



WTS CT Newsletter

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CHAPTER VISION: OFFER A WTS 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.

A Message From the President

January 2026

As we begin 2026, let us take a moment to reflect on the many successes of 2025 and the collective impact of WTS Connecticut over the past year. Together, we continued to advance the WTS mission of transforming the transportation industry through the advancement of women. Throughout 2025, our Chapter expanded professional development opportunities, strengthened student outreach, supported scholarships, and fostered meaningful connections through networking, mentorship, and leadership programming. These accomplishments were made possible by the dedication of our members, sponsors, volunteers, and partners.

I am especially grateful for the leadership and commitment of our volunteers with our Executive Board, committee volunteers, whose time and expertise ensured the success of our initiatives and events. Your service exemplifies the spirit of WTS and reinforces our shared commitment to equity, inclusion, and excellence in transportation.

As we look ahead, WTS Connecticut remains focused on growth, engagement, and impact of supporting women at every stage of their careers while inspiring the next generation of transportation professionals. I am confident that 2026 will bring new opportunities to build on our momentum and deepen our impact across Connecticut. One of your goals in 2026 is to achieve WTS International status of Large Chapter which is 175 members and increase scholarship fundraising goal to \$5,000.

Whether you're looking to become a member, learn how to be a better ally, or volunteer at an upcoming event, I invite you to join us in continuing to make a positive impact in Connecticut's transportation industry. If you have ideas, questions, or simply want to connect, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any member of the WTS Connecticut leadership team.

Thank you for your continued support of WTS Connecticut. I wish you and your loved ones a healthy, successful, and fulfilling New Year.



Sincerely,

Katherine Hedberg-Klose

President
WTS Connecticut

ADA Coordinating Engineer
Connecticut Department of Transportation

Governor Ned Lamont's Council on Women and Girls Leadership Panel

WTS Connecticut's (WTS CT) 2025 Honorary Member Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz co-chairs the Council on Women and Girls, in this role, she hosts a series of panels for women in leadership which are organized by the Leadership Subcommittee. For the month of June, the Council highlighted women in the transportation industry in an effort to encourage women and girls that they can explore too! One of the panels was held in-person at the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) and featured Katherine Hedberg-Klose, Catherine Young (WTS CT Advisory Council Member), Lisa Rivers (CTDOT Public Transportation Administrator), and Katie Rosen (Labor Arbitration and Mediation Specialist at Alternative Dispute Resolution, LLC).

June 25, 2025
CTDOT
Newington, CT



"Inspiring the next generation of women and girls in transportation is vital for Connecticut! Don't be afraid to reach out for help or seek mentors in the industry."



Mentor Program Kickoff Meeting

June 25, 2025
CTDOT,
Newington, CT



A Mentor Program Kickoff meeting was held by the Mentorship Committee on June 25, 2025 at the CTDOT Training Center for the 13 mentor-mentee pairings that have been matched for the 2025 program. This in-person event was attended by the program participants as an opportunity to connect as mentor-mentee pairs. People were able to discuss their interests and goals of what they hoped to achieve throughout the progression of this year-long program.

"Participating in the mentor program has allowed me to learn from professionals from outside my organization. It has been great to hear their perspectives and experiences!"
- Katherine Yale

DEI Series: Allyship in the Workplace



In this interactive membership workshop hosted as a webinar and led by Vanessa Spatafora (KJR Consulting), participants had the opportunity to deepen their understanding of prejudices, assumptions, and privileges. Attendees gained a deeper understanding and comfort with inclusive practices and vocabulary. This session also explored what it meant to support and cultivate allyship within their organizations. People left the session being able to identify ways their organizations could continue to be safer and more inclusive for all members.

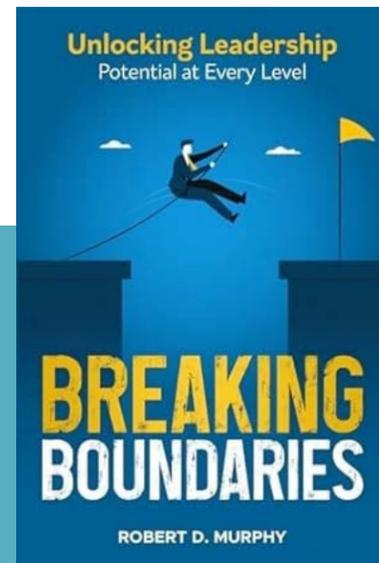
“How to make an impact: Listing your pronouns in your email signature is a small but significant act of allyship.”

