

Message from the President

Suzanna Set, P.E., PTOE

Texas Department of Transportation – Houston District, WTS Houston President



Greetings WTS Members and Friends-

Happy Holidays! We had another productive year, thanks to our dedicated leadership, members, sponsors and volunteers. As I look back in 2023, I am proud of our chapter's success and look forward to our opportunities in 2024.

I am grateful for all the corporate sponsors' generous and continuous support. It is with your support that allow us to provide high-quality programs to our members, scholarships to future transportation professionals, and networking opportunities to connect members to industry leaders. Thank you for all you do to advance women and advance transportation. This annual report not only highlights our chapter's accomplishment in 2023 but also serves as a reflection of your support.

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as your 2022-2024 Chapter President, and I look forward to welcoming and supporting our 2024 Board of Directors.

Happy Holidays to you and your family,

Suzanna

President, WTS Houston Chapter

2023 Young Engineer of the Year Event



2023 Mentorship Graduation



2023 WTS Houston Scholarship & Awards Gala



WE ARE WTS HOUSTON...



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Texas Department of
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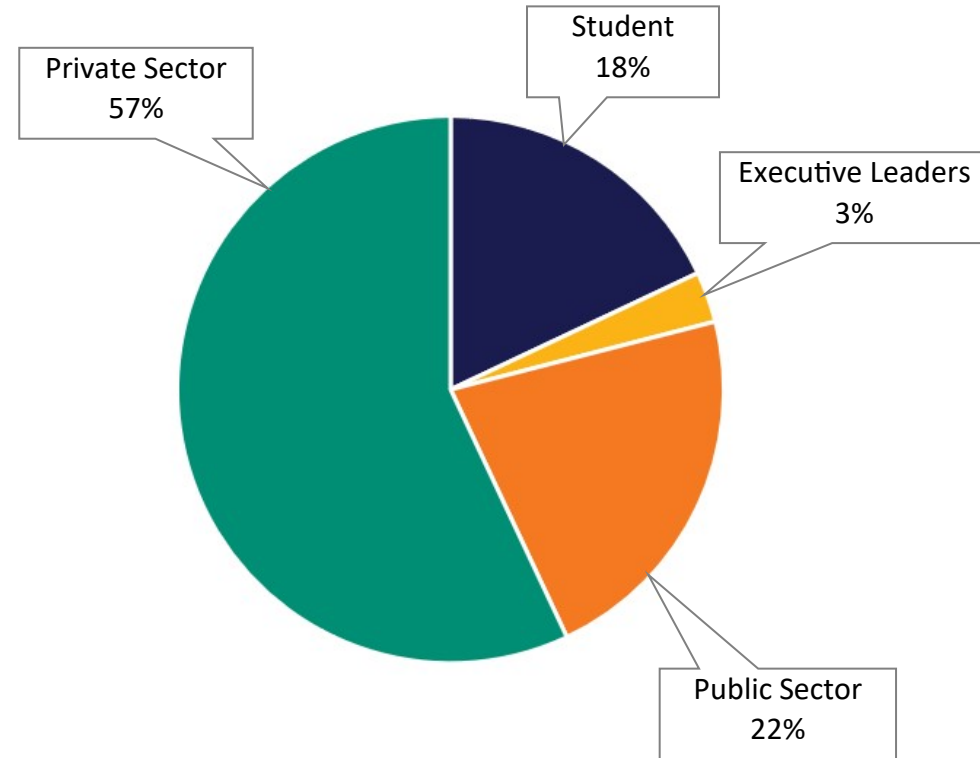
Director of Student Relations

Ashley Jones, RPA
ASH&E, L.L.C.

Region Council Representative - Chair

Angela McMurray, AICP
ISANI Consultants

WTS Houston Membership Profile



2023 Event Highlights

WTS Houston Professional Development and Diversity Event

The WTS Houston Professional Development and Diversity event took place on September 7th. This half-day event started with the small business roundtable followed by a panel discussion about shaping diversity in the workplace, a conflict resolution workshop and successfully ended with the Women on the Move celebration.

