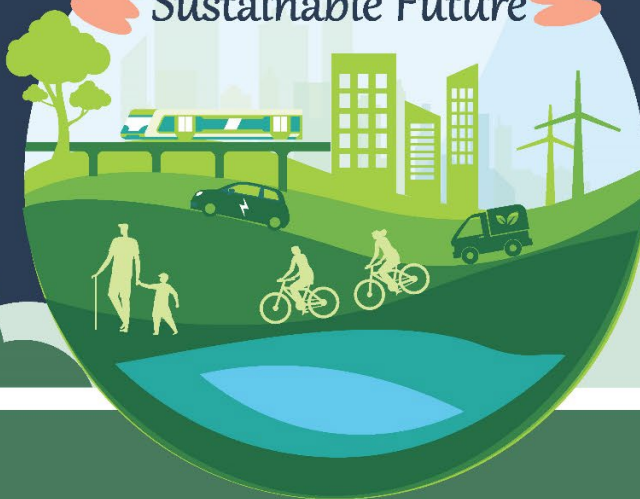




> San Diego

Advancing women  
Advancing transportation

Shaping a  
Sustainable Future



# 2024 WTS San Diego Chapter Annual Awards & Scholarship Gala

October 23, 2024

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# President's Message

What an incredible night this is, gathered here in America's finest city to celebrate the accomplishments and dedication of the finest in our industry. It is truly an honor to stand before you as we reflect on the past year and look forward to the bright future ahead. Thank you all for being here tonight, and thank you for your unwavering support of WTS and its mission.

Tonight's theme, Shaping a Sustainable Future, should resonate deeply with all of us as transportation professionals. We are not just building roads, bridges, or transit systems—we are crafting the very framework that will support healthier, more resilient, and more equitable communities. Sustainability is no longer a buzzword; it's a critical element of every decision, every project. As transportation professionals, we are responsible for shaping the future of mobility, of connecting communities with opportunity, and of ensuring this resilient network can serve the generations to come.

At the heart of ensuring these outcomes is collaboration. Our industry spans a diverse array of professionals—each with their own expertise, perspectives, and ideas. True progress comes when we break down silos, when we invite others to the table, and when we take the time to listen and learn from one another.

That's why WTS plays such a critical role. WTS is not just about advancing women in transportation—it's about advancing the entire industry by ensuring that the best and brightest minds are given the opportunity to lead, contribute, and innovate. We are not just shaping the future of transportation; we are shaping the future of leadership in transportation.

As we work toward sustainability, we must also focus on the sustainability of our workforce. Tonight, we honor the outstanding leaders and rising stars of this industry, and we are proud to support the next generation of talent through our WTS scholarships. These young women will carry the torch forward, and we are committed to empowering them as they take their place in shaping a more sustainable future.



## Cecily Taylor, TE PhD Senior Regional Planner | SANDAG

This journey would not be possible without the collective efforts of so many. First, I want to extend my deepest thanks to the dedicated members of our chapter, especially our volunteers and board members. You are the lifeblood of WTS-San Diego, and your passion for our mission drives our success.

To our corporate sponsors and partners—thank you for your continued belief in and support of our vision. Your commitment to advancing diversity, innovation, and sustainability is what enables us to push the boundaries of what's possible.

And to all of you in this room tonight—our members, our awardees, our colleagues—thank you for your dedication to a better, more sustainable future. Together, we are building something that is bigger than any one of us.

Thank you again for being here tonight, and thank you for all you do to support WTS and the future of transportation. Let's continue to lead with purpose, empower one another, and together, let's build a future that is sustainable, equitable, and filled with opportunity for all.







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Fariba Ramos, Caltrans District 11

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Hannah Berenjfoorosh, Kimley-Horn

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## Scholarship Chair

Janine Andreas, HDR

## Transportation YOU Chairs

Shannon Gonzales, Kleinfelder

Eric Meisgeier, MCTC



# Program

## WELCOME

Dawn Wilson & Morgan Wolfe, Annual Award Gala Co-Chairs

## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Cecily Taylor, President WTS San Diego

## EVENING TOAST

Anna Lantin, HDR

## INTERMISSION / RAFFLE

## GUEST SPEAKER

Lillian Doherty, North County Transit District

## TRANSPORTATION YOU

Dara Braitman & Amanda Olgeirsson  
Committee Members

## GUEST SPEAKER

Denis Desmond, San Diego Metropolitan Transit Service (MTS)

## SCHOLARSHIPS PRESENTATION

Janine Andres, Scholarship Chair  
Marie Lewis Adams, Scholarship Committee Member

## INTERMISSION / RAFFLE

## GUEST SPEAKER

Denis Desmond, Metropolitan Transit System (MTS)

## AWARDS PRESENTATION

Claudia Brizuela & Amy Restelli  
Recognitions Leads

Olivia Lincoln & Melina Pereira  
Diversity & Inclusion Committee Members

## SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Melissa Gomez, Vice President WTS San Diego

## CLOSING REMARKS / RAFFLE







# Guest Speakers



**Lillian Doherty**  
North County Transit District

**Lillian Doherty** is the Director of Planning and Development overseeing a portfolio of transformative infrastructure projects, including 11 transit-oriented development projects, zero emission fleet transition, and environmental compliance services. During her time with District, she has been excited to lead the development and completion of the District's Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, hydrogen development partnership study with SDG&E and others, as well as other studies focused on improving District transit services.

Before coming to NCTD, Lillian served in varying executive functions for the City of Encinitas as the Director of Development Services and as the Director of Infrastructure and Sustainability. During her tenure at the City, the City began construction on transformative projects, such as the Leucadia Streetscape Project and the El Portal Undercrossing. The City also certified its Housing Element for the first time in the City's history.

Prior to working in local government, Lillian served as legal counsel for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) where she advised on key projects such as rebuilding the New Orleans levee system, the Santa Ana River Mainstem Flood Risk Management Project, Whittier Narrows Dam Remediation, and the Section 408 Permit Development Program. In her final 5 years at the Corps' Los Angeles District, Lillian served as the first Chief for the Operations Division, overseeing 16 dams, 61 miles of levee and channel and associated facilities. Lillian graduated from the University of Georgia in 2004 and the Loyola University College of Law in 2007. She currently retains her Georgia Bar Membership in Good Standing.



