

2009 Woman of the Year

Ms. Amy Jackson-Grove

*Federal Highway Administration
Connecticut Division Administrator*



We are very pleased to honor **Ms. Amy Jackson-Grove** with the distinction of WTS Connecticut Valley Chapter Woman of the Year. WTS Connecticut Valley Chapter's 2009 Woman of the Year is an outstanding role model in transportation, a leader who has made outstanding contributions to the transportation industry, and a woman who has directly contributed toward the advancement of women. Amy, who through her career achievements and generous support of women in the industry has advanced the reputation of women in transportation.

Ms. Jackson-Grove has been the Division Administrator for the Connecticut Division since March 2009. In her role as Division Administrator, Amy leads the administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in the State. She directs a diverse staff of engineers, planners, realty, financial specialists, and support personnel. She works with the Connecticut Department of Transportation, Congressional representatives, MPOs, local elected officials, and resource agencies to provide leadership and guidance in the identification of surface transportation needs and related priorities which, when implemented, carry out USDOT's national transportation and safety program goals.

Amy joined the Federal Highway Administration in 1988 and entered the Highway Engineer Training Program. While on the training program, she was stationed in Tennessee, South Carolina, Alabama, and Massachusetts (The Big Dig). After graduation from the training program, she held Assistant Area Engineer, Area Engineer and Program Manager positions in Washington State, Maryland, Connecticut and New York Division Offices. In Washington State, she was heavily involved with the reconstruction of the Spirit Lake Memorial Highway projects. In 1992, she took the position of Area Engineer in the Maryland Division where she provided review and oversight of the Federal-aid Program for the Baltimore Beltway area and the northeastern part of the State. Then, in 1994, she was promoted to the Program Manager in Connecticut where she was staff director of the planning, research, technology transfer and environment programs. In 2005, she assumed the position of Assistant Division Administrator in New York.

Amy is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire where she received a Bachelors of Science in Civil Engineering.

Amy has been very supportive of WTS and participated in our signature Transportation Mini-Series (TMS) Program, hosting the rail panel discussion during the TMS Dinner Program. She is generous with her time and talents, always willing and offering to assist the Connecticut Valley Chapter. It is with sincere appreciation and admiration that WTS Connecticut Valley awards Ms. Amy Jackson-Grove our Woman of the Year.

2009 Employer of the Year **Connecticut Department of Transportation**



The Employer of the Year Award is presented to the **Connecticut Department of Transportation**. The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) has consistently supported the goals and purpose of WTS, contributed to transportation through its commitment to excellence and quality, has an outstanding record of affirmative action in hiring and promoting at all employment levels, and supports continuing education of its employees.

CTDOT employees have actively participated in and promoted the educational forums, professional development seminars, and networking events offered by WTS, and one of WTS' 2009 apprentices is a CTDOT employee.

The Connecticut Department of Transportation was formed in 1969, through the merger of four public agencies: the State Highway Department, the Department of Aeronautics, the Transportation Authority and the Commissioners of Steamship Terminals.

The mission of the CTDOT is "to provide a safe and efficient intermodal transportation network that improves the quality of life and promotes economic vitality for the State and the region." CTDOT is responsible for the development and operation of highways, railroads, mass transit systems, ports, waterways and aviation facilities, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the State of Connecticut.

Some of the projects CTDOT is currently overseeing are:

- The New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Commuter Rail
- New Britain to Hartford Busway
- The Danbury Commuter Rail Centralized Train Control and Signalization System
- I-95 New Haven Harbor Crossing
- Route 7 Reconstruction and Widening in Wilton
- Relocation of Route 72 in Bristol and Plainville

Congratulations to the Connecticut Department of Transportation, WTS 2009 Employer of the Year and Commissioner Joseph Marie, who is accepting the award.

2009 Member of the Year

Ms. Kim Tran



WTS Connecticut Valley Chapter is pleased to present the 2009 Member of the Year award to **Ms. Kim Tran**. Ms. Tran is WTS CT Valley Chapter's Newsletter Committee Chair and Website Manager. She joined the CT Valley Chapter in 2008, and quickly contributed to the success of the Connecticut Valley Chapter in 2009. Over the past two years, Kim has been an energetic and spirited member of WTS. Kim is very organized, creative and has a true passion for WTS. In the fall of 2009 Kim attended the WTS Chapter Leadership Training held in Miami where she actively participated in networking and the exchange of ideas and strategies with other chapters and learned about Chapter management and new WTS web-based tools.

Kim graduated from University of Vermont in 2000 with a B.S. in Civil Engineering. She is a Civil Project Engineer with STV Incorporated, and is part of STV's Transportation and Infrastructure Group. She has worked on various projects in New York City, but her current project assignment is working on the Arch Tunnel Project in STV's New Jersey office. A Project Manager whom Kim has worked with provided the following testimonial: "Kim has a winning attitude that embraces challenges and encourages collaboration...she draws the best out of every person, promotes talent and shares successes."