The first ever WTS Southwest Region Small Business Round Table was a hit! We had representation from our Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana Chapters. The group discussed the many struggles of growing a successful business, but more importantly we shared solutions. A big Thank You to all that attended and to our moderator Ms. Odessa Phillip from our WTS Foundation board. We are looking forward to hosting similar events in the future.

The Diversity Committee had the pleasure of discussing “Shaping Diversity in the workplace” as part of the WTS Houston Professional Development and Diversity half day event. Our distinguished panelists, Veronica Davis, PE, and Kim Mickelson, AICP, JD, shared experiences on their journeys as women in the workplaces. The discussion included their individual approaches that continues to enhance productivity and growth in the workplace, as well as working with different generations towards sustainable inclusion and equity. It was an invigorating topic that generated some dialogue with participants.



We wrapped up the day with our second annual Women on the Move event where we celebrated three recently promoted leaders in our industry, Amanda Austin, Angela McMurray and Ujari Mohite.

Women on the Move Honorees



Amanda Austin, P.E.
Roundabout and
Alternative Intersection
Design (RAID) Lead at
TxDOT



Angela McMurray, AICP
Director of Environmental
Services at ISANI



Ujari Mohite
Chief Transit Oriented
Development
Program Officer at
METRO



MENTORSHIP PROGRAM



Kick-Off



Graduation

By Victoria Mota, TEI Planning + Design, WTS Mentorship Chair

The WTS Houston Chapter's Mentorship Program is in its sixth year with eighteen mentors and mentees in this year's program. The program focuses on professional development and growth for all participants, mentors and mentees alike. Mentees and mentors were paired based on professional interests and career focus areas. Events included career development panels and monthly one-on-one lunches with mentors and mentees.

Highlighted events included discussions and panels focusing on specific professional development topics. In June, the Mentorship Program hosted a Career Panel which featured ReShane Dawn-Fowler (Ardurra), Anita Hollmann Matijcio (HGAC), and Giti Zarinkelk (Zarinkelk Engineering Services). The panelists highlighted the importance of work/life balance and setting boundaries with your boss and colleagues. In July, the mentees learned about Self-Advocacy and Salary Negotiation with a panel featuring Liza Amar (CDM Smith), Paula Ikpatt (HNTB), and Stephanie Anderson (Gradient Group). At this event, mentees learned tips to negotiate salary and how to increase their confidence in the workplace. In October, the final panel centered around project management with panelists Ashley Purkey (Half), Blanca Obregón (TranSystems), and Brenda Bustillos (TxDOT).

Other events from this year included happy hour, small group meetings with multiple mentoring pairs, and an Escape Room. The program wrapped up in October an end-of-year celebration in November, including the program's alumni at William Price Distilling Company. Thank you to all the mentees and mentors for your commitment to the program this year!



Career Panel

Girls in STEM Conference

By Farah Anwar, Jacobs, STEM Chair

WTS Houston participated in GirlStart's annual **Girls in STEM** conference was held at Alief Taylor High School on Saturday, October 14th, 2023. STEM Committee Chair **Farah Anwar** led the effort and was joined by chapter members Suzanna Set, Yvonne Hernandez, Fabiola Dagrín, Michel Maksoud, Youssaira Belmokadem, Tania Acosta, Marisol Ponce, Jenni Kimbell, Deepak Sampath Kumar and Robert Powers who volunteered to help.

We presented a workshop titled "**Exploring Roadway Elements: Intro to Transportation Engineering**," where students were given an overview of transportation engineering and introduced to two of the basic elements of roadway design: signage and pavement markings. Students learned about the various types of signs and pavement markings and the meaning, purpose, and importance of both. After the presentation, each student applied their understanding of these roadway concepts in two hands-on activities: an individual activity where each student matched the colors and words to the correct signs and a paired activity where students worked together to cut and paste the corresponding signage and pavement markings onto roadway scenarios that were laid out.