June 26, 2025
Virtual

Leadership Book Club

The book club session was a huge success, with full participation from all who registered! Participants dove deep into the first seven chapters of *Breaking Boundaries: Unlocking Leadership Potential at Every Level* by Robert D. Murphy and Stephen Zimmerman, PhD. This book covers essential topics in career mentorship, organizational development, personal growth, and professional advancement. Drawing on Murphy’s journey to executive leadership, *Breaking Boundaries* goes beyond management tips, offering guidance on creating a path to success in any industry.

July 8, 2025
West Hartford, CT



Some standout insights from the session included:

“Promotion comes from visible impact, not just hours clocked in.”

“Don’t confuse popularity with leadership effectiveness.”

“Vision without execution is hallucination.”



PROMOTING MOBILITY AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

WSP USA Inc. is proud to work with WTS in delivering transportation infrastructure that meets Connecticut’s community needs for mobility, safety, connectivity, sustainability, and resiliency.

Transportation & Civil Engineering Summer Camp

July 8 and 15, 2025
University of Hartford
West Hartford, CT

WTS CT facilitated a session at the University of Hartford's (UHart) Transportation & Civil Engineering Summer Camp for high school students. WTS CT volunteers taught students about Complete Streets concepts and took them on a walk audit of the UHart campus to observe Complete Streets elements in real life. The students had the opportunity to come up with their own design plan to make the campus more bicycle, pedestrian, and transit friendly and present it to the group.



"The students were passionate and brought unique ideas for future improvements with their designs, the future is bright!"



CT Summer Transportation Camp

WTS CT facilitated a session at the Connecticut Summer Transportation Institute program at Central Connecticut State University. WTS CT members talked about Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) studies and facilitated an interactive activity where students had to design a brand new roadway while considering environmental impacts and cost. The camp concluded with a graduation ceremony at CTDOT and WTS CT awarded two scholarships to women attending the program.

July 21, 2025
Central Connecticut State University
New Britain, CT



WALK Bridge Norwalk, CT

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ADA Anniversary Event

WTS CT partnered with CTDOT, CT ITE, and ADA Coalition of Connecticut (ADACC) for its third annual ADA Anniversary Event! The event gives the industry an opportunity to hear from individuals with disabilities, learn how individuals are improving accessibility in their communities, and what resources are available. Speakers included Paul Pernerewski Jr. (City of Waterbury Mayor), Karen Kitsis (CTDOT Deputy Commissioner), Rich Donovan (Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments Transportation Manager), and Bill DeMaio (Newington Parks and Recreation Director, President of the ADACC).

There were several exhibits offering technical assistance with ADA requirements, products, and designs from CTDOT's ADA Engineering Unit, Facility Design Unit, Active Transportation & Safe Routes to School Unit, UConn T2 Center, Fidelco, CTtransit and many more!

July 29, 2025
Waterbury City Hall
Waterbury, CT



“CTDOT is improving lives through transportation and looking at one of the most vulnerable road users, people with disabilities, to travel safely in their community.”

Friends & Family Day

August 16, 2025
Sparetime
Bristol, CT



Everyone had a great time at the WTS CT Family & Friends Day. The event brought together WTS CT members and their loved ones for an afternoon of bowling, food, drinks, and good conversation. Attendees enjoyed each other's company and had the opportunity to unwind. It was wonderful to see the families of WTS CT members who were able to participate and join in the fun!

SPONSOR HIGHLIGHT



Designing with Nature: An Interview with VHB's Megan Raymond

Bringing coastal resiliency and ecological insight to infrastructure projects.



Megan Raymond recently joined VHB as Director of Natural Sciences in Wethersfield, Connecticut. Megan brings deep experience in tidal and inland wetland permitting, coastal resiliency, restoration design and nature-based design solutions, supporting clients across the municipal, transportation, and real estate markets in Connecticut and throughout New England. With a background that blends science, policy, and practical implementation, she will play a key role in helping communities, transportation agencies, and developers balance environmental integrity with infrastructure needs.