**Denis Desmond,**  
San Diego Metropolitan  
Transit Service (MTS)

**Denis Desmond** started his career in the transit industry as an everyday San Diego Transit passenger while in high school. He later became a bus driver, and went on to other transit positions in operations, training, scheduling, and supervision. He came to MTS 26 years ago to manage bus service contracts, and has served in the Planning Department since 2004. Denis has been MTS' Director of Planning & Scheduling for the last 12 years. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography from the University of California, Davis.



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# CHAMPIONS OF DIVERSITY

Congratulations to all WTS-IE Scholarship & Award Winners!

# Scholarship



## Janine Andres, Chair

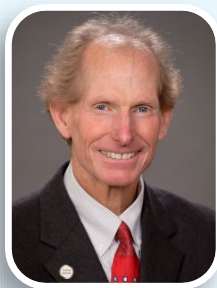
HDR

Janine is a professional engineer with more than 9 years of experience in design and management of rail projects. She is based locally in HDR's Downtown San Diego office and has successfully delivered numerous transit projects locally and nationally. Janine began her career at HDR in 2014 as an intern and has worked on numerous transit projects assisting engineers in various disciplines since then. Janine's technical experience in delivering transit projects at various stages of a project's life cycle allows her to anticipate cross-disciplinary design challenges and provide solutions with the client and end-user in mind. Janine is an avid transit rider and often seeks out safe and efficient public transportation options during her solo-travels. She believes that public transportation empowers people to become more independent and provides them the ability to seek better opportunities in healthcare, education and profession. Janine is passionate about improving the safety and efficiency of our local transit facilities making it a viable option for all San Diegans.

## Selection Committee



**Ashley Marani**  
Nova Services Inc.



**Bruce Urquhart** SDSU  
Faculty, Formerly Caltrans



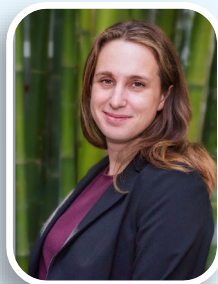
**Cecily Taylor**  
SANDAG



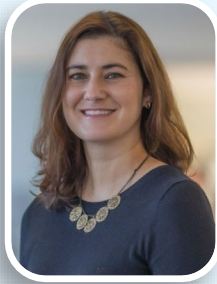
**Jennifer Wagner**  
Mott MacDonald



**Kim Magee**  
HDR Inc.



**Lisa Madsen** Port  
of San Diego



**Marie Lewis Adams**  
HDR Inc.



**Marissa Thomas**  
RailPros



**Stacy Williams**  
Twining, Inc.



# High School



## Orianna Russell



University of Colorado **Boulder**

We are excited to award this year's High School Scholarship Award to Orianna Russell from Point Loma High School! As a high school student, Orianna was very passionate about aviation and aerospace engineering. She earned her Private Pilot License through Delaware State University's Flight Academy and held leadership roles in the Civil Air Patrol. She was also involved in Northrop Grumman's High School Involvement Program where she acted as the project manager for the Cubesat project. Orianna is now pursuing a degree in Aerospace Engineering at University of Colorado Boulder. Congratulations Orianna!

# Undergraduate

## Julia Baxter

**SDSU** | San Diego State University



Julia Baxter is currently a Junior studying Civil Engineering at San Diego State University. Her college pursuits have been shaped by her motivation to improve her community by making public transportation a viable option for commuters. She understands that solving San Diego's transportation problems is no easy feat and requires creative solutions. Julia is a well-rounded student and an active participant in her community. She is a dedicated student who is enthusiastic about the professional development opportunities provided by professional organizations such as ASCE and WTS. Congratulations Julia!

## Nancy Song

UC San Diego



Nancy Song is an Urban Studies and Planning student at UC San Diego and is currently working as a student assistant for Caltrans District 11. She is passionate about understanding, contributing to and shaping the urban landscape. During her participation in UC Berkeley's embARC Summer Design Academy, she found herself intrigued by the vital role transportation plays in shaping our communities and became inspired to create more accessible and interconnected urban environments. Currently, she is making small changes for the UCSD community through the Architecture Club by proposing improvements for pedestrian and vehicular movement through specific sites within the campus. This past summer, Nancy studied abroad in Amsterdam further immersing herself in sustainable urban planning and design. Congratulations Nancy!

# Graduate

Nusheen  
Baradaran

**SDSU** | San Diego State  
University



Nusheen Baradaran is pursuing a Masters degree in Transportation Engineering at San Diego State University. She is a San Diego native who was always fascinated by the growing infrastructure and development in the city. She is an impeccable student who began conducting research in utilizing bi-polymer for eathern construction and slope stability during her undergraduate program. She ultimately would like to pursue a PhD and is working towards her thesis on implemenation of Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) to improve road safety. We are excited to support Nusheen in her academic endeavors!

Katie Persons  
UC San Diego



Katie Persons is the Director of Service Planning at NCTD and is currently pursuing her Masters in Business Administration. She has a strong commitment to improving public transportation and is focusing her studies on leadership development to further advocate for safe, accessible and high-quality transportation in San Diego. Katie believes that having female leadership in transportation provides valuable insights in the needs and perspectives of our diverse community. This has been especially true for San Diego County where female leadership has helped shape the diverse mobility fabric. Congratulations Katie and we look forward to seeing you inspire the next generation of female leaders in transportation!

