



Advancing women  
Advancing transportation  
> Connecticut

Annual Awards & Scholarship Banquet  
St. Clement's Castle  
April 2, 2026

## **Honorary Member & Award Recipients:**

- » Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award
  - » Honorable Ray LaHood Award
    - » Member of the Year
    - » Employer of the Year
  - » Innovative Solution of the Year
    - » Woman of the Year

## WTS CT Honorary Member

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### **State Representative Aimee Berger-Girvalo**

State Representative Aimee Berger-Girvalo was elected in November 2020 to represent the 111th District in Ridgefield. She is currently in her third term. Aimee is a graduate of UMass Amherst.



Throughout her career, she has managed multi-million-dollar restaurant and retail businesses, worked as a preschool teacher, public school special ed paraeducator, and a behavior therapist serving children on the autism spectrum and their families. Raised by a mother who served as an Army nurse during the Vietnam War, Aimee has been civically and politically engaged since childhood, serving as an advocate for those in need for as long as she can remember. Aimee serves as Chair of the Transportation Committee and as a member of the Public Health Committee and the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee.

Additionally, she is the chair of the Transportation Bonding Subcommittee. Aimee is a member of the Bipartisan Women's Caucus, the Climate Caucus, and the Intellectual and Developmental Disability Caucus. A resident of Ridgefield for more than 20 years, Aimee has two beautiful children: a daughter who graduated from college and works in the nonprofit world, and a son who is attending college in Rhode Island.

## Rosa Parks Leadership Diversity Award

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### **Trish Chastanet, PMP, CTDOT**

Trish Chastanet is a visionary leader with a proven track record in leading high-performing teams and developing innovative solutions. As a skilled Supply Chain and certified Project Management Professional with 11+ years of experience in procurement, strategic planning, supply chain management, and transportation, she brings a wealth of knowledge from her professional experience working in the private and public sector.

Trish has extensive experience in driving transformative change, strategic thinking, negotiating contracts, executing agreements, managing supplier relationships, and implementing cost optimization measures.

Trish is a graduate of the American Public Transportation (APTA) Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) class of 2024 and serves as an APTA ELP National Mentor. Trish is a graduate of the WTS International Signature Leadership Program, class of 2024. Trish holds a bachelor's degree in International Business and master's degree in Technology Management from Central Connecticut State University.

Trish served as the 2025 COMTO CT Program Committee Chair where she spearheaded an inaugural 6-month Leading with Purpose Mentoring Program for transit professionals.

Trish enjoys engaging with transit professionals on finding opportunities to improve Public Transportation, and outside of work she loves outdoor adventures and competes in Spartan Races.

## Honorable Ray LaHood Award

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### **Commissioner Garrett Eucalitto, CTDOT**

Garrett T. Eucalitto is the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Transportation, confirmed to the role in January 2023. He leads one of the state's largest agencies, overseeing a nearly \$3 billion annual budget and more than 3,300 employees dedicated to maintaining a safe and efficient multimodal transportation network.

Eucalitto recently concluded his term as President of AASHTO, where he represented transportation leaders from across the nation, and he continues to serve in key national and regional leadership roles, including on the Transportation Research Board Executive Committee and as co-chair of the Northeast Corridor Commission. Prior to becoming Commissioner, he served as Connecticut DOT Deputy Commissioner and previously held senior positions at the National Governors Association and the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management. He holds a bachelor's degree from the College of the Holy Cross and a master's degree from Boston University.

## Member of the Year Award

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### **Steph Bogue, HNTB, EIT, RSP1**

Steph Bogue brings over six years of experience to their role as a transportation engineer at HNTB in Rocky Hill, Connecticut. They have a technical background in transportation design and analysis working within both highway and traffic disciplines. In addition to their work at HNTB, Steph currently holds the office role as Professional Development

Manager where they strategically engage staff at all levels to actively participate in the transportation industry. They have a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Connecticut.

Steph currently serves as the Vice President for WTS Connecticut and has been an active member within the organization since they joined the workforce in 2019. Their previous leadership roles within the chapter include serving as the Co-Chair and Chair of the Diversity & Membership Committee, Secretary, Treasurer, and Partner Program Liaison. Steph is passionate about bringing an intersectional lens to their work and integrating diverse, equitable, and inclusive practices into all aspects of their career.

