PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
SPRING AHEAD!

Spring has arrived and WTS CT Chapter’s newsletter has a new look! Thanks to our Newsletter Committee Chair Alicia Leite we now have a brighter appearance.

Recently announced, WTS CT Chapter’s 2015 Annual Award Winners are as follows; Rebecca Hall of Tighe and Bond, Member of the Year Award; Sharon Okoye of CTDOT, Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award; Tighe & Bond, Employer of the Year; CTfastrak, Innovative Project of the Year and Vice Admiral Sandra Stosz of the US Coast Guard as Woman of the Year.

We will be celebrating our 2015 Annual Award Winners at a banquet at Saint Clements Castle in Portland on the evening of April 14th where we will also recognize our scholarship recipients and those individuals currently participating in our Mentor Program. We hope everyone can join us for this special event.

It is especially fitting that CTfastrak is our project of the year as the US Department of Transportation continues to increase funding for transit in many cities and states. Providing transportation to all residents is also providing opportunity to people who may not have seen a way forward without the means or access to jobs, education, health care, and even entertainment; giving them the opportunity to fulfill their goals and dreams. Increasing the success of the residents of the State of Connecticut is directly proportional to the continued overall success of our State.

Recognizing and making the most of the opportunities that come our way is something we should all be cognizant of. Some opportunities are time sensitive and only come once in a lifetime, but we have some control over other opportunities. Every day brings a new chance to improve ourselves and the lives of those around us. And of all the opportunities that present themselves during our lifetimes – the opportunity to be kind is one we can all take.
WTS CT Chapter hosted its 2015 Holiday party at Rooster Company in Newington. The night began with a WTS Board Meeting to wrap up 2015 business. The meeting was opened to members interested in learning more about the WTS CT Chapter policies and how goals are set, discussed and agreed upon. Following the board meeting, the room filled with people and wonderful food delicacies. Celebration of the season and the continued success of the WTS CT Chapter’s accomplishments were enjoyed by all. A raffle to benefit the Scholarship Fund consisted of a Rooster Company and Starbucks gift cards. The lucky winners were Susan Baillargeon and Sharon Okoye both from CTDOT. It was a wonderful event to network and taste some amazing southern cuisine. Thanks to everyone who attended and made the night memorable.

MUTCD & TRAFFIC CONTROL
WTS Connecticut hosted a professional development session on the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and how to mitigate liability exposure for accidents associated with construction work zones. This session was presented by Julia Paridis of Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP, WTS Connecticut past Advisory Board Member and currently Diversity Committee co-chair, and legal liaison.

The session began with an in-depth history of MUTCD. The first manual was created on November 7, 1935, and was only 166 pages long. There have been ten editions since, with 2009 being the latest. Today’s MUTCD has over 850 pages with 9 parts broken into sections: general, signs, markings, signals, low-volume roads, temporary traffic controls, traffic controls: school areas, traffic controls: rail and light rail transit grade crossings, and traffic controls: bicycle facilities. Julia, stressed the importance of reading and implementing the standards as outlined in the manual. For example, a standard is always prefaced with “Shall”; guidance for recommended practice would start with “Should”; and an option would have “May.”

Julia continued her presentation with a detailed review of the MUTCD Part 6: Temporary Traffic Control and prefaced with court cases and their verdicts. She illustrated that over the year’s jury verdicts have escalated to over $10 million in liability. Her presentation provided methods and guidance on how to mitigate verdicts if you or your staff finds themselves in a construction/vehicular related accident. One of the best approaches a firm or state agency could have is to develop a Crisis Management Plan with a “go team” approach.
Congratulations to the following award winners! We look forward to seeing everyone on April 14, 2016 at Saint Clements Castle.

**Woman of the Year**
Vice Admiral Sandra Stosz, United States Coast Guard

**Innovative Project of the Year**
CTfastrak, Connecticut Department of Transportation

**Employer of the Year**
Tighe & Bond

**Member of the Year**
Rebecca Hall, Tighe & Bond

**Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award**
Sharon Okoye, Connecticut Department of Transportation

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**SCHOLARSHIP WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT**

WTS CT is proud to honor two young women who are pursuing careers in the transportation field. Nicole Prete is the recipient of the WTS Sharon D. Banks Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship. She is currently enrolled as an undergraduate student at the University of Connecticut majoring in civil engineering. She is actively involved in the Bridge Weigh-in-Motion field and presented on this topic at our TMS event in 2015.

Rosana Martinez-Castro is the recipient of the WTS Helene M. Overly Memorial Graduate Scholarship. Rosana is currently working towards her Ph.D. in civil engineering at the University of Connecticut. Rosana’s research focuses on the use of smart transportation systems to improve bridge inspection and bridge safety.