11

## Gala Volunteers

Brian Pecus, Caltrans  
Megan Cunningham, Dokken Engineering  
Ashley Wiley, SANDAG

### San Diego State University Student Volunteers

Klara Adwer  
Rwzan Adwer  
Tareq Alsharif  
Fadi Atesha  
Virginia Butrus

Jerome Jay Cabanganga  
Nicole Gee  
Chelsea Gutierrez  
Tejaswini Hegade  
Kyle Leja

Viviana Martinez  
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# Awards



## Amy Restelli, *Recognitions Lead*

**KIMLEY-HORN**

Karen Jewel, PE is currently the Corridor Project Director for the Central Corridors at Caltrans District 11, San Diego. She has over 34 years' experience in the transportation industry and is responsible for the Capital Projects development through construction on four major freeway systems in the San Diego Region. Prior to her current roll she was a Project Manager, a Branch Chief in Traffic Operations, and the District Hydraulics Engineer. She started at Caltrans as a student intern before graduating and has built a successful career with the agency.

She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from San Diego State University in Civil Engineering and a Project Manager Certification from Sacramento State University. Karen is a member of San Diego WTS and ITE.



## Claudia Brizuela, *Recognitions Lead*

**CITY OF SAN DIEGO**

Claudia Brizuela is a Senior Traffic Engineer with over 10 years of experience in the City of San Diego. Claudia's professional experience includes managing curb and parking for the City of San Diego's most parking impacted communities, updating parking policy and requirements citywide, long-range mobility improvements in several communities, multimodal corridor studies and planning, and traffic operations analyses. Claudia's more recent efforts include long range planning for the Hillcrest Neighborhood and Mira Mesa Community.



# AWARDS JURY



## **Lima Saft** *SDSU Adjunct Professor & Caltrans District 8*

Lima Saft, a Licensed Civil Engineer with over 30 years at Caltrans, is currently the District 8 Innovation Manager. Dr. Lima Saft has a vast experience in different facets of transportation, including the focal point for Connected Technology and Intelligent Transportation System projects, and most recently as Acting Project Manager on I-405 Design-Build Project in Orange County. She has brought awards and accolades to Caltrans for her research and innovation efforts. Dr. Saft is an advocate for continuous learning. As an adjunct professor of Transportation Engineering at San Diego State University, she teaches upper division undergraduate and graduate courses, readying her students for transportation careers. Lima was named one of 2021 Women of Influence in Engineering by San Diego Business Journal, 2019 Outstanding Engineer of the Year by the San Diego County Engineering Council and a 2017 WTS San Diego Chapter Woman of the Year. She continues to be an exceptional mentor, engineer, and capable leader in her role as the Pacific West Region Council Member and the immediate past President of the San Diego Chapter of WTS.

## **Heather Furey** *San Diego Metropolitan Transit System*

Heather Furey is the Director of Capital Projects and Land Management at San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). Heather joined MTS in 2019 after spending 20 years in the private sector, assisting public clients with planning, design and construction of transportation projects. At MTS, Heather is leading a team of engineers managing and implementing the agency's capital improvement program, state of good repair projects and enhancing MTS owned real estate assets with Transit Oriented Developments. Heather has a BS in Civil Engineering from Michigan State University, is a licensed civil engineer. Upon retirement, Heather and her husband Chuck plan to cruise the world's waterways aboard their sailboat. Practice runs have included two pacific crossings and multiple trips down the Baja Coast.



## **Audrey Porcella** *City of San Diego*

Audrey Porcella is a Grants Program Coordinator for the City of San Diego, where she celebrated her 1 year work anniversary earlier this year. Audrey earned a BS in Social Sciences from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and an MA in Geography from San Diego State University. Prior to the City, Audrey worked at the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) for over 9 years. At SANDAG, she started as a transportation planner, transitioned to a role in land use and housing, and later established SANDAG's Grants Division. Audrey has extensive experience pursuing federal and state grant funding in support of regional planning and capital improvement projects. A recent success was securing \$10 million to support the City's Urban Forestry program and plant over 5,000 trees in disadvantaged communities across the City. Audrey grew up in Orange, CA, and now resides in North Park. Outside of work, Audrey enjoys road cycling, racing her track bike in the San Diego Velodrome, working out with November Project San Diego, and enjoying the local craft beer and restaurant scene.





## Fariba Ramos, Caltrans District 11

Fariba is the Branch Chief of Electrical Design at Caltrans, District 11. She has over 30 years of experience in electrical and communication transportation systems in construction and design. Since 2018, she has delivered over \$200M in transportation electrical projects in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Fariba has extensive construction experience and was the first woman Resident Electrical Engineer in District 11. She holds a degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering from San Diego State University. Fariba has volunteered at Westview High School Robotics Team and currently is WTS San Diego Chapter professional organizational liaison.

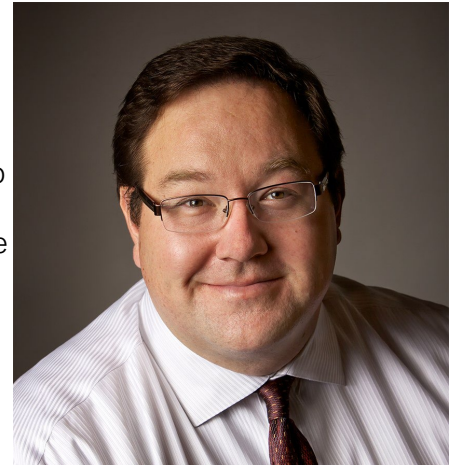


## Katy Cole, Fehr & Peers

Katy is a principal and registered engineer with over 21 years of project management experience, based locally in the Fehr & Peers San Diego office. Katy's professional experience includes managing hundreds of projects across disciplines. Her expertise spans travel demand management plans/quantification, multimodal corridor studies, traffic micro-simulation analysis, transportation master planning, parking studies, access and circulation studies, traffic operations analyses, and transportation impact studies. She has been instrumental in assisting local agencies implement SB 743, and has helped to author transportation study guidelines for many of our local jurisdictions. She is also passionate about multimodal planning and safety and has worked on many local bicycle and pedestrian master plans and safety studies.

## Don Murphy, Arcadis

Mr. Murphy is US Director of Transit Systems and Operations for Arcadis and has over 30 years of experience in the transportation and transportation systems industry. He has managed numerous key transportation projects in the San Diego region ranging from the Escondido Rapid Bus project to his on-going efforts with the new proposed Otay Mesa East border crossing. His areas of expertise include transit technologies and operations, toll systems, and binational Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). He was recipient of the WTS San Diego Honorable Ray LaHood Award in 2019.