Read this interview with Megan to find out more about how she works across disciplines to develop nature-based solutions to project challenges, and connect with Megan via email at mraymond@vhb.com.

Q: You've spent your career working with wetlands and coastal systems. What areas have you focused on most?

Megan: Early on, I worked in river and wetland ecology, developing permitting strategies for projects near water. Over time, I became drawn to coastal ecology and adaptive management—creating solutions for areas where built and natural environments meet. I've worked extensively on floodplain management and living shoreline projects that use nature-based techniques to address erosion, enhance habitat, and strengthen resilience. That blend of science, policy, and design really shapes how I approach every project.

Q: How does your work intersect with the transportation market, for which VHB does a lot of work?

Megan: I've supported projects for the Connecticut Department of Transportation, including NEPA documentation and environmental permitting for portions of the I-84 corridor. Transportation projects often intersect with sensitive natural systems—bridges, crossings, wetlands—and my background helps streamline permitting and confirm environmental considerations are appropriately integrated.

Q: You talk about "the value of nature" as part of your professional lens. How does that translate into project work?

Megan: I look at nature as a form of capital—something that holds measurable and lasting value. When we make decisions about infrastructure or development, we should ask: What value does this project bring to nature, to people, and to aesthetics? At VHB, our use of benefit-cost analyses for ecosystem services helps quantify those benefits, making the case for environmentally and economically responsible design choices.

Q: How do you help communities implement coastal resiliency plans?

Megan: My focus is on translating plans into tangible action—designing and executing the solutions that achieve resiliency goals. That can include restoring coastal wetlands, stabilizing shorelines, or creating sustainable infrastructure that adapts to changing environmental conditions. The goal is to provide communities with strategies that don't just respond to climate impacts but build long-term environmental and social value.

Q: How would you summarize your approach to environmental work?

Megan: I believe that public access to coastal and natural spaces is critical—it helps people connect with and care about the environment and can foster long-term stewardship. My philosophy is to design projects that strengthen that connection, supporting communities while preserving/enhancing ecological function. If we can achieve both, we've done our job well. I'm really looking forward to collaborating on projects that combine cross-disciplinary problem-solving within the energy, transportation, and water resources disciplines. These types of projects highlight the power of engineering and ecology working together to create solutions that serve people and protect the environment.

Membership Appreciation

August 21, 2025
Firestone Art Studio + Café,
Manchester, CT

WTS CT members enjoyed a wonderful afternoon at Firestone Art Studio + Café in Manchester, CT, where creativity took center stage. Each participant selected a ceramic piece from a variety options and spent time painting it to reflect their own unique style. The studio's warm, inviting atmosphere made it easy to relax, share ideas, and let imagination flow. By the end of the session, everyone left with a personalized masterpiece and a memorable experience filled with color, networking, and fun!



End of Summer Social

Our end of Summer Social was at Elicit Brewing Company in Manchester, CT! It was a casual, fun-filled evening to celebrate the summer season and our WTS CT community. Everyone said the food was outstanding (great job Elicit Brewing!) and the Student Outreach Committee organized a Plinko game fundraiser for the scholarship fund with donations from attendees. We also handed out a limited run of printed copies of our Newsletter as a keepsake!

September 10, 2025
Elicit Brewing
Manchester, CT



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Leadership & Mentorship Program

The annual WTS CT Leadership and Mentorship Roundtable Breakfast was once again a well-received and impactful event, reinforcing its reputation as a flagship professional development opportunity. Attendees participated in engaging, topic-focused tracks led by speakers who facilitated interactive conversations on leadership styles, professional challenges, and career growth. A robust panel featuring representatives from CTDOT, CRCOG, AECOM, HNTB, Jacobs, and VHB provided valuable insights from across the industry. Breakout sessions offered attendees the chance to explore industry trends, share personal experiences, and deepen their leadership skills in a collaborative, supportive environment. A special thank you to CTDOT and our Hartford Level Industry Partners (AECOM, HNTB, Jacobs, and VHB) for their continued support and contributions to making this event a success.