We presented two sessions during the conference – one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Each session was attended by 10-20 girls from 6th – 8th grade, otherwise known as Junior Explorers. Both sessions were interactive and hands-on. We kept the students engaged and involved throughout the sessions by asking questions and encouraging their participation by passing out traffic sign-themed stickers as well as mini traffic cones and construction hats as prizes. Their major take-aways were:

- Signs have code names (i.e. Stop signs are R1-1)
- Engineers must refer to manuals/codes like the MUTCD when placing signs and markings
- The shape and color of signs matter

Our second year in a row participating in the STEM conference was a success! Both students and volunteers enjoyed themselves and had a great time. A big thank you to all volunteers and to both WTS and GirlStart for their commitment to the next generation of women in STEM. We hope to keep supporting these initiatives by continuing to work with organizations like GirlStart in the future!



ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP & AWARDS GALA

2023 WTS Houston Scholarship Winners

HELENE M. OVERLY MEMORIAL

Disha Chatuvedi
Texas A&M University

LEADERSHIP LEGACY

Olajumoke "Lizzy" Omosebi
Texas Southern University

SHARON D BANKS MEMORIAL

Dorimekka "Dori" Nichols
Texas Southern University

MOLITORIS LEADERSHIP

Kameelah Muhammad
Texas Southern University

TRANSPORTATION YOU

Sally Tram-Anh Nguyen
Harmony School of Advancement

By Ashley E. Jones, ASH&E, L.L.C. Director of Student Relations

Our Chapter attracts new professionals to the industry by providing scholarships to women in the Houston region pursuing a transportation-related or STEM program. This year, the chapter awarded a total of five scholarships for a total of \$18,500.00. The TransportationYou scholarship was awarded to **Sally Nguyen**, a Senior at the Harmony School of Advancement, for her commitment to continuing her STEM education. Our collegiate award winners are committed to both maritime and roadway transportation. Three of these scholarships were awarded to students at Texas Southern University: **Kameelah Muhammad, Dorimekka (Dori) Nichols, and Olajumoke (Lizzy) Omosebi**. Molitoris Leadership Scholarship awardee, **Kameelah**, inspired by impacts to the supply chain during the pandemic, is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Maritime Transportation Management and Security. **Dori**, who was awarded the Sharon D. Banks Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship, was recognized for her commitment to the transportation industry and desire to establish a business utilizing her commercial driving abilities. She is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Maritime Transportation Management and Security. Jannet Walker-Ford Leadership Legacy Scholarship is given to a graduate student who demonstrates an interest in innovation in the transportation industry. WTS Houston awarded this to **Lizzy**, who holds both a bachelor's degree in Aviation Science Management and is working on a master's degree in Transportation Planning and Management. The Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship awardee, **Disha Chatuvedi** graduated from Texas A&M University this Spring with her master's degree in Urban Planning.



Advancing women
Advancing transportation
> Houston

ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP & AWARDS GALA

By Ashley E. Jones, ASH&E, L.L.C., Director of Student Relations

The WTS Houston Chapter recognition award and scholarship winners were celebrated on April 6, 2023 at the Westin Oaks in the Galleria. Each year, the Houston Chapter holds the Gala to celebrate our colleagues and scholars that exemplify the core mission of WTS and to raise funds for our Foundation programs. Guests to this year's gala dressed for a roaring '20s good time – the 1920s! – when Americans were starting to take road trip vacations and an investment was made to improve our transportation infrastructure. This year's fundraisers were successful in raising the funds needed for the 2023 scholarship program, as well as adding a new Endowed Scholarship sponsored by **Michel Maksoud, PhD, PE**.