## Chris Wahl, HNTB

Chris Wahl is the Planning Director in the San Diego office of HNTB. He has 18 years of experience producing and managing various transportation planning efforts for public and private sector clients throughout California. He currently manages a team of planners who are delivering transformative planning projects for agencies across Southern California, including SANDAG and the Riverside County Transportation Commission..

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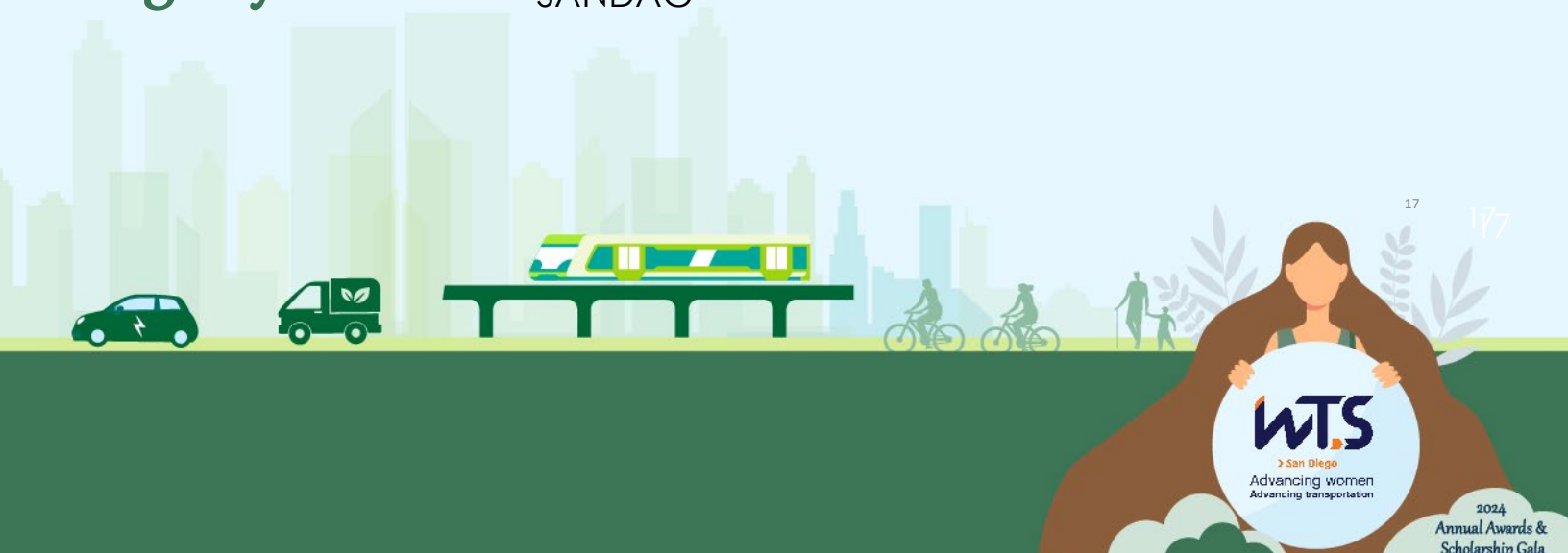
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# Award Winners

## Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award

Kena Teon, San Diego Metropolitan Transit Service (MTS)

## Honorable Ray LaHood Award

Glen Parker, Wood Rodgers Inc.

## Employer of the Year Award

HNTB

## Innovative Transportation Solutions Award

Mobility Evaluation Tool

City of San Diego

## Alternative Modes & Active Transportation Award

The Beach Bug: Pacific Beach Neighborhood

Electric Vehicle Pilot Program

SANDAG, City of San Diego

## Technology for Transportation

Maritime Clean Air Strategy

Port of San Diego

## Member of the Year Award

Dawn Wilson, Michael Baker International

## Pursuit of Excellence Award

Claudia Brizuela City of San Diego

## Woman of the Year Award

Brittany Waddell, Flatiron Construction







# Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award

## Kena Teon



Kena Teon is WTS San Diego's 2024 Diversity Leadership Award Recipient. Kena is promoting diversity, inclusion, and multicultural awareness within the transportation industry. As Grants Administrator for the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), Kena secured nearly \$100 million in grant funding to support capital projects that significantly enhance the quality of life for various San Diego communities. Through her work, she champions projects that improve safety and enhance amenities, particularly in marginalized neighborhoods. Kena actively participates in MTS's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee, showcasing her relentless efforts in shaping policies that promote equity and justice within the transit system.

Beyond her professional endeavors, Kena is an eager advocate for the advancement of women in the transportation sector. Kena dedicated over a decade to fostering professional opportunities for women and minorities through her involvement with the WTS San Diego Chapter. She volunteers as a chapter board member and amplifies initiatives that propel women forward in this traditionally male-dominated field. Her vision is rooted in the pursuit of equality, advocating for equal opportunities, fair compensation, and unwavering respect for all women within the industry. Within her role at MTS, Kena champions the cause of WTS, advocating for the importance of its endeavors, opportunities, and programs.

As chair of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee, she developed programs that empower individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds and ensures their voices are heard in the transportation industry. Kena ensures that the EDI committee is present

in all chapter planning and decision-making through designated liaison roles. Kena sends regular messages to chapter leaders that highlight multicultural holidays or raise awareness of diverse groups that make up our community. Kena collaborates with other committees to promote education and outreach initiatives in local schools throughout the San Diego County, broadening their horizons and opening doors to transportation opportunities. Kena spearheads events to recognize International Women's Day in March and Women's Equality Day in August. Recently, Kena oversaw the coordination of a Women's Equality Day reception, raising the profile of WTS-San Diego and the mission of advancing women.