A big congratulations to both of the scholarship recipients.
Interested in becoming a member? Contact Lisa Slonus at slonusl@wseinc.com

GIRLS & STEM EXPO NAUGATUCK VALLEY CC

On November 6, 2016, WTS Student Outreach Committee members Sharon Okoye, Jennifer Mortensen, and Nancy Rolfe participated in the exhibit table portion of the Girls & STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) Expo, at Naugatuck Valley Community College. The exhibit table consisted of information about careers in the transportation and STEM fields. The girls spun the “WTS Wheel” and answered questions. They heard facts about: construction materials, transportation, wayfinding signs, or women’s first achievements. For participation in the wheel activity, the girls were given a kit containing ultraviolet detecting beads and materials to make a key chain. All in an effort to expose the girls to a variety of careers in STEM.

STUDENT OUTREACH COMMITTEE

The 2016 Student Outreach Committee has an exciting year planned. Over the past several years, this committee has focused on making contacts and connections with other organizations that share the goal of education and empowerment of women and girls. Through these contacts committee members have become involved in various Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) events. Many of the organizations now reach out to the WTS Student Outreach Committee to join major events that host as many as 500 young ladies. This year the committee has plans to be involved in a Tech Savvy Conference for 6th through 9th grade girls, their parents and also their teachers. Connecticut Women’s Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF) has invited the committee to help with two Girls & STEM Expos. During one Expo, the committee will lead two hands on sessions helping girls understand the basics of what engineering is and explain that the field is wide open to girls. In the second Expo, the committee will interact with teachers. They are excited to share detailed explanations of how many career opportunities there are for girls in the STEM fields and give the teachers some ideas for including STEM activities in their classes. The interaction with teachers opens a dialog to make plans for professional women to speak in their classrooms and to small groups, sharing their knowledge and helping to encourage and to spike their interest in all STEM fields. We are excited to expand our contacts and reach out to even more girls this year. Look for us in August at the Connecticut Science Center -Women in Science, Saturday Science Series.
DIVERSITY SURVEY RESULTS

The members of the Diversity Committee would like to thank all of the WTS CT members who participated in the Diversity Survey. The results of this survey will be used to increase membership, enhance programs, and provide leadership opportunities for women representing diverse transportation sectors.

Twenty-four (24) members representing diverse groups participated in the survey. The survey results demonstrate that most of our members are in the engineering field – some in private and some in public sectors. Most responses regarding inclusion and diversity included ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc., however, many acknowledged professional diversity as well. The consensus was that all should be allowed to participate equally regardless of who they are. Many of our members joined to network and meet people in the industry as well as gain knowledge from other professionals in the industry.

Results of the survey are summarized below.

Diversity & Inclusion (D&I)

100% of respondents were able to define D&I. In summary, respondents described D&I as embracing everyone’s ideas, culture, perspectives, knowledge and experience, without discrimination.

Membership Profile

WTS membership is currently limited to private and public engineering firms.

Membership – Years of Experience

70% of the membership has over 20 year’s professional experience.
HAVE YOU CONSIDERED BECOMING A CORPORATE SPONSOR?

A sponsorship of WTS Connecticut offers vital mutual benefits to WTS and your company. WTS Connecticut offers outstanding networking and professional development opportunities for transportation industry employees and leaders at every level.

WTS offers informative programs, scholarships for students, mentoring program, and information exchange through our newsletter and website (including job postings).

For more information on the Corporate Sponsorship Program please contact our Chapter President, Sandra Dumas at sdumas@haks.net

DIVERSITY RESULTS- CONTINUED

Membership Activities

The following activities were recommended for diversifying membership. Some respondents made two or more recommendations.

Network – 50%

Professional Growth & Development – 38%

Expand Knowledge of Transportation Industry – 17%

Diversify Transportation Industry – 13%

Mentoring Women – 13%

Diverse Teams – 4%

Based on the results of this survey, the Diversity Committee recognizes that WTS CT Chapter needs to diversify its membership to sustain and grow. During 2016-2017 the focus will include increasing presence through networking and collaboration with diverse groups by and reaching out to all sectors of transportation. All member support is needed to ensure success. Please email activity ideas/suggestions to Candy Phillips at clphillips@laneconstruct.com or Julia Paridis at julia.paridis@wilsonelser.com.

Thank you for your participation and continued support! We look forward to your response and help toward the goal to diversify membership.

CORPORATE SPONSOR HIGHLIGHT

Transportation Law Has Many Twists and Turns. We’ll Keep You on the Straight and Narrow.

Since our founding more than 35 years ago, Wilson Elser has been a leader in transportation law. Our skilled attorneys offer accomplished counsel on virtually all related matters, including:

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We are intimately familiar with applicable Connecticut statutes and regulations, as evidenced by our offices strategically located in Stamford and Hartford, home to our government relations practice. With the resources of one of the country’s largest law firms behind us, we can provide ready and reliable assistance, wherever the road may lead.

