

WTSCFL Newsletter



*PRESIDENT: Snehal Ambare, PE
VICE PRESIDENT: IVANNIA BOK, PMP®-
SECRETARY: Kelda Senior
TREASURER: Nancy Clements, PE
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT: Amy Windom, PE*

DECEMBER 2022 | QUARTER 4

President's Message

Hello Central Florida transportation community,

I am thrilled to share our final newsletter of 2022. Your WTS Central Florida Chapter has had a productive year, thanks to our dedicated leadership, members, sponsors and supporters.

This Q4 newsletter highlights our latest accomplishments. We invite you to explore all of our 2022 highlights by checking out our [previous three newsletters from this year](#) and our chapter's [photo gallery](#).

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as your 2022 chapter president, and I look forward to welcoming and supporting our dynamic 2023 board of directors.

We invite you to join us on this journey of advancing women in the transportation industry. You can support by [becoming a sponsor](#), [attending an event](#) or simply following and engaging with us on [social media](#).

We appreciate your support and look forward to seeing you in 2023. Best wishes for a joyous holiday season and a prosperous new year!

Snehal Ambare
2022 President, WTS Central Florida



Chapter Updates

WTSCFL Welcomes 2023 Board of Directors

Congratulations to our 2023 Board of Directors elected as of October 24, 2022 by the WTSCFL membership.

In addition to the elected members shown below, current president Snehal Ambare will continue on the board as Immediate Past President.

The transition to the new board began with a Board Retreat on November 5. The new board will begin its duties on January 1, 2023.



Ivannia Bok | President
CTS Engineering



Stacey Russell | Vice President
GPI, Inc.



Sarah Larsen | Secretary
MetroPlan Orlando



Nancy Clements | Treasurer
WGI, Inc.



Negaar Minaei | Director of Advancement
CDM Smith



Rebecca Bess | Director of Diversity
Southeastern Surveying and Mapping



Kathrin Tellez | Director of Membership
Fehr & Peers



Dawn Ratican | Director of Professional Development
AIM Engineering & Surveying



Tanya Schmidt
Director of Programs

Chapter Updates

2023 Scholarships Now Available

Part of the WTS goal of fostering the development of women in the transportation field is achieved by encouraging new professionals to careers in transportation.

In addition to the WTS Central Florida Chapter funded scholarships awarded at our banquet in October 2022, WTS International has six scholarships.

Each chapter nominates one person in each category. We use our local winners as our applicants for WTS International, when feasible, and request applications for the open categories. At this time, we have three open categories.

- The Transportation YOU High School Scholarship
- WTS Junior College/Trade School Scholarship
- Molitoris Leadership Scholarship for Undergraduates

Scholarship applications are due by **January 6, 2023, 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time**. For more information and for applications, visit our website at: <https://www.wtsinternational.org/chapters/central-florida/scholarship-information>



2022 Scholarship Winners with Scholarship Chair and Chapter President during the 2022 Banquet

Welcome to our New Members!

- Courtney Humphreys | HDR
- Leah Wilson | DRMP
- Faezeh Pitstick | JBT AeroTech
- Mariam Nour | UCF Student
- Tyler Valila | HDR
- Kathryn Peterson | HNTB

A welcome transfer from another chapter!

- Robyn Hartz | CMT Engineering



> Central Florida

Advancing women
Advancing transportation

CHECK OUT RESOURCES
AVAILABLE TO WTS MEMBERS

Home-MyWTS Communities
(wtsinternational.org)

Member Spotlight



Laura Kelley

Executive Director

Central Florida Expressway Authority

For our final spotlight of the year, we are pleased to share more about Laura Kelley, who has more than 30 years of experience in executive transportation management, helping shape national, state, and local policy.

In 2014, she was named the Central Florida Expressway Authority's (CFX) first executive director, managing the daily operations of the agency's 125-mile expressway system and \$4 billion-dollar five-year work plan.

Under her leadership, the agency has adopted a "Customer First" philosophy leading to innovative programs including:

- Opening drive-up Reload Lanes on expressways
- Piloting the Visitor Toll Pass Program in partnership with the Orlando International Airport
- Instituting toll discounts drivers millions of dollars (thank you!)

Laura also guided the installation of numerous cutting-edge safety and technology improvements on CFX expressways including the award winning wrong-way driver detection systems.

We asked Laura to share a little more about herself that you may not know. Did you know that Laura is an avid paddleboarder? Read on to get to know Laura better and the contributing factors to her success.



Member Spotlight

Laura Kelley

Executive Director

Central Florida Expressway Authority

What do you value most from your WTS membership?

I enjoy being a part of an organization that supports women in our industry. I believe that we have a responsibility to find ways to encourage female advancement and women in leadership.

What is the best career advice you have ever received?

My father was a great humanitarian and had a tremendous work ethic. He always encouraged me to work hard and treat people with respect.

What is something that most people don't know about you?

I love the outdoors and nature. My favorite activities include running, walking, paddleboarding, kayaking, gardening. My vacations are active ones.

If you weren't the Executive Director of CFX, what would you be doing with your time?

I have a finance and accounting degree, so I would most likely be working in the financial world. I also loved studying art history in college, so you might also find me working in the arts.

How did you become interested in transportation?

My first job out of college was a Contract Administrator for a bridge engineering firm. My role there eventually evolved to CFO. These early experiences made me realize how transformative transportation can be to the economic health of a community.

What is your favorite mode of travel?

