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APRIL 2023 | QUARTER 1

President's Message

Hello Central Florida transportation community,

I am thrilled to share our first newsletter of 2023. This year has been very busy but so rewarding! Your WTS Central Florida Chapter has had a productive first quarter, thanks to our dedicated leadership, members, sponsors and supporters.

We have held our Open House, first Quarterly Program, TransportationYou E-Week event, Coffee and Conversations event, 5th Annual Swings for Scholarships, and our General Membership Meeting + Happy Hour. This is just the tip of the iceberg as we have so many events we are working on to better serve the chapter's 190+ members.

Most recently, we held our annual A Walk in Her Shoes event, where we saw our highest attendance in the event's history! We are thankful for the overwhelming response and support from sponsors, members and our colleagues and friends.

If you are feeling inspired to maximize your membership, there are plenty of opportunities to get more involved. If you or anyone you know likes budgeting and numbers we are looking for our next treasurer to shadow our current treasurer. Reach out for more details.

We invite you to join us on this journey of advancing women in the transportation industry. You can support by [becoming a sponsor](#), [attending an event](#) or simply following and engaging with us on [social media](#).

We appreciate your support and look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event!



Ivannia Bok
2023 President, WTS Central Florida



Welcome to our New Members!

Joined December 2022

- Jamison Edwards, Central Florida Expressway Authority
- Annemarie Byrnes, Promatech, Inc.
- Kimberly Camilleri, HNTB
- Kirsten Berg, Mead & Hunt, Inc
- Carol Scott, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
- Stephanie Sharpe, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise

Joined in January 2023

- Shemania Accema, Student at University of Florida
- Liz Clancy, Kimley - Horn and Associates, Inc.
- Nicole McLaughlin, DRMP
- Morgan Morris, Student at University of Central Florida
- Gisele Ribeiro Passalacqua, WSP USA
- Carrie Sarver, Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority
- Jennifer Triana, TopoDOT



› Central Florida

Advancing women
Advancing transportation

CHECK OUT RESOURCES
AVAILABLE TO WTS MEMBERS

Home-MyWTS Communities
(wtsinternational.org)

Welcome to our New Members!

Joined in February 2023

- Corrina Greico, Traffic & Mobility Consultants, LLC
- Mindelyn Heath, AECOM
- Sakoat Hossan, WSP USA
- Shavonne Hoyte-Rene, Stantec Consulting, Inc.
- Marc Hustad, VHB
- Lexi Johnson, Protean Design Group
- Michelle Kendall, WSP USA
- Marjorie Kirby, Ardurra
- Erynn Schroeder, Kittelson & Associates
- Kenza Sersouri, KEITH
- Natalie Shortt, Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.

Joined in March 2023

- Daniella Almanza, Transystems
- Andres Monsalve, The Balmoral Group
- Christine Kefauver, Brightline
- Siera Miller, Anthem Consulting Engineers
- Richard Ramoutar, Anthem Consulting Engineers
- Laura Campos, HNTB Corporation
- Bianca Diaz, HNTB Corporation
- Rosy Lu, WBQ Design & Engineering, Inc
- Colette Moss, DRMP

Joined in April 2023

- Hannah Dale, HNTB Corporation
- Demily Santiago, Traffic & Mobility Consultants, LLC



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(wtsinternational.org)

Member Updates

WTSCFL Secretary Sarah Larsen Welcomes Newborn James Fella

Join us in congratulating our Secretary and new mommy Sarah Larsen. She and her husband welcomed their baby boy, James Alexander Fella on January 28!

Sarah, we can't wait to meet your new little one and welcoming him to the WTS family. Sending you all wishes for health and happiness.

The adventure has begun!



Member Spotlight



Azza Alisawi

Traffic Engineer

Traffic & Mobility Consultants

Let's Get to know our Student Chapter Members. This quarter, we are pleased to introduce you to Azza Alisawi. She led the charge to establish the UCF Knights Student Chapter of WTS, is currently serving as the Student Chapter president for the 2022-2023 academic year and was a recipient of the Frankee Hellinger Leadership Graduate Scholarship. Originally from Jordan, Azza is working to obtain her Master's in Civil Engineering with an emphasis in Transportation Systems Engineering from the University of Central Florida (Go Knights!), while working as a Traffic Engineer at Traffic & Mobility Consultants and serving as a Transportation Research Assistant.