As a proud Mexican American and individual of Asian heritage, Kena draws her inspiration from her own multicultural background and serves as a valuable role model for young women from diverse backgrounds, inspiring them to pursue their potential and foster self-belief. Kena's unwavering dedication to equity, diversity, and inclusion continues to leave an indelible mark on both the WTS organization and the broader transportation landscape, enriching opportunities and shaping a more inclusive future for all. Kena not only champions initiatives that advocate for women but also exemplifies the importance of cultural awareness in fostering a diverse workforce. Her initiatives serve as a catalyst for change, ensuring a more equitable environment where everyone has the opportunity to succeed and contribute to the transportation industry's progress.

# Honorable Ray LaHood Award



## Glen Parker

Glen Parker is WTS San Diego's 2024 Honorable Ray LaHood Award Recipient. Glen is an unwavering advocate for women in the transportation industry. He consistently goes out of his way to elevate, empower, and endorse female professionals. He takes personal interest in the advancement of his colleagues, actively supporting their career growth through recommendations for promotions and salary adjustments. Over his 20+ years in the transportation industry, Glen has led some of the largest road and highway projects in our region. And although his resume is packed with great successes, his most outstanding achievement is the impact he's made on those that have worked with him. Glen's management style is characterized by his deep awareness of the challenges women face in the industry, enabling him to create an inclusive environment that fosters professional development and success for the women employees on his teams.

Glen made significant contributions to the transportation field by advocating for and mentoring women in key positions within his organizations. He led the development of a training curriculum for engineers with 0 to 3 years of experience at Wood Rogers and focused on developing a curriculum where female engineers are being supported and mentored so that they can grow their careers and stay at the organization and ultimately, the transportation industry. He actively sought feedback from employees to shape a curriculum that addresses the real needs of newcomers, emphasizing confidence and growth in particular for young female engineers. As the president of the San Diego Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA), he dedicated time to mentoring younger members, helping them navigate their careers with practical advice and encouragement.

Glen's impact is far-reaching. He led some of the most significant road and highway projects in our region over his 20+ years in the transportation industry, but his most remarkable achievement lies in the profound impact he has had on those he's mentored. He provides invaluable advice, fostering professional growth and development for engineers, especially women engineers who have worked with him. He advocates for the career advancement of his female colleagues whether its writing letters of support for promotions or organizing meetings to discuss salary increases.

The values he instills in his colleagues resonate throughout the industry, promoting a culture of equity and mentorship. His outstanding contributions not only uplift individuals but also drive change, enhancing the overall landscape of the transportation sector. Through his work and dedication, Glen paves the way for the next generation of leaders, ensuring that diverse voices are heard and represented in the transportation field. His actions inspires many and sets a powerful example for others to follow. Glen's leadership and relentless advocacy transform the opportunities available for women in transportation. By cultivating a network of empowered women, Glen ensures that the future transportation landscape will be one marked by innovation and inclusiveness, ultimately benefiting both the workforce and the communities they serve. This commitment to nurturing talent and championing women in the transportation industry truly embodies the spirit of the Honorable Ray LaHood Award.



## Employer of the Year

HNTB Corporation stands out as a leader in the transportation and infrastructure sector, boasting over 6,000 employee-owners dedicated to the nation's most significant infrastructure projects. A hallmark of HNTB's success is its commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace, particularly for women in transportation. The firm has established robust initiatives that promote recruitment, retention, and advancement of women at all levels, as evidenced by the impressive representation in management teams—60% of the San Diego Office Management Team and 72% of the West Division Management Team are female. HNTB's focus on employee satisfaction is reflected in its low staff turnover rate of less than 5%, attributed to career advancement and learning opportunities and a healthy work-life balance.

HNTB continuously supports WTS in its mission to advance women in transportation across all employment levels, exemplified by the annual Platinum sponsorship and participation in local events like the Annual Awards Dinner and Bowling Fundraiser. As a WTS Trailblazer Corporate Partner, HNTB leaders, including Mary Jane O'Meara and Ronnie Hakim, have been appointed to the WTS International Chair's Advisory Council, while others serve on the International and Foundation Boards. The team has also received numerous WTS awards, and local staff like Pamela Zazueta and Dara Braitman contribute as non-voting board members on committees. Vice President Tricia McColl, the office's most senior Project Manager, was honored with the local chapter's first lifetime achievement award in 2022.

HNTB actively supports women and families through comprehensive benefits, including financial assistance for fertility treatments and adoption processes and providing nursing equipment for new mothers. By emphasizing skill rather than gender, HNTB often forms all-female project teams and provides students with hands-on experiences, showcasing its dedication to fostering the next generation of professionals. Through partnerships with organizations like WTS, HNTB continues to champion the advancement of women in transportation, encouraging mentorship and community involvement among its accomplished female staff.

HNTB is committed to promoting from within, leveraging a diverse workforce across various geographies and markets to enhance a tradition of engineering excellence. The inclusion of individuals with different cultures, backgrounds, and beliefs fosters innovative solutions that drive our success. In California and the Western United States, Michelle Dippel, West Region President, plays a pivotal role in strategically overseeing the growth of the San Diego office, which in turn creates more opportunities for women within HNTB. Notably, the West Division Management Team is comprised of 72% women, highlighting HNTB's commitment to gender diversity in leadership positions.

HNTB demonstrates a strong commitment to professional development through challenging assignments, training opportunities, and support for participation in professional organizations. HNTB's mentorship program plays a crucial role in employee development by promoting goal setting, career planning, and networking opportunities. Through a mentor/mentee-driven approach, the program fosters camaraderie and inclusion while developing emerging leaders. Locally, the Emerging Professionals group, which consists of 50% female staff, provides a platform for future leaders to share insights and receive guidance from experienced professionals.

WTS San Diego is proud to present the Employer of the Year award to HNTB as they demonstrate leadership in the transportation industry through a steadfast commitment to diversity, inclusion, and employee satisfaction. With impressive representation of women in management and a focus on career advancement, HNTB exemplifies the values that support its employees but also the broader mission of advancing women in transportation.