Kim is involved with several professional and community organizations in addition to WTS. She serves as an Advisor of the New England Board of Higher Education at MIT where she provides engineering support and assists college students with developing their career goals. Additionally, Kim is a Judge Member of the Delaware Valley Regional Fair & the Intel International Engineering Fair, which are part of the Society for Science. Kim also uses her technical expertise to judge Science & Engineering projects from the students around the world. In May, Kim will be traveling to San Jose to participate in this Program. Kim also serves as an Advisor on the Committee of the International Youth Association; Kim's role is to promote Youth Leadership. She is also a member of the Planning Committee of the Future City, a youth organization providing technical support to help students understand engineering.

Kim came to America 1992 at the age of 16; in her own words, "I have sacrificed and worked with every possible opportunity I've had to make me what I am today." Kim's first name is actually "Khanh" and her middle name, "Kim." People have called her Kim since she has been in the United States.

Kim's real joy is that she loves working with kids and helping them in both education and life skills.

It is with great pleasure that the WTS Connecticut Valley Chapter presents Ms. Tran with our 2009 Member of the Year award.

2009 Innovative Project of the Year **HAKS — Gold Star Bridge over Thames River** **Gusset Plates**



The collapse of the I-35 West Bridge in Minneapolis, Minnesota on August 1, 2007 was a tragic incident that refocused national attention to the state of bridges on our nation's aging highway system. The 8-lane steel truss arch bridge failed catastrophically during the evening rush-hour, killing 13 people and injuring 150. Investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) conclusions included there was a general practice of "inadequate attention to gusset plates during inspections" and "an exclusion of gusset plates in load rating analysis." As a result of the investigation, Federal

Highway Administration (FHWA) issued guidelines for analysis and evaluation of gusset plates and urged all states to analyze all steel truss bridges on the national highway system, in accordance with these guidelines.

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) immediately implemented action to carry-out inspection, analysis and evaluation of gusset plate connections in steel truss bridges. HAKS was assigned 9 steel truss bridges including the Gold Star Bridge, a twin bridge structure carrying Interstate I-95 over the Thames River in New London / Groton. It is the largest structure in the state with over 1,000,000 sq. ft. of deck area, a span length of 6,000-ft. and a total of 57 spans. The magnitude and complexity of this project can be appreciated by understanding that HAKS physically inspected and evaluated over 500 gusset plate connections contained in over 22 deck truss spans on the Gold Star Bridge alone. Two spans of the older I-95NB Bridge included gusset plate connection details similar to the ones on the I-35W bridge.

Work included hands-on field inspections of gusset plate connections at each of the 9 bridges. Collecting accurate as-built information was paramount to fully assess the safety and structural adequacy of the truss bridge and to assure the load rating analysis is truly reflective of the actual as-built and deteriorated conditions at the connections. Each span of each bridge presented its own set of problems and challenges in terms of traffic control, inspector access and safety, and safety of the traveling public. Various means of access were used to inspect the fracture critical gusset plate connections.

The outcome of the gusset plate analysis and evaluation revealed that some gusset plates were found to have section loss due to corrosion and exhibited enhanced sensitivity due to this section loss. These instances were identified and documented for CTDOT, allowing them to monitor these plates in the near term and plan for their rehabilitation in the long term. In addition, HAKS worked closely with CTDOT to develop rehabilitation and strengthening methods, and to prioritize the repairs; thus, prolonging or extending the long term life of this important infrastructure resource. More importantly, the analysis and evaluation of the majority of the gusset plate connections concluded that they were structurally adequate for present day vehicular loading.

HAKS received outstanding Performance Evaluations and recognition from CTDOT for their technical abilities and thoroughness in performing the gusset plate analysis, and for the timely and efficient completion of the work.

2009 Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award **Greater Bridgeport Transit (GBT) Diversity Committee**



WTS Connecticut Valley Chapter is pleased, in this first year of awarding the Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award, to recognize the accomplishments of the **Greater Bridgeport Transit (GBT) Diversity Committee**. The GBT Diversity Committee has truly exhibited extraordinary efforts and initiatives to facilitate professional opportunities for women and minorities within their organization and in the communities they serve. And, the GBT Diversity Committee has contributed significantly to promoting diversity, inclusion and multi-cultural awareness not only within their organization but also within their community.

In 2002, under the direction of the Human Resource Manager, Crystal Engram, an employee-based Diversity Committee was established. The Diversity Committee is comprised of 10 members who serve on a voluntary basis and without a budget. The Committee is representative of a cross-section of employees, with four men and six women participating. With respect to the racial composition of the Committee, one member is Caucasian, six are Black or of African descent and three are Latino or of Hispanic descent.