We were able to connect with Azza and learn more about her professional journey.

What is your favorite mode of transportation?

My preferences depend on various factors like weather, distance, time, and desired level of comfort, but my ultimate favorite mode of transportation is the bicycle especially for short-distance commute, and that is due to bicycles being easy to carry, the most environmental-friendly, the most cost-efficient mode, and of course for its great health benefits.

How did you become interested in a career in transportation?

A career in transportation equips you with magnificent abilities to reshape our communities daily and have a real impact on people's lives, while considering preserving nature. The United States has the best infrastructure in the world and what makes us the greatest nation is our highly developed network of roadways, railways, seaports, and airports. Additionally, being one of the most vital growth drivers, our policy makers have always put huge emphasis on the need to continuously expand, improve and innovate when it comes to employing the new technologies necessary to increase transportation efficiency, comfort, and capacity.

Member Spotlight

Azza Alisawi

Traffic Engineer
Traffic & Mobility Consultants

Congratulations on being the founding president of the UCF chapter. What were some challenges in getting the chapter established and how did you overcome them?

Being the founding president only gives me the honor of working with some of the best talents and future industry leaders who will soon graduate and pick up the baton. The challenging part was attracting students who are willing to take on the responsibility of strengthening the transportation industry and advancing transportation innovation.

What advice do you have for other students interested in transportation?

Seeking a rewarding transportation-related career starts with joining a professional organization that provides the students with countless learning opportunities and also the ability to connect with industry professionals. From logistics to transportation, from autonomous driving to emerging mobility choices, and from pedestrian safety to airport security, the options are endless and the opportunities are vast.

What are your plans after graduation?

Being a life-time learner, I will continue what I do best - research, innovation, and application. I will also consider kicking off my professional career to gain the qualifying experience needed to obtain my PE License in Transportation.



Member Spotlight



Heather Roberts

Regional Business Manager
Kimley-Horn

Heather Roberts, the 2023 Director of Programs, is this quarter's professional member spotlight.

When a WTSCFL board vacancy occurred at the first of the year, Heather, a programs committee member at the time, volunteered to step up. The board unanimously approved her as the Director of Programs. Her passion for finding the right solution for each need is evident in the seamless transition for the chapter during this process.

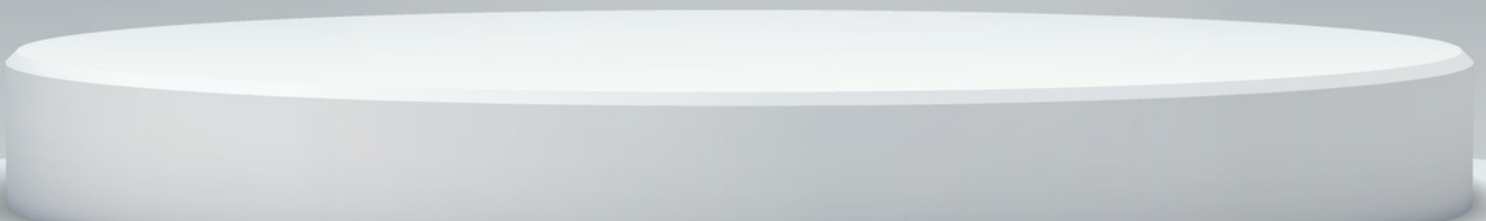
In addition to being a long-time member of WTSCFL, Heather currently serves as a Regional Business Manager for Kimley-Horn to support business operations for Florida offices. She has 15 years of professional experience including work focusing on traffic studies, operations, signal design, signing and pavement markings, and managed lanes. Heather is a Florida native, received her B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of Florida, and the proud mother of two.

What do you value most from your WTS membership?