Chapter Awards are presented to recognize the companies and individuals who have made positive contributed to either to the Chapter or to the transportation industry in the Houston region. The employer of the year, **HDR** fosters women leaders through career and leadership development programs, as well as recruiting and mentorship initiatives. We appreciate their leadership within our Chapter and within our industry. This practice supports WTSI's mission to attract, sustain, connect and advance women's careers. **Onyinye Akujuo** of H-GAC was awarded Woman of the Year for her sponsorship of women and fostering their careers in transportation in all the organizations she has worked with. In her acceptance speech, she told us about the mentorship she received when she joined WTS in New York, and how that helped her see other possibilities for her own career trajectory. The Honorable Ray LaHood Award, which recognizes men who advocate for the advancement of women within their own organizations and the transportation industry, was awarded to **Michel Maksoud, PhD, PE**. The Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award was presented to **Veronica Davis, P.E.** to recognize her commitment to diversity and inclusion, celebrating both her contributions at the City of Houston and as co-founder of Black Women Bike in D.C. Veronica was additionally awarded the Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award by WTSI in May 2023. The Innovation Transportation Solutions Award was presented to **TxDOT** for the Regional Express Access Lanes (REAL) Plan, a forward-thinking look at future regional transportation needs and how addressing evolving multimodal transportation needs will ensure safe, equitable, flexible and efficient transit. Two WTS-Houston members were recognized for their contributions to the industry and to the chapter: **Ashley Purkey, P.E.**, of Half (2023 Young Engineer of the Year), and **Thalia Gonzalez P.E.** of Jacobs (Member of the Year).

2023 WTS Houston Award Winners

WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Onyinye Akujuo
Houston-Galveston Area Council

YOUNG ENGINEER OF THE YEAR

Ashley Purkey, PE
Half

HONORABLE RAY LAHOOD

(MAN OF THE YEAR)
Michel Maksoud, PhD, PE
DEC

EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

HDR

ROSA PARKS DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Veronica Davis, P.E.
City of Houston

INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTION AWARD

Houston Regional Express Access Lanes (REAL) Plan
TxDOT

MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Thalia Gonzalez, PE
Jacobs



CELEBRATE WOMEN

2023 WTS International Conference

WTS Houston Chapter had nine members attend the 2023 WTS Annual Conference in Atlanta, GA. The conference theme was **The Great Intersection**, which brought together diverse professionals from across North America to discuss the industry's cutting-edge conversations and most pressing issues.

The conference's keynote speaker was Cassi Chandler, FBI's first African American female special agent assistant director. She was transparent, by sharing many of her personal stories, and provided direct advice for women navigating and wanting to grow each other in corporate culture. Her closing remark on how family is the most important thing resonated with everyone and brought many of us in the room to tears.

WTS Foundation Gala was held at the Atlanta aquarium. It was a night where we celebrated this year's award winners and scholarship recipients. Two of winners are from WTS Houston Chapter! Carolina Graça, our chapter's 2022 scholarship winner, she received the WSP strategic scholarship of \$5,000. Veronica Davis received the WTSI Rosa Parks Diversity Award. Our chapter also received the Gold Level Circle of Excellence, along with all the other Texas Chapters! Congratulations to all the winners



THE GREAT INTERSECTION

EQUITY TRANSPORTATION

2023 WTS Houston Committee Chairs

PROGRAMS CHAIR

Da Li - WSP

CORPORATE PARTNERS CHAIR

Lacey Atkins-Hébert - AtkinsRéalis
Heidi Lanza - STV

SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR

Dani Courtney - HNTB
Youssaira Belmokadem - DEC

DIVERSITY CHAIR

Amma Cobbinah - METRO
Bin Wang - WSP

STEM & TRANSPORTATION YOU

Farah Anwar - Jacobs

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Yahaira Pineda - CP&Y
Maderley Monsalve - CP&Y

COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR

Ashley Pukey - Half Associates
Shenelle Graves - LAN

SOCIAL MEDIA CHAIR

Cristin Emshoff - Baxter and Woodman

WEBSITE CHAIR

Sarah De Moya - HDR

MENTORSHIP CHAIR

Victoria Mota - TEI

NEWSLETTER

Youssaira Belmokadem - DEC
Amber Forrest - RG Miller

FINANCE CHAIR

Yanfen Zhou - Pape-Dawson Engineers
Allison Schaub - Pape-Dawson Engineers

STUDENT CHAPTER CHAIR

Ashley Maggio - Garver
Clarissa Oliveira - WSB

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHAIR

Trinh Hoang - Jacobs
Agueda Guerra - Half Associates
Cristin Emshoff - Baxter and Woodman

