I Annual Conference—Neela Babu, President; May El-Khattab, Holiday Party Committee Chair; and Christine Sherman Baker, Membership Committee Chair. The Annual Conference was held virtually from Richmond, Virginia, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Inspiration from Keynote Speaker Carla Harris

The 2021 Annual Conference focused on the theme “Activate + Elevate” which encompasses the mission of WTS. The conference had a strong kickoff with an inspiring and rousing keynote speaker Carla Harris, and with an incredible panel of U.S. DOT administrators.

Carla Harris has spent over 30 years working on Wall Street. During those years, she climbed the corporate ladder and identified success strategies along the way. When Harris began her career, she was told that the work place was a meritocracy, and she had believed that. As an intelligent and hard worker, she felt she was well-suited to move up within the company. However, within her first year on Wall Street she realized that more was required in order to succeed and advance in her career. Her observations and lessons have resulted in what she calls “pearls” which she shared with the audience:

- Be authentic.
- Make sure you have two types of currency.
- Performance currency, which is generated by you performing well.
- Relationship currency, which is generated by the investments you make in the people within your work environment.
- Take risks and don't let fear hold you back.
- If you don't ask, you don't get.
- Use your network and don't be afraid to ask people in your network to help you.

Harris' pearls can also be found in her books: “Expect to Win” and “Strategize to Win.”

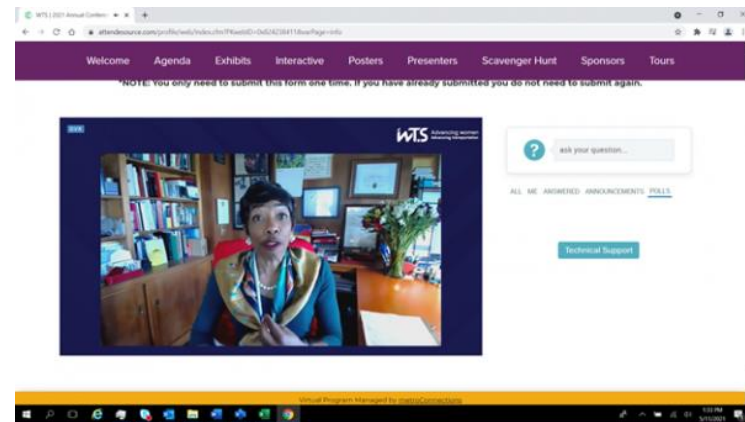


Photo 47 - WTS Annual Conference Keynote Speaker

U.S. Department of Transportation Panel

The U.S. DOT panel included an impressive lineup of speakers:

- Polly Trottenberg, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
- Stephanie Pollack, Acting Administrator, Federal Highway Administration
- Bradley Mims, Deputy Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration
- Meera Joshi, Deputy Administrator, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Paula Hammond, Chair of WTS International, moderated the panel.

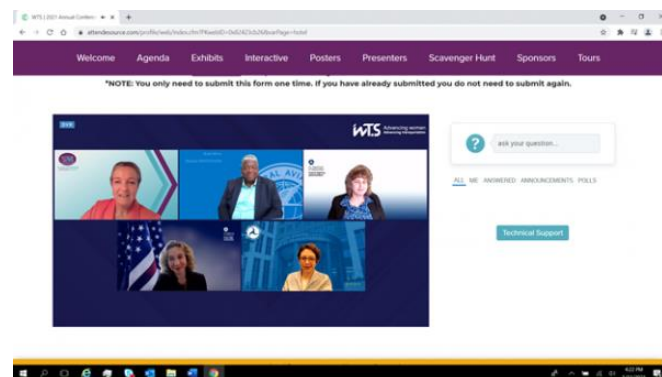


Photo 48 - WTS Annual Conference DOT Panel

Each panelist spoke about their individual priorities for their respective roles. There was an overall focus on equity within transportation policies and projects, and they agreed on the importance of considering climate impacts when making transportation design decisions. A couple of the panelists also discussed the value of having a more diverse workforce citing that there are insufficient numbers of women and people of color working within the department.

All of the panelists expressed enthusiasm for their roles, especially considering how infrastructure is a clear priority for President Biden. They were also grateful to be part of the WTS community.

Connected Autonomous Vehicles

Dalia Leven, national planning lead for transit and shared mobility at Cambridge, presented on Connected Autonomous Vehicles (CAV). CAVs are expected to improve roadway safety by eliminating human crashes which are 80% of traffic-related incidents, lower transportation costs, increase roadway capacity, improve mobility for all, and reduce environmental impacts of driving.

Leven's presentation focused on setting a framework for approaching CAVs within transit agencies by engaging the audience with stimulating questions: How do CAVs impact public transits? Will CAVs be owned by public agencies or private individuals/corporations? When will they arrive and will they be comfortable for everyone? Will they be affordable? Who will be able to use them? Will the use be more rural or urban? Will it push people away from the cities and into the suburbs and hence have unintended consequences?

Lessons in Community Engagement

Community engagement ensures that transportation projects and policies meet the needs and values of the community. However, community engagement can often exist in a vacuum—limited to already engaged community members. Public meeting times, locations of public meetings, languages/mediums in which information is provided, and messaging outlets are factors that potentially limit who participates in the public process. The pandemic, with the resulting necessary limits on public involvement to virtual forums, further exacerbated limitations and imbalances in engagement.

Fortunately, the challenges we faced in 2020 led many agencies and organizations to think outside the box and initiate proactive and more inclusive engagement strategies showcased at the WTS-I Annual Conference. Here are a few of those engagement strategies—both old and new—with different twists to elevate involvement from more diverse community members:

- Track social media analytics and provide targeted content in harder-to-reach areas.
- Send SMS messages within a geofenced area that informs people they passed an upcoming project site, asks their opinion, and provides information to stay engaged in the process.
- Collaborate with bilingual community members to help get messages out (this is in addition to providing translators at meetings and hosting translated materials).
- Have staff members go door-to-door, to church/community meetings, canvas, or distribute flyers to meet people where they are.
- Use the mail—it still works!
- Maintain relationships with community leaders to help spread the word.
- Host focus groups or one-on-one meetings to connect with people on an individual level.
- Track who you are reaching by having people who attend meetings or provide input sign up for updates and include their address or zip code (this helps identify areas you are not reaching).
- Ask people directly where/when/how they would like to receive information and use that input to craft your outreach plan.

In addition, panelists provided insight on communication strategies that ensure meaningful engagement however you're able to reach people:

- Engage in two-way conversations and be intentional about immediately addressing negative comments in a private chat.
- Ensure the communication loop is clear, telling people what you heard and how you changed the project using that information.
- Use visualization techniques like 3D ocular lenses or video flythroughs to get people closer to the project.
- Host walking or bus tours for specific projects, so people understand project needs and objectives.

The bottom line is that it is imperative for agencies to continuously adapt strategies and then assess their efficacy to build a more inclusive and equitable engagement platform that helps community members feel heard. Conversations—both big and small—go a long way in bringing new people into the public process.

WTS International Chapter Leadership Training

In November 2021, WTS-I held its annual leadership training virtually due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the change, the training was still valuable and productive for many WTS members. Sophie Guiny (Program Logistics Committee Chair) attended on behalf of WTS-DC.

WTS Washington, D.C. Chapter

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