September 16, 2025
CTDOT
Newington, CT

Mentor Program Progress Meeting

The evening featured two mentor-led sessions. The first session, Reverse Mentoring: The Conversation Every Leader Should Be Having, was led by mentor speaker Tony Ciriello (US Sector Leader – Government & Infrastructure at SLR). This session challenged traditional mentorship models and highlighted the value of two-way learning between junior and senior professionals.

October 1, 2025
CTDOT
Newington, CT

The second session, Speak with Purpose: Using Communication to Inspire, Guide, and Grow, featured mentor speaker Alicia Leite (Assistant Vice President, Advisory Services and Connecticut Local Engagement Leader at WSP). This discussion focused on the role of communication in effective leadership and mentorship, with particular attention to the unique challenges women face in male-dominated environments. Topics included communication styles, navigating virtual versus in-person interactions.

The evening concluded with a Mentorship Midpoint Conversation, led by Amber Saleh (WTS CT Mentorship Chair). This interactive session provided mentors and mentees with an opportunity to reflect on their experiences, share successes and lessons learned, and offer constructive feedback to help strengthen the program moving forward. Overall, the progress meeting reinforced the value of intentional mentorship, open dialogue, and shared learning. These discussions strengthened connections across the WTS CT community and support continued professional growth.



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CTDOT Merritt Parkway (Route 15) Improvements



CTDOT Route 8 Metalizing on 11 Bridges

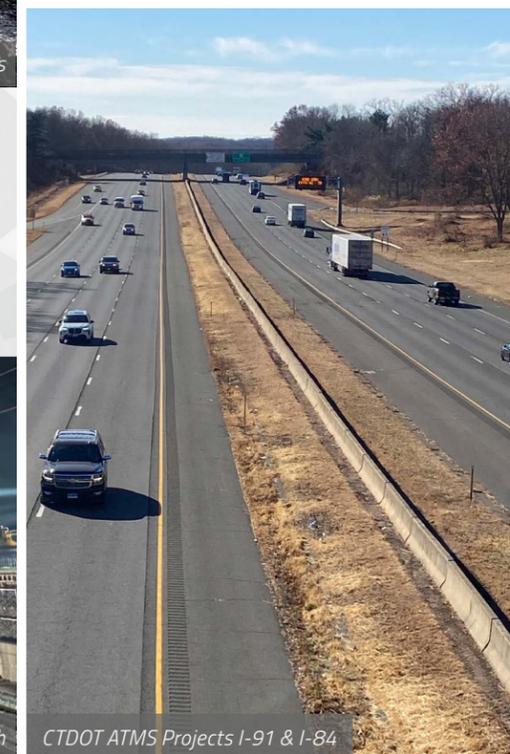
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CTDOT ATMS Projects I-91 & I-84

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Membership Hike



October 5, 2025
Bluff Point State Park
Groton, CT

WTS CT members gathered for a group hike which followed a scenic loop around Bluff Point State Park. The sun shone warmly through the autumn foliage, creating a pleasant atmosphere as participants walked together and enjoyed the beautiful surroundings. Throughout the hike, members were treated to picturesque views of Long Island Sound. The combination of vibrant leaves and sparkling water made for a memorable outdoor experience. In addition to enjoying nature, the group took time to learn some basic first aid skills. Members were introduced to techniques for treating injuries, including how to properly splint a forearm injury. This practical activity added an educational component to the outing and helped everyone feel better prepared for emergencies in the outdoors.




Volunteer with WTS Connecticut!
Scan the QR code or email WTSConnecticut@gmail.com

Give back to the community and make an impact on the transportation industry! Volunteering allows members to develop their power skills like communication, leadership, problem solving and thinking of innovative ideas.

Scan the QR Code to complete the volunteer interest form!



Local Transportation Industry News

WTS CT Updates from the AASHTO Annual Meeting

WTS CT was proud to see its members recognized on the national stage at the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Annual Meeting. This event provided the opportunity to network with other WTS members and WTS International leadership.