2023 PROGRAMS



January	Luncheon	Karen McKinnon, P.E. & Wael Tabara, P.E., Updates on Brazoria County
March	Members Event	Brio Happy Hour
April	Gala	Scholarship & Awards Gala
April	Luncheon	Tina Liu, P.E., Update with Harris County Pct. 3
April	Lattes & Leaders	Tracey Rudder Aping, Williams Brothers
May	Luncheon	Amanda Austin, P.E., TxDOT-Houston, TxDOT's Roundabout Initiative
June	Joint Event	TAG and WTS — Women in Transportation
August	Luncheon	Felicia Harral, P.E., Updates on Calhoun Port Authority
September	Professional Development	Professional Development and Diversity Event
September	Reception	Women on the Move
September	Chapter Meeting	Chapter Annual Meeting
October	Members Event	Mix & Mingle at Kendra Scott
October	Joint Event	Heavy Highway & Transportation Forum
November	Joint Event	ASHE, TexITE, and WTS—Multimodal Transportation Panel
November	Lattes & Leaders	Allie Isabelle, AICP, Houston-Galveston Area Council
December	Members Event	Sponsor Appreciation and Members Only Holiday Reception



CORPORATE PARTNERS

Financial Statement January - October 2023

REVENUE	
Annual Awards Gala	\$28,893.14
Membership	\$2,188.50
Monthly Programs	\$19,718.18
Corporate Sponsorship	\$90,055.73
WTS Foundation Income (Gala Silent Auction)	\$16,965.00
Other	\$251.40
Total Revenue	\$158,071.95
EXPENDITURES	
Annual Awards Gala	\$44,951.19
Operating Expenses	\$5,039.13
Membership	\$1,836.02
Mentorship Program	\$1,902.48
Monthly Programs	\$24,553.33
WTSI Conferences	\$6,6160.34
Corporate Sponsorship	\$17,677.35
Scholarship Outreach	\$1,111.45
Student Chapter	\$495.57
Women on the Move	\$1,604.81
Other	\$971.78
Total Expenditures	\$106,303.45
NET REVENUE	\$57,768.50

TITANIUM

AECOM ARUP BUILDING AMERICA
HDR HNTB Jacobs

PLATINUM

AF AQUINAS & FIELDS stv MBCO
THE RUOS GROUP walter p moore WSP

GOLD

ATKINS CDM Smith DEC
LJA ENGINEERING Riner ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE

AGENCY

Diamond
HARRIS COUNTY TOLL ROAD AUTHORITY HOUSTON PUBLIC WORKS
METRO HOUSTON AIRPORTS
Ruby HOUSTON TRANSTAR Affiliates
Texas Department of Transportation

SILVER

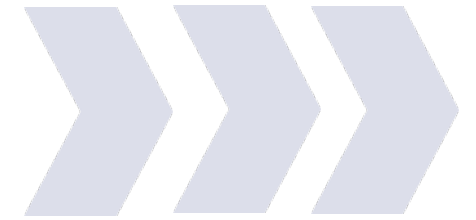
ARDURRA BAXTER & WOODMAN CobbFendley consor
DCCM FREESE NICHOLS halff PAPE-DAWSON ENGINEERS
RABA KISTNER r.g. miller Stantec
STUART CONSULTING GROUP Terracon VSE WOOLPERT

SMALL BUSINESS

CYPRESS ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING GEOTEST THE GOODMAN CORPORATION GRADIENT HOLLAWAY
STEVENS TECHNICAL TRANSCEND tei Zarinkelk WEISSER Engineering & Surveying

IN-KIND

HOUSTON TRANSTAR GULF COAST RAIL DISTRICT



Our corporate and agency sponsors help WTS Houston underwrite programs, STEM events, scholarships and professional development opportunities. Their generous financial support allows WTS Houston to continue to promote our mission and expand our reach in the local transportation industry.

We are thankful to our Corporate Partners Chair, **Lacey Atkins-Hébert**, who is leading the committee to grow and increase our annual sponsorships.

The 2023 WTS Houston Board of Directors wish to thank all of the corporate and agency partners who gave so generously to help our chapter further its mission.