# Employer of the Year Award

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## Toole Design

Toole Design is at the forefront of active transportation planning, design, and implementation. For over 20 years, we've transformed the way people move and helped communities thrive. Our success is built on combining technical precision with a focus on community needs, resulting in transportation systems that serve people of all ages, abilities, and identities. Shawna Kitzman opened our Hartford Office in 2025, expanding Toole Design's ability to serve Connecticut communities.



# Innovative Solution of the Year

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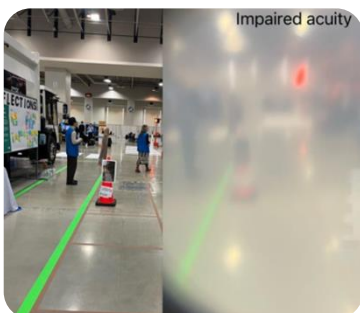
## Empathy at the Intersection Initiative, CTDOT & MassDOT

Empathy at the Intersection is a nationally recognized, women-led initiative developed by the Connecticut Department of Transportation and Massachusetts Department of Transportation that is transforming how transportation professionals approach to understanding safety, accessibility, and customer experience. Moving beyond traditional classroom training, the program immerses participants in the lived experiences of vulnerable road users, transit operators, and maintenance staff through hands-on simulations, reflective learning, and conference programming. The program features experiences such as visual impairment simulations, aging simulation suits, financial hardship workshops and other reflective experiences.

Since launching in 2024, the initiative has been featured at major national events including multiple American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and Transportation Research Board (TRB) conferences and meetings, reaching thousands of participants from agencies across the country. Its scalable, human-centered model has helped professionals translate empathy into real-world design and policy decisions, advancing safer and more inclusive transportation systems.

The Empathy at the Intersection team utilized their skills and connections to bring Empathy at the Intersection to life. Meghan Haggerty, Jaclyn Youngblood, Briette Brightman and Kris Carter lead efforts at MassDOT for the idea to pull together a memorable experience. Dr. Angie Hinzey brought the research side of the project and measuring impact. Katie Hedberg-Klose and Julio Serna brought their expertise with accessibility and training materials being used at CTDOT for engineers, planners and inspectors as well as securing sponsorships and connections with industry groups. Finally, Julie Lorenz and Shawn Wilson played an integral role securing partnerships and connections with other subject matter experts and securing funding for additional materials and supplies for the exhibit.

Empathy at the Intersection received national recognition through the AASHTO President's Awards and exemplifies the mission of WTS by elevating women's leadership while delivering innovative, impactful transportation solutions.



## Woman of the Year

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**Dr. Bin (Brenda) Zhou, Ph.D, P.E., Professor and Civil Engineer Program Coordinator, Central Connecticut State University**

Bin (Brenda) Zhou's expertise is in transportation planning and engineering, with research interests focused on quantitative analyses and modeling techniques.

She joined WTS as a graduate student at the University of Texas at Austin and received WTS International's Helene M. Overly Memorial Graduate Scholarship in 2008. After settling in Connecticut, Dr. Zhou actively participates in WTS Connecticut through its Student Outreach and Scholarship Committee and was honored with the Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award by both WTS Connecticut and WTS International in 2020.

Dr. Zhou is committed to STEM outreach that promotes postsecondary opportunities for youth, especially those from historically underrepresented groups. In collaboration with two project managers at the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), she launched Connecticut's National Summer Transportation Institute (NSTI) in 2013, serving nearly 100 high school students in five years. She has also contributed to similar projects including the NSF-funded Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program and Central's Next Generation Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and Community Engagement project – Cultivating a Culture of Inclusion: Women Thriving in STEM. NSTI evolved into the Connecticut Summer Transportation Institute (CSTI) in 2025 due to funding structure changes, and Dr. Zhou is currently working on the 2026 CSTI with support from Central and CTDOT.

Dr. Zhou serves as a faculty advisor to Central's Society of Women Engineers (SWE) and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) student clubs, collaborating regularly with industry partners to enhance student engagement and support student success. In 2018, she advised a team of five female civil engineering students on a community-engaged capstone project, in which the team competed in the National Timber Bridge Design Competition. The team won second place for Most Aesthetic Design, and their bridge was donated to the Town of Berlin. This initiative has generated six timber bridges for local communities so far, and two capstone teams are currently building two bridges under the supervision of Dr. Zhou and her colleague at Central.