# Innovative Transportation Solutions Award

## Mobility Evaluation Tool (MET)

The San Diego Mobility Evaluation Tool (SDMET) is a web-based innovative solution/application powered by ESRI services that automates the Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) screening process, provides a VMT reduction calculator, and delivers an algorithm-generated error-proofed report that streamlines the City of San Diego's process to review development projects. As the first web-based tool of its kind in the region, the tool ensures that new projects are aligned with the city's Climate Action Plan, promoting mobility choices and sustainable practices. The SDMET also enables tracking of a project's compliance with the CCMC regulations, ensuring that transportation equity, accessibility, and sustainability goals are met. By utilizing the tool, developers can align their projects with the program's requirements.

Under the strong leadership and vision of a talented group of local women, the SDMET helps ensure that new projects built in our communities are designed to provide mobility choices and support alternative modes of transportation. Key contributors included policy leaders, visionaries, and technical experts from the City of San Diego (Heidi Vonblum, Alyssa Muto, Maureen Gardiner, Ann Gonsalves, Meghan Lithgow Liz Saidkhanian, and Sameera Rao), supported by the consultant team from Fehr & Peers and Byrne Communications (Katy Cole and Kristen Byrne). The team worked collaboratively to ensure the tool met the needs of various stakeholders including competing needs from various departments, and to guarantee accurate results that align with the City's guidelines.

The intentional outreach efforts educated community members and industry professionals about the significance of transportation, greenhouse gas emissions, and the benefits of promoting non-auto modes of transportation. With its user-friendly interface and adaptability for other jurisdictions, SDMET sets a new standard for transportation analysis, fostering vibrant, walkable, and bikeable neighborhoods while promoting inclusivity and sustainability in urban development.

City of San Diego  
**Mobility Evaluation Tool**  
Understanding the Benefit of Mobility Options

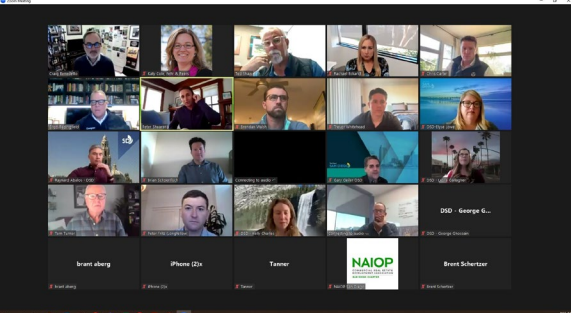
**San Diegans'** quality of life relies on thriving neighborhoods and a healthy environment.

Building projects that are **walkable, bikeable, and close to transit** will help create this vibrant community and will also reduce greenhouse gasses caused by driving.

The **Mobility Evaluation Tool** helps developers analyze important information such as tracking project compliance with the **City's Complete Communities Mobility Choices Regulations** and driving reductions.

Equipped with this data, they can build projects that reduce environmental impacts and **enhance the quality of life** for all San Diegans.

To Learn More  
visit: [sandiego.gov/mobilityevaluationtool](https://sandiego.gov/mobilityevaluationtool)  
email: [sustainability@sandiego.gov](mailto:sustainability@sandiego.gov)





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# Alternative Modes & Active Transportation Award

## The Beach Bug: Pacific Beach Neighborhood Electric Vehicle Pilot Program

The Pacific Beach Neighborhood Electric Vehicle (NEV) pilot program, affectionately known as the Beach Bug, represents a transformative transportation solution that enhances regional connectivity and economic prosperity. Launched in summer 2023, the Beach Bug's success is largely attributed to the collaborative efforts of over 20 women who played key roles in its inception and execution, including but not limited to April DeJesus, Emily Doss, Brandy Sweitzer, Kasey Cross, Janet Bessent, Sam Foulke, and Danielle Kochman from SANDAG, and Krystal Ayala, Claudia Brizuela, Sarah Pierce, and Kelly Terry from the City of San Diego.

The project team took a holistic approach to managing transportation and parking challenges in Pacific Beach while incentivizing parking turnover and supporting local businesses. The Beach Bug not only met the community's needs but exceeded expectations through comprehensive and equitable outreach efforts that reflected the voices of the residents it serves.

As a part of the Mid-Coast Mobility Hub Strategy and SANDAG's first micro transit partnership with a local jurisdiction, the Beach Bug is set to revolutionize transportation in the region. As an essential part of SANDAG's Flexible Fleets initiative, this project aligns with the 2021 Regional Plan vision and supports the City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan goals. By introducing all-electric, low-speed shuttles known as NEVs, it provides residents and visitors with a convenient, efficient, and enjoyable alternative to traditional car travel. By connecting to the regional network at Balboa Transit Station, the Beach Bug reduces the reliance on personal vehicles, alleviates traffic congestion, and improves parking conditions in the area.



Key elements of the Beach Bug project included speed reductions on Balboa Avenue to ensure safe access to the Trolley Station, metered parking, an established a Parking District to support shuttle operations, and a wheelchair-accessible vehicle. Additionally, recognizing the importance of accommodating users without smartphone access, the team collaborated with the service provider to extend the hours of an existing call center used by the City of Chula Vista, thus ensuring that all Beach Bug riders could access the service regardless of technology. The shuttle's ride-hailing feature further exemplifies this inclusive approach, allowing users to flag down the vehicle as it operates.

At its peak, the Beach Bug achieve 5,000+ monthly passengers, highlighting its groundbreaking public acceptance and vital role for the community. The project team's commitment to refining data collection and decision-making processes has ensured a responsive approach to community needs. By establishing standardized performance metrics and fostering community collaboration, the Beach Bug initiative meets its current objectives and promises to maintain its positive influence for years to come. This project is a shining example of how effective transportation solutions can enhance community connectivity and promote sustainability.



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# Technology for Transportation

## Maritime Clean Air Strategy

Maritime Clean Air Strategy – Electrification and Clean Freight Implementation by the Port of San Diego is WTS San Diego's 2024 Technology for Transportation Award Recipient. The Port of San Diego adopted innovative and progressive transportation-focused clean air goals with the adoption of the Maritime Clean Air Strategy (MCAS) in 2021.