WTS CT President, Katie Hedberg-Klose, accepted an AASHTO President's Award for the impactful Empathy at the Intersection initiative. The program, developed through collaboration between the CTDOT and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), puts transportation professionals in the shoes of system users to experience streets from the perspective of pedestrians, transit riders, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable users.



By encouraging professionals to experience transportation systems firsthand, the program challenges assumptions, builds empathy, and helps shift mindsets toward safer, more inclusive transportation design.

There were also two other achievements by CTDOT. One of which was the prestigious America's Transportation Awards Grand Prize for its emergency project demolishing and rebuilding the Fairfield Avenue Bridge over I-95 in Norwalk in 2024. The \$10,000 prize associated with the award will be donated to the Andrew DiDomenico Memorial Foundation and Connecticut Foodshare.

Additionally, the AASHTO President's Award was given to CTDOT for its groundbreaking Section 106 Joint Programmatic Agreement with the United States Department of Transportation. The first agreement of its kind in the nation, it establishes a unified federal review process and delegates authority to the state, helping accelerate reviews of transportation projects that may affect historic properties while maintaining important protections under the National Historic Preservation Act.

WTS International and AASHTO continued their collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at strengthening partnerships and expanding opportunities for progress in transportation. This year's meeting also marked a significant milestone for representation in leadership across the industry, with 15 women serving as state DOT CEOs, the highest number in history.



This event served as a reminder of the importance of collaboration across agencies, organizations, and professional networks to build a more inclusive and forward-thinking transportation system. Attending the Annual Meeting was especially meaningful to see Connecticut's own Commissioner Eucalitto serve as AASHTO President and highlight the leadership role Connecticut continues to play in advancing innovation and safety nationwide.

Beyond the awards, committee, and technical updates, the meeting also offered valuable opportunities to connect with the broader transportation community. WTS CT members were able to attend the WTS International Pinnacle Partner Reception, hosted with HNTB, which brought together leaders from across the industry.

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Annual Transportation Mini-Series



Lauren St. Germain of LSG Coaching was our keynote speaker. She reminded us that great leadership requires Slow Down Skills: rest, reflection and celebration.

 Lauren St. Germain
www.laurenstgermain.com



Thank you to all attendees, corporate sponsors, and our photographer and videographer for documenting this great event. We look forward to seeing everyone next year!

BRIAN AMBROSE  PHOTOGRAPHY

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The 19th Annual Transportation Mini-Series kicked off on the morning of Thursday, October 17th and was our largest program to date! Attendees were from the public and private sector including Federal, State, Regional, and Municipal transportation professionals. The morning Plenary Session consisted of a panel moderated by Kate Rozen (Toole Design) on how we can strengthen collaboration across advocacy, policy and practice. The insights from panelists Aimee Berger-Girvalo (CT Legislature), Matt Hart (CROCOG), John Moritz (CT Mirror), Jay Stange (Active Transportation Advocate), and Josh Bernegger (CT Police Chiefs Association), were solution oriented and provided practical strategies for building trust and collaboration between the public and the transportation industry. The group discussion during the Q&A portion of the session was successful in providing constructive models for productive dialogues.