I really enjoy the interaction with other transportation professionals. I've always felt at home attending WTS events, and have made so many wonderful connections along the way!

What is the best career advice you have ever received?

Follow your passions. Work doesn't feel as much like work if you're able to focus on topics that are important to you and spend time with people that you enjoy.



Member Spotlight

Heather Roberts

Regional Business Manager
Kimley-Horn

What is something that most people don't know about you?

I love to dance! I spent years dancing ballet, tap, and jazz as a child. In high school, I performed during every half-time show twirling flags and spinning wooden rifles. I even joined a student-led dance organization in college. Next up, ballroom lessons and Irish dancing!

How did you become interested in transportation?

Even before I began driving, I was the designated co-pilot. My mom relied on me to find the signs and route us to our destinations, long before Mapquest and GPS were available! When I began driving myself, I became fascinated with driver behavior and wanted to understand more about how traffic backups occurred. Traffic engineering seemed like a perfect fit.

What is your favorite mode of travel?

Around here, I usually stick to cars and planes. But I loved riding the trains when I travelled abroad, and am very excited about having more rail options in Florida.

How do you balance a successful career and other aspects of your life?

Sometimes you have to take it day by day (or minute by minute). I think it's really important to give yourself some grace and focus on the successes, instead of the things that you haven't had a chance to accomplish yet. For me, it's also critical to have people you can lean on both at work and at home. You support people, let other people support you too!



If you know someone that we should spotlight in our next newsletter, please reach out to WTSCL's Director of Membership, Kathrin Tellez at k.tellez@fehrandpeers.com

Upcoming Events

Register at wtsinternational.org/chapters/central-florida/events



Please Join

**ASHE CFL, FES CFL, WTS CFL and ASCE EWRI
at the 2nd Annual**

SINKHOLE DE MAYO CHARITY FUNDRAISER

Event Details

Registration: 5pm at Barley and Vine
Barley and Vine: 5:00pm-6:30pm
Sideward Brewing: 6:30pm-7:30pm
MilkHouse: 7:30pm-8:45pm
Sportstown: 8:45pm-9:30pm

Supporting



**CHILDREN'S SAFETY VILLAGE
OF CENTRAL FLORIDA**

Thursday, May 18th, 2023

5:00 pm to 9:30 pm

Donations

Event Registration \$40 (members): Includes 2 drink tickets plus special activities (prizes for the winners!).

Event Registration \$50 (nonmembers): Includes 2 drink tickets plus special activities (prizes for the winners!).

Event Sponsor opportunities available! See event email for more information.



Recent Activities

Emerging Professionals Program

Our chapter's 2022 Emerging Professionals Program was a great success.

We celebrate the industry leaders who came together to mentor and guide emerging professionals, as well as those who took the initiative to receive professional development.

Special thanks to Lilli Smith for organizing a successful program!



Recent Activities

Quarter 1 Program Highlights Transportation Resiliency into the Future

On February 14, we enjoyed a packed house for our February program, "Transportation Resiliency into the Future!"

Thank you to our panelists: Brenda Defoe-Surprenant, Jennifer Carver and Sarah Kraum, and our moderator Alison Stettner, for facilitating an informative and engaging discussion on the impact extreme weather events, rising sea levels and climate change can have on transportation infrastructure.



Special thanks to our program committee! From managing registration, to securing sponsors, to designing the presentation deck, to preparing and tracking attendees' professional development credits, our program committee and their teams worked together and executed a successful event: Heather Roberts, P.E., Amy Windom, Kelli Muddle, Dawn Ratican, Ivannia Bok, PMP®, Nicole Jeffers, and Barbara Stiles, FSMPS, CPSM.



Recent Activities

Engineers Week Girl Day Event with Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE)

On February 23, Engineers Week Girl Day, WTS Central Florida teamed up with Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) to host an exciting event aimed at introducing girls to engineering. We invited and transported 20 female students and their teachers from Seminole County's Milwee Middle School's Pre-Engineering Magnet program to FTE Headquarters at Turkey Lake Plaza for an afternoon of engineering-related activities.