By 2030, the Port aims to achieve 100% zero emission (ZE) truck trips serving the Port, 100% ZE cargo handling equipment operating on the terminals, and a 100% ZE Port Fleet, far exceeding the California Air Resources Board requirements. The Maritime Clean Air Strategy represents strategies that are focused on advancing transportation and infrastructure through technology. The Port successfully implemented initiatives such as the arrival of the first all-electric tugboat in the United States that will be fully powered by a shoreside battery energy storage system, adopting shore power for ocean-going vessels, incorporating the first two all-electric mobile harbor cranes in North America, and advancing zero-emission truck implementation. The Port is working with Caltrans on the Harbor Drive 2.0 project to develop a multimodal corridor to improve signal prioritization for reduced truck idling, create specific transit lanes, and improve roadway conditions.

A unique aspect of the Port's electrification efforts is the strong involvement of women across various levels of the project management and implementation process. Nine women serve in cross-functional roles, contributing expertise from planning and technical assistance to environmental assessment and stakeholder engagement. The projects of the Maritime Clean Air Strategy are supported and led by the following women: Renée Yarmy, Maggie Weber, Michelle Giron, Lisa Madsen, Sureena Basra, Natalia Jimenez, Wendy Siao, Anna Buzaitis, and Jolie Gobler. Their collective efforts fostered a collaborative environment that allowed for the Port team members to overcome the challenges inherent in modernizing aged infrastructure and addressing spatial constraints.

The Port leaned into the challenge of electrifying everything as quickly as possible and far ahead of the state's regulatory requirements, and in doing so, has demonstrated that these technologies are possible. The commitment of approximately \$120 million since the adoption of the MCAS in 2021 demonstrates the Port's dedication to the betterment of air quality within the Portside communities and a zero-emission transportation future. By embracing innovative technologies and practicing operational flexibility, the Port of San Diego is setting a benchmark for the maritime sector and offering

ports into the transition to a zero-emission future, reinforcing its commitment to stewardship and sustainable development.





# Member of the Year Award



## Dawn Wilson

Dawn Wilson has been a cornerstone of WTS for many years, embodying the spirit of community engagement and professional excellence. Her poise, active listening, and thoughtful responses make her a role model for attendees at WTS events. Dawn goes above and beyond by volunteering her time, championing initiatives, and chairing key events like the Annual Awards Dinner. Her commitment to fostering a supportive environment for her colleagues, particularly women in the industry, highlights her dedication to promoting their success in taking on leadership roles.

In addition to her impactful involvement with WTS, Dawn is an exemplary leader in regional transportation planning and solution-oriented engineering. She recognizes and seizes opportunities to empower her female colleagues, balancing her professional responsibilities with her role as a full-time mother. Dawn's infectious enthusiasm inspires others to strive for excellence, significantly contributing to the advancement of women in technical and leadership positions. Her passion for teaching and continued learning is evident in her leadership of company-wide committees and her co-presentation of "Grow and Nurture a Diverse & Talented Team" at the WTS-SD July Program. Known for her approachability, patience, and supportive nature, Dawn is a trusted leader among her colleagues.

Dawn's influence reaches beyond San Diego, as she actively collaborates with peers and government agencies throughout California to foster a collaborative environment. Her dedication to promoting quality work and innovative solutions has earned her a loyal client base and a reputation as a trusted advisor.

Dawn has played a pivotal role in the transportation industry through her diverse range of complex projects, including smart technologies, intelligent transportation systems, and multimodal facilities. By championing a holistic approach, Dawn advocates for all users and modes of transportation, ensuring that her projects make a significant impact on communities throughout California. Her leadership on various projects—such as those involving downtown main streets, military installations, and urban developments—reflects her commitment to integrated transportation solutions that enhance accessibility for all modes.

As a leader in the industry, Dawn has leveraged her expertise in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) to shape important policy guidance in alignment with Senate Bill 743, including establishing VMT thresholds for Carlsbad. She has also facilitated training sessions for local and regional agencies, furthering their understanding of sustainable transportation practices.

Through her exemplary leadership, Dawn enhances the visibility and reputation of WTS, showcasing the organization's commitment to collaboration and excellence in transportation planning. She has played a transformative role in revitalizing WTS through her leadership as the Awards Committee Chair, particularly in organizing the Annual Awards Dinner during the challenging transition period following the COVID-19 pandemic. Dawn's unwavering commitment to WTS and her ability to inspire others make her the heart of the chapter. WTS San Diego is proud to title her Member of the Year.



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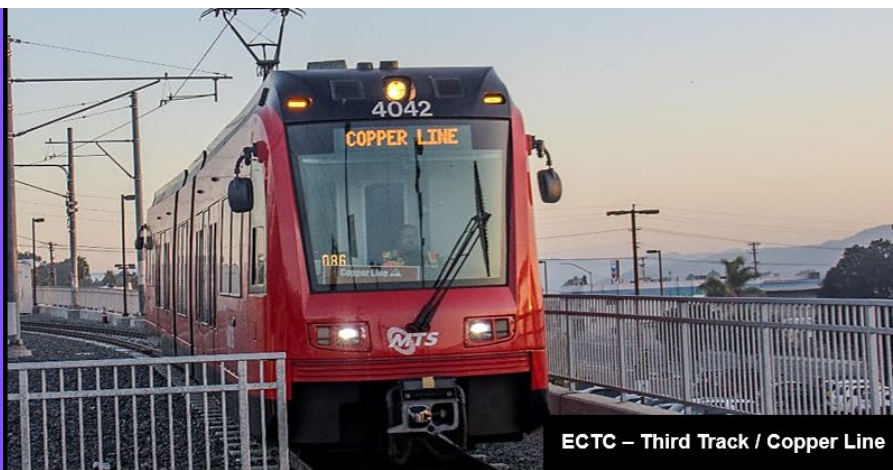
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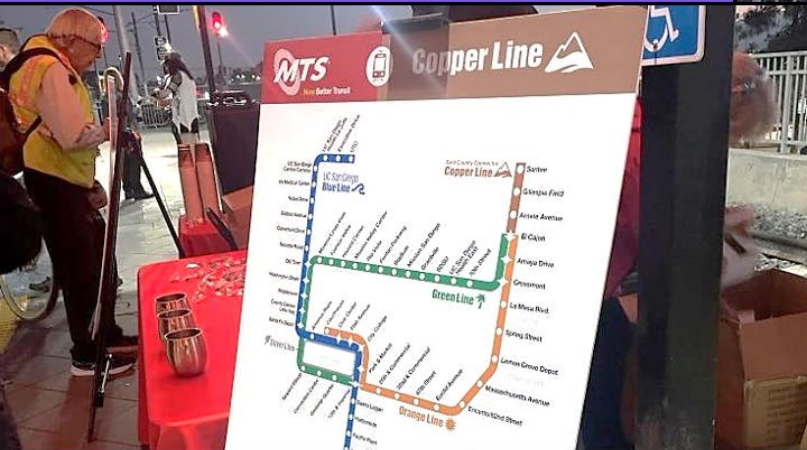