All modes of transportation that puts someone else in the driver/pilot seat.

How do you balance a successful career and other aspects of your life?

I don't know that I do. If you are a family member or a friend of mine, you know that I love serving my community and often put up with me talking transportation more often than not. The only other topic I talk more about is my grandson.

If you know someone that we should spotlight in our next newsletter, please reach out to WTSCFL's Director of Membership, Kathrin Tellez at k.tellez@fehrandpeers.com

Upcoming Events

Register at wtsinternational.org/chapters/central-florida/events



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Central Florida

**2023 Chapter
Open House**

January 18, 2023
5:30 to 7:30 PM

Azalea Lodge at Mead Botanical Garden
1300 S Denning Drive
Winter Park, FL 32789

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TRANSPORTATION RESILIENCY INTO THE FUTURE

Save the Date ♦ **February 14, 2023**
11:30 AM – 1:30 PM ♦ Dubsdread Ballroom



Moderator:
Alison Stettner, AICP
Director, FDOT
State Office of Policy
Planning



Panelist:
Jennifer Z. Carver, AICP
FDOT Statewide
Resilience Planning
Coordinator



Panelist:
Sarah Kraum
Senior Transportation
Planner,
Space Coast TPO



Panelist:
Brenda Defoe-Surprenant
Director of Planning, East
Central Florida Regional
Planning Council

Upcoming Events



The Southeastern States and Women's Transportation Seminar North Carolina Triangle Chapter (WTS) will hold its bi-annual Southeast Rail Forum (SRF) March 22-24, 2023, in Arlington, VA. This notice is a call for presentations for a limited number of speaking opportunities.

The SRF objectives include highlighting and discussing the following:

- Rail success stories with an emphasis on partnerships (Federal, State, Local, Railroads, Private Sector) in the Southeast
- Strengthening today's Rail System for future advancement and development as an integral piece of the larger Transportation network
- Developing and leveraging sustainable and predictable funding sources for Rail projects in the Southeast
- Rail's benefits to long-term transportation resiliency, equity, emission reductions, and economic development including, transit-oriented development practices, and collaboration to move more people and goods by rail
- Challenges and solutions to provide a robust Rail System including Rail Safety, Evolving Technology and Maintaining Readiness

SRF/WTS is looking for fresh, innovative, cutting-edge ideas, case studies, and best practices that touch on the benefits of rail in the southeast.

Register at: southeast-rail-forum.constantcontactsites.com/



Contact Paddy Jordan to learn about VOLUNTEER and SPONSORSHIP opportunities for the forum!

Patricia.Jordan@mottmac.com



Recent Activities

25th Annual Scholarship & Awards Banquet

Thank you to our members, sponsor and supporters for making our 25th Annual Banquet a success! Congratulations to each Scholarship and Award winner. Check out and download Banquet photos from our [Photo Gallery](#).



Recent Activities

Brightline Vehicle Maintenance Facility Tour

We had a blast during the facility tour of Brightline Trains!

Huge thanks to Katie Mitzner M.A. and the Brightline team for hosting us. Shout out to Tanya Schmidt and Amy Windom for coordinating this awesome event.

In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, WTSCFL donated proceeds to Libby's Legacy Breast Cancer Foundation.



Career Expo with WTS-UCF Knights Student Chapter



Our first career expo in partnership with WTS-UCF Knights Student Chapter was a success!

Thank you to our partner firms for participating and helping to inspire the next generation of transportation leaders.

Special thanks to every attendee and resume reviewer.

The future of our industry looks bright!

Recent Activities

2022 End of Year Members Event at Sleuths Mystery Dinner Show

This year's End of Year Members Event was one for the books!
Thanks to our chapter members and their guests for celebrating with us.



Recent Activities

Second Harvest Volunteer Day

Thank you to all volunteers who participated in this year's serve day with Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida, and to those who donated.

Big thanks to Annie Cancel and our chapter's Community Relations committee for organizing this year's serve day.

As you finalize your end-of-year giving plans, we encourage you to continue donating to fighting hunger in Central Florida.

Securely donate here: <https://lnkd.in/eG-gWSay>



*Know of a great event or organization WTS should partner with? Please let us know!
Text 201.449.6961 or email Annie Cancel, Community Relations at anicancel@yahoo.com*

Student Member Spotlight

Congratulations to student member and WTSCFL's 2021 Leadership Graduate Scholarship winner Jady Chen on graduating with her Master's of Science in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Central Florida in December 2022!

We are proud of you, Jady, and look forward to witnessing your continued success in the transportation industry.



We appreciate the support of the transportation community, particularly our 2022 Annual Sponsors!

**2022 ANNUAL SPONSORS**

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BRONZE ANNUAL SPONSORS



Join WTS

We would love to have you join us! To start your membership with WTS, go to our website using the QR code or URL below.

SCAN QR CODE OR USE URL:

<https://www.wtsinternational.org/chapters/central-florida>



CLICK ON JOIN WTS BUTTON
(UPPER RIGHT CORNER)



Follow us on Social Media

Stay connected with all things WTS Central Florida by following us on all social media. Be sure to use the hashtag #WTSCFL in any of your chapter- related posts! We love to see and share your WTS content.

- WTSCFL Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/wtscentralflorida>
- WTSCFL Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/55161918824>
- WTSCFL Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/wtscentralflorida/>
- WTSCFL Twitter: <https://twitter.com/wtscentralfla>
- WTSCFL LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/wtscfl>