During the event, the students got a behind-the-scenes look at the Traffic Management Center (TMC), discussed road safety with FTE staff, participated in a demonstration of Impervious pavement, learned about transportation-related careers, and even competed for prizes in "Engineering Jeopardy". It was an amazing opportunity for the students to get hands-on experience and explore the world of engineering.

WTS Volunteers Karen Van den Avont and Emily Wigle from Protean Design, Baily Hitt and Stephani Morales From Keith, and Negaar Minaei from CDM Smith all participated in helping run this event.



These students, volunteers and staff worked together to address and explore various educational transportation aspects. Some of these included a tour of the Traffic Management Center (TMC), a discussion of road safety with FTE staff, a demonstration of Impervious pavement, and an introduction to transportation-related careers.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this event a success, especially the staff at FTE and the dedicated teachers at Milwee Middle School. We're already looking forward to next year's Engineers Week Girl Day!

Huge thank you to the Florida Turnpike Enterprise staffer who supported the event: Chelsea Mason Todd Bettger, Noelle Warren, Gabbi Rickstrew, Tiffany Crosby, Ellie Wilson, Teresa Price, Justin Relitz, Dalita Singh (Traffic management center), Kelly Kinney (road ranger), Adriana Kerwin (pavement).

Recent Activities



2023 Swings for Scholarship Raises Funds For Transportation's Future

On March 3, our chapter hosted its annual Swings for Scholarship fundraising event at TopGolf in Lake Mary, Florida.

Over 100 transportation industry professionals participated in this interactive networking opportunity to socialize with peers, while raising over \$10,000 in funds to provide scholarships for future transportation professionals! Notably, most attendees played the golf driving range game, however a few attendees simply enjoyed the food and weather, and supported their teammates as spectators.



Spring Members Happy Hour at Delaney's!



Check out more event photos on our [Photo Gallery](#)

Special Thanks to our
2023 ANNUAL SPONSORS

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KSM **Kimley»Horn** **ENGINEERING AND TESTING**
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WTS Advancing women
Advancing transportation
Central Florida

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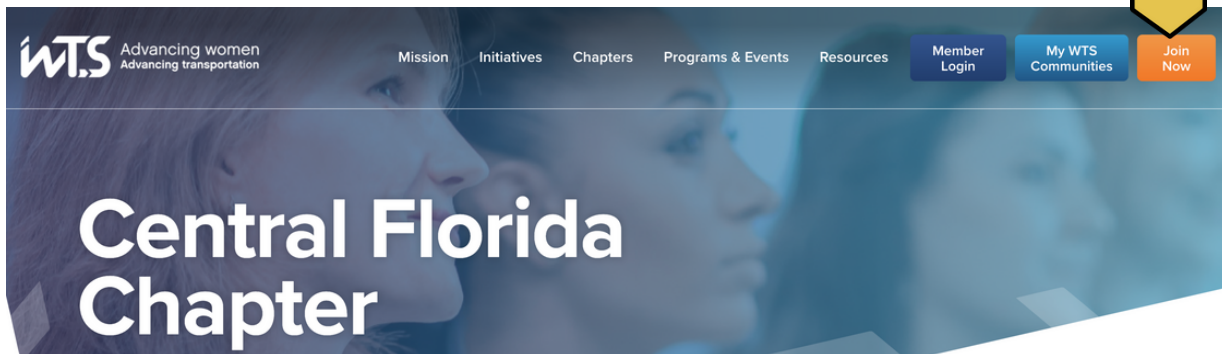
We would love to have you join us! To start your membership with WTS, go to our website using the QR code or URL below.

SCAN QR CODE OR USE URL:

<https://www.wtsinternational.org/chapters/central-florida>



CLICK ON JOIN WTS BUTTON
(UPPER RIGHT CORNER)



Follow us on Social Media

Stay connected with all things WTS Central Florida by following us on all social media. Be sure to use the hashtag #WTSCFL in any of your chapter- related posts! We love to see and share your WTS content.

- WTSCFL Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/wtscentralflorida>
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