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# Pursuit of Excellence 1

## Award



## Claudia Brizuela

Claudia is a dedicated Senior Traffic Engineer in the City of San Diego's Sustainability and Mobility Department. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from San Diego State University in 2009 and began her career as a Student Intern in the Transportation Department. Over the years, she steadily advanced through various roles in various departments, becoming a licensed traffic engineer and taking on significant responsibilities in managing complex policy updates and community mobility studies.

Claudia began her career conducting traffic operations, safety analyses, and preparing work orders for traffic signs, striping, and pavement markings; then progressed to managing high-profile and complex policy and regulatory updates such as the Transit Priority Area parking standards and several high-profile community plan mobility element updates; now she is the City's lead engineer on curb space management and parking district initiatives. Claudia has mastered this difficult role and her ability to navigate challenging discussions with community members about parking reflects her compassion, empathy, and strong work ethic. She also has a wealth of experience managing consultants, interagency and interdepartmental coordination, and presenting to the public and decision makers.

Claudia's recent efforts in launching "The Beach Bug," a neighborhood electric vehicle initiative spearheaded by a female-led team, demonstrate her dedication to community-led mobility improvements. Claudia coordinated with the Transportation Department to review a speed survey conducted for Balboa Avenue

and, as a deputized City engineer, advocated to implement a speed limit reduction in this location so the NEV can safely access the Balboa Avenue Transit Station and make a key connection to the Mid-Coast Trolley. She also advocated for the shuttle to serve as a connection for students who take the Trolley as part of their commute to and from schools in the Pacific Beach community. Claudia approaches every project, task, and community meeting with complete professionalism, grace, and a positive attitude. She's a role model and leader among the traffic engineers in the Sustainability & Mobility Department and is a trusted staff member by all.

In addition to her technical expertise, Claudia is passionate about promoting equity and inclusivity in transportation planning. As the Recognitions Chair for the San Diego WTS Chapter, she actively mentors young women in the field, advocating for their professional growth and creating pathways for success. She is passionate about equity and inclusivity both within the City of San Diego and in the development of public projects that she manages. Her commitment to mentorship is exemplified by her recent participation in the City of San Diego's mentorship program and WTS Transportation YOU Mentorship program where she traveled to Washington DC with her mentee to educate and empower girls about their opportunities in the transportation industry. Her professionalism, positive attitude, and advocacy for diversity make her a role model within the engineering community, inspiring others to engage in meaningful work in transportation.





# Woman of the Year Award



## Brittany Waddell

Brittany Waddell is a highly accomplished Environmental Manager at Flatiron, recognized for her extensive expertise in environmental compliance management within the construction industry. With over a decade of dedicated service on large-scale civil and utility construction projects, she has developed a remarkable ability to navigate complex regulatory environments.

Brittany actively develops and implements innovative strategies to address environmental challenges while optimizing project efficiency. Her leadership has been crucial in the successful execution of major infrastructure initiatives, including the San Diego International Airport Terminal 1 Expansion and California High-Speed Rail, North Coast Corridor, and West Mission Bay Drive, demonstrating her commitment to achieving compliance without compromising project goals.

Brittany's leadership in managing all aspects of environmental compliance, from water quality protection to biological and cultural resource management, has been instrumental in achieving project milestones while minimizing environmental impacts. She integrates her passion for preserving natural resources with her understanding of construction processes, enabling her to foresee environmental risks and develop solutions tailored to project needs.

As the Regional Lead of Flatiron's Women's Employee Resource Group, Brittany advocates for equal opportunities and professional growth for women in heavy civil construction. Under her leadership, the group has launched initiatives such as mentorship programs, leadership training, and networking events, empowering women within the organization and facilitating their advancement in the transportation sector.

Brittany's influence extends beyond her role at Flatiron. She is actively involved in various industry groups, including WTS San Diego and Los Angeles, the AGC Environmental Committee, and the LiUna Green Committee's Women in Construction Pathway. Through these platforms, she has advocated for policy changes that promote the advancement of women in construction.

In addition to her advocacy work, Brittany is committed to preparing the next generation of industry professionals. As an adjunct professor at the University of San Diego, she teaches courses on environmental assessment practices, bridging theoretical knowledge with practical applications within the construction industry. Her curriculum emphasizes real-world case studies and hands-on exercises, equipping students with the skills necessary to navigate complex regulatory landscapes.

Brittany's leadership and advocacy efforts underscore her commitment to prioritizing environmental stewardship, compliance, and gender equity in the transportation sector. She actively engages with young women at high schools and colleges, providing mentorship and guidance to inspire them to pursue careers in transportation.

Through her leadership, mentorship, and advocacy, Brittany actively shapes a more inclusive and diverse future for the transportation industry with her multifaceted contributions and steadfast support for women.

# 2023 Annual Awards Gala Committee

The Annual Awards Gala Committee is a dedicated team at full year planning and coordinating every part of this evening's event. We appreciate their selfless cross multiple committees who spend dedication to the little details that make this gala a special event for our award winners, scholarship recipients, and guests. Thank you to all our committee members!

## Committee Chairs



Dawn Wilson, Michael Baker International  
Morgan Wolfe, AECOM



## Executive Board Liaison



Eleanor Gonzalez, Caltrans District 11

## Registration & Hospitality



Marie Lewis Adams, HDR

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2024  
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# Thank You