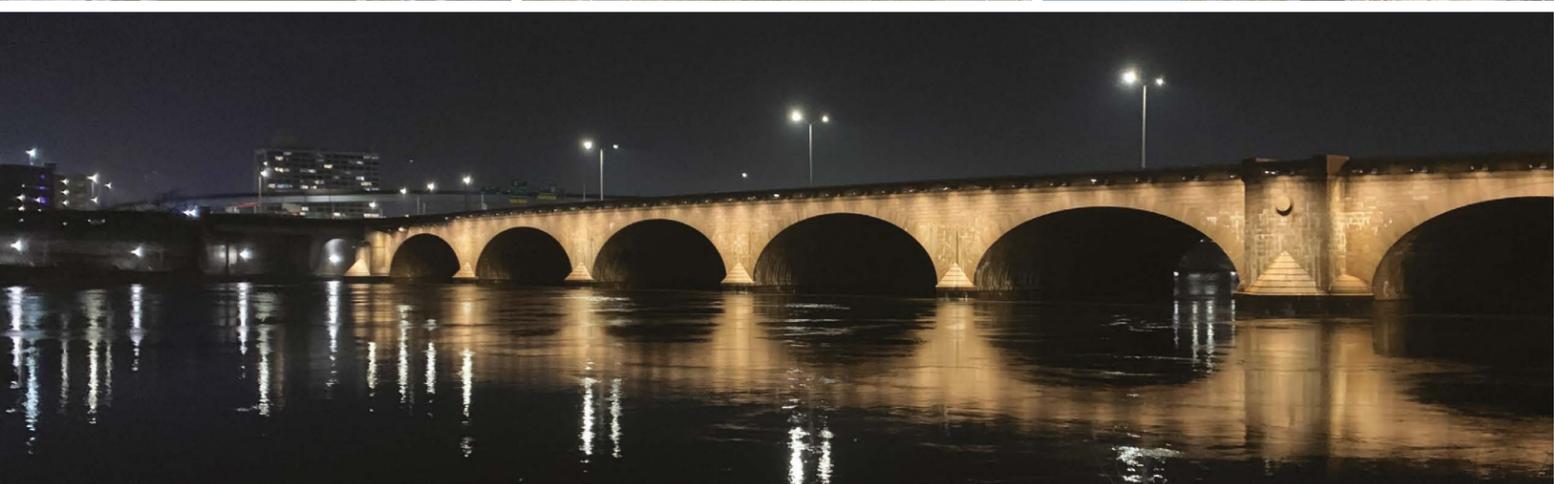


This year, an abundance of submissions allowed for 12 breakout sessions within three tracks:

- *Innovating Transportation*
- *Empowering Leadership & Growth*
- *Shaping the Future of Transportation*

To learn more about the breakout sessions, scan this QR code:





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HNTB, AECOM, HDR, Jacobs, & WSP

WTS International's State Level International Partnership:



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Upcoming Events:

March 18

WTS CT Open House

April 2

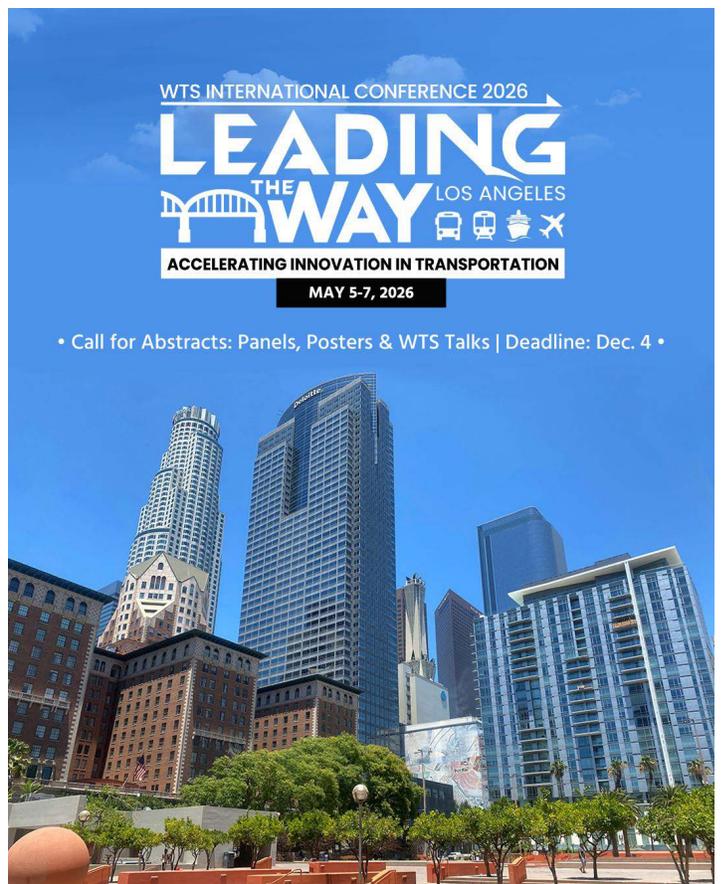
Annual Awards & Scholarship Banquet

May 5-7

WTS International Annual Conference

September 24

20th Annual Transportation Mini-Series



• Call for Abstracts: Panels, Posters & WTS Talks | Deadline: Dec. 4 •