The GBT Diversity Committee addresses human resources issues such as improving internal communications and interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, and achieving service quality and employee productivity and efficiency. The Committee places a high value on mutual respect and acknowledges the differences people bring to the workplace. The Committee works together while being grounded in individuality.

The GBT Diversity Committee's projects and/or activities promote diversity, inclusion, and multi-cultural awareness while supporting the goals and mission of WTS. These projects include but are not limited to: participation in Bridgeport St. Patrick's Day Parade, Luis Munoz Marin School Black History Event(s), Declaration of Rosa Parks Day, Milford Anti-Hate Taskforce Diversity Day, Bridgeport Minority Expo, GBT Annual Family Day(s), making donations to national agencies such as the Southern Regional Sickle Cell Association, American Red Cross/(Tsunami Relief), taking part in cultural luncheons, Arts & Craft Day(s), establishment of a Healthy Club, organization of Employee Appreciation Week, in-house College Fairs, decoration of a "Halloween Haunted Bus" and handing out candy to neighborhood children, organization of successful food and toy drives during the holiday seasons, Easter basket drives that increased from donating to 50 children in area hospitals and shelters in 2003 to 350 children in 2009, volunteering for the American Cancer Society and Special Olympics. The Committee is very proud of these events.

The GBT Diversity Committee has also promoted diversity in the transit community beyond GBT. In 2007 GBT Diversity Committee members shared information and their success with how to establish and manage a Diversity Committee with CTTransit. This information sharing was instrumental in CTTransit establishing a Diversity Committee.

The GBT Diversity Committee clearly supports the goals and mission of WTS, improving the quality of life for GBT employees and the community. WTS is truly pleased to acknowledge the work of the GBT Diversity Committee with our 2009 Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award.

2009 Scholarship Recipient

Ms. Enisa Alanaj

Central Connecticut State University

Enisa Alanaj is a sophomore at Central Connecticut State University studying civil engineering with a focus on transportation. Enisa is a recipient of the 2008 Klewin/D'Amato Scholarship, the Lincoln Mongillo Scholarship and 2009 Anthony and Helen G. Bichum Scholarship. She is interested in pursuing a Masters Degree and eventually a PhD with a focus on bridge and highway design. Aside from having a passion for engineering she is an accomplished artist that has shown her paintings in galleries and has won juried exhibitions.

“...she has a solid background in physics and mathematics and she demonstrated an excellent grasp of concepts...Enisa is motivated, hard-working, and pleasant. With her motivation and intelligence, I believe that she will be successful in her future career in the field of engineering and become a role model for women in Engineering.” *Alfred A. Gates, Ph.D., P.E., Chair Department of Engineering, CCSU*

Marcia Ferranto

WTS International Executive Director



Ms. Marcia Ferranto is the Executive Director of the Women's Transportation Seminar. She became the Executive Director early in 2010 and brings more than two decades of experience to the position in advocating educational and career development for women. Involved in association management for more than 10 years, she most recently served as the Executive Director of the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation in Delaware. Among her accomplishments with the Foundation, Ms. Ferranto refocused the organization's mission and vision to an educational establishment, spearheaded a new master plan and managed more than 300 staff and volunteers. She built and balanced its annual operating budget by developing a successful program of pursuing new funding, grants and donations. Ms. Ferranto also held posts with the Delaware Art Museum including Acting Director, Chief Financial Officer and Director of Finance and Human Resources; and ran two of her own accounting and payroll firms.

Ms. Ferranto received her Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from Widener University in Chester, Pennsylvania. She is also a 2006 graduate of the Museum Leadership Institute (MLI), Getty Leadership Institute. Ms. Ferranto is a former member of the Forum of Executive Women and the American Association of Museums; and has been a guest speaker at the New York University, Masters Program, Steinhardt School of Education, Department of Art & Art Professions.

As Executive Director of WTS, Ms. Ferranto is responsible for the overall administration, management, and operations of the organization, including oversight of business operations, planning and evaluation, international programs and events, policy development and implementation, and fiscal management, including fundraising. Additionally, Ms. Ferranto represents WTS at various transportation venues and events, interacting with other organizations, and promoting WTS' mission, goals, and our vision of *Transforming Transportation through the Advancement of Women*.

"I am delighted to welcome Marcia as our new Executive Director. She brings a wealth of experience in all aspects of leadership and management of non-profit organizations that will make her a valuable asset to WTS and our membership," said Elaine Dezenski, President of WTS International.

WTS Connecticut Valley Chapter joins our Sister Chapters and WTS International in welcoming Marcia to the WTS family!