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The WTS Connecticut Chapter Mentor Program offers an annual Women’s Roundtable Discussion where top transportation industry leaders share stories of career hurdles, successes, and leadership styles. The program is intimate in nature, and the discussion takes place within an open format.

2015 women included Jennifer Carrier of Central Regional Council of Governments, Sofia Nirshberg of VN Engineers, and Lori Long of AECOM.

In 2015 a Men’s Roundtable Discussion event was added using the same questions. The men included John Dunham and Scott Hill of the CTDOT, Steve Wexell of HW Lochner, Ken Livingston of Fitzgerald & Halliday (FHI), and Joe D’Agostino of WSP-PB.

The results and differences of these two events were both interesting and distinguishable. Comparison to follow.

What did you want to be when you grow up?
Women were basically interested in teaching, yet by the time they had to choose their study of choice for college they all chose engineering or construction. Individuals that influenced their choice of study were male role models within their lives.

What did you want to be when you grow up?
Men were interested in a variety of careers including health care, public safety, trucking or architecture and the army.

For some the choice of study changed because of their level of interest or strength within a course of study, for others it was a test result based upon strengths and personality and one the recommendation of their father.

When questioned about being prepared in your career? Women discussed their hurdles and treatment of women within the transportation industry.

When questioned about being prepared in your career? Men discussed skillsets including scheduling, estimating and time management. This discussion also led to a conversation on communication skills and working with millennials; and their need for immediate answers and knowing “why” about everything. The conversation continued with millennials and their ability to communicate verbally and in writing. The discussion highlighted the reliance on millennials because of the shortage of mid-range experienced engineers and the importance of coaching/mentoring from the get-go.

When asked about unexpected hurdles, women said it was the ability to manage others, outside of their firm and to maintain cash flow.

Both groups shared experiences when they were unexpectedly placed in a management role. Women thought they had to continually prove themselves, at every step and at times every assignment, in their careers. Transitioning was compared to starting over rather than progressing. The men on the other hand, expressed concern about the level of expertise their new position required and that the pursuit of a career path which might not align with their strengths.

When asked how experience has developed you as a leader, woman said that they continually questioned themselves and the decisions they were making. The overall message was to take risks and never let the fear of being struck out get you down. Some advice; challenge the process, be patient, constantly learn, be comfortable outside of your comfort zone and always encourage and support others.

When asked how experience has developed you as a leader, man similar to women, stressed the importance of taking risks, stretching yourself, making yourself the best qualified, not just the most qualified and managing staff based upon the individual and not the gender; that different techniques work for different people.

When asked about mentoring, women used family members, teachers and colleagues. These relationships were mostly organic. Women encouraged mentoring within their organizations and participation either formally or organically anytime anywhere.

When asked about mentoring, men ran a different course. Some observed, learning from others and picked-up leadership traits from various individuals to create their own style, while others had relationships that were more organic where individuals took an interest in them. In some cases, individuals were provided as mentors to teach and guide.

(Continued on next page)
WTS CT VISION:
A WTS Connecticut Chapter that provides exceptional benefits to its members in the areas of professional development, career support, mentorship, and student outreach; offers leadership, educational, and networking opportunities; advances women in the transportation industry; and strives to function in an environmentally sustainable manner, with integrity and a commitment to diversity.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT—ANGELICA QUINTERO

Angelica is a Civil Engineer with WSP I Parsons Brinckerhoff. She joined the firm in January 2014 and currently serves as part of the management team of the New Haven – Hartford - Springfield Rail Program.

After finishing high school in her native country of Colombia, Angelica came to the United States in 2001 to start her higher education at Bergen Community College. She took classes in the Natural Sciences, and due to her awareness of environmental issues, became the President of the Biology Club and the Vice President of the Environmental Club. While going to school, she worked for several years for the New Jersey State Assembly as a Community Outreach Coordinator. In 2008, Angelica returned to college as a full-time student to study Natural Resources Conservation. Having decided that Civil engineering would allow her to learn about the infrastructure of water treatment facilities and distribution systems, Angelica transferred to Rutgers University, and graduated on 2013, with a degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering.

During her junior year at Rutgers, she performed research focused on detecting organic compounds in aquatic systems. Angelica published a technical paper after winning first place in a competition for the ASCE/EWRI Congress in May 2012, titled “A Review of the Occurrence, Most Relevant Analytical Method, and Possible Treatment for Di-Ethylhexyl Phthalate (DEHP) in the Water Environment.” She is going back to school in the fall of 2016 to follow her true passion to work towards developing and improving technologies for safe drinking water.

Angelica is an enthusiastic member of the WTS CT Chapter. She has served on various committees, assisted in the planning of the chapters annual conference and is currently participating in the organizations Professional Mentor Program.
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