

WTS 2016 Transportation Award Winners to be Recognized at Conference

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Washington, DC ([PRWEB](#)) April 13, 2016 -- WTS International, the association for the professional advancement of women in transportation, has selected the winners of its annual recognition awards for 2016. Each of the six awards will be presented at an awards banquet on May 19 during the 2016 WTS Annual Conference in Austin, Texas. The recognition award winners are:

- WTS Woman of the Year – Therese McMillan, Chief Planning Officer, Los Angeles County MTA
- WTS Member of the Year – Kirsten Bowen, National Practice Lead for Highway Design, Michael Baker International
- WTS Honorable Ray LaHood Award – Frederick Salvucci, Senior Lecturer, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Former Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation
- WTS Employer of the Year – Multnomah County, Oregon
- WTS Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award – Senator Karen Spilka, Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means
- WTS Innovative Transportation Solutions Award – Indego Bike Share, Philadelphia

The 2016 WTS Woman of the Year, Therese McMillan, has been a constant, active voice in advancing women in transportation. Advancing the careers and personal development opportunities for young women, she has dedicated her time to roundtable discussions with students and young professionals, she's presented at the WTS Transportation YOU DC Youth Summit, and last year she met with teenagers as part of a program that encourages at-risk girls to explore male-dominated fields, and spoke to them concerning the challenges and rewards of being a female in transportation. McMillan has mentored students and young professionals throughout her career, and views this as one of the most important responsibilities as a transportation leader.

The 2016 WTS Member of the Year, Kirsten Bowen, first learned about WTS in 2007 from a coworker. Once involved, she determined quickly that Northeast Ohio was a region unserved so she set out to ratify a local WTS chapter there and volunteered to serve in the role of President. Bowen was chapter president for five years while the chapter established itself and began to expand. She subsequently served as Past President for two years and then moved into a role of Programs Committee Chair. Bowen also supports WTS at both the regional and national levels, serving on the WTS Central Region Board and on a seat on the WTS International Advisory Board.

The first-ever WTS Honorable Ray LaHood Award Winner, Fred Salvucci, has had a knack for listening to and appointing women who shared his concern about the human impacts of transportation projects and the need to build coalitions. The women he appointed to prominent positions during his tenure at the Massachusetts DOT included Ann Hershfang, Claire Barrett, and Jane Garvey, who became Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration. Salvucci hired Kay Gibbs and Sandra Warren, talented advocates who implemented programs to increase diversity at the modal agencies and at private contractors in public construction. The City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are still benefitting from Fred's visionary leadership that preserved rail corridors, expanded rail services, and built highways that work without destroying neighborhoods.

The 2016 WTS Employer of the Year, Multnomah County, strives to be an inclusive organization for recruiting and retaining its employees. The county demonstrates this inclusivity with flexible work schedules, work out-of-class opportunities, apprenticeship opportunities to attract non-traditional employees, and assessing the minimum qualifications for positions that emphasize transferable skills such as life skills gained through household management or volunteer opportunities. This assessment encourages candidates to apply that might traditionally believe they lack the skills. A strong advocate for training employees to grow in their position and prepare them for future advancement within the county, Multnomah's County Chair's Office provides a quarterly Executive Leadership Series for all executive management at the county, including department and division directors. Topics such as succession planning, mindfulness in the workplace, equity and empowerment, sustainability in management, and creativity and collaboration are some of the topics addressed in the past.

2016 WTS Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award winner, Massachusetts State Senator Karen Spilka, is a trailblazer for promoting equality and opportunity for women. As the Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, Spilka is a leader in her own right, and she uses her position to advance leadership opportunities for other women. Her legislation, S.1007, the Women on Boards Resolution, was unanimously passed by the Massachusetts Senate by a vote of 38 to 0. Spilka persuaded the House to act on the Resolution, too, passing the House 156 to 0. Thanks to her leadership, Massachusetts companies are now encouraged to adopt policies and practices to increase gender diversity in their boards of directors and senior management groups. Spilka is also a co-sponsor this session of the Equal Pay bill, passed by the Senate earlier this year, which seeks to bridge the gender wage gap by ensuring equal pay for comparable work, establish pay transparency, and require fairness in hiring. Last session, Senator Spilka was the lead sponsor of legislation which was successfully signed into law to create the MetroWest Commission on the Status on Women. This is a 9-member commission charged with examining all issues concerning women and girls in the area and identifying ways to advance equality.

The WTS Innovative Transportation Solutions award is awarded to a project led by women that makes a difference in the lives of a community and its users. Launched in April 2015 by the City of Philadelphia, Indego Bike Share offers round-the-clock access to public transportation with over 700 bikes located at 70 stations. Indego was planned, implemented, and is now managed by several women. Philadelphia's bike share initiative has prioritized social inclusivity and equity from its inception—Indego has been widely heralded as an exceptional example of best practices in this new industry. The city has sought to maximize bike share's value to communities and to cultivate community ownership of station sites through a comprehensive engagement process that has included surveys, community ambassadors, community site visits and events, and approximately 100 meetings with representatives of Philadelphia neighborhoods and business associations. Prior to launch, a series of focus groups made up of low-income Philadelphians helped determine hard and soft barriers to potential bike share use in those households. This work is unique among US cities in that it relied on pre-implementation research in the local market. The results helped develop a pricing model for bike share that was simple, transparent, and appealing to users.

The Awards Banquet will be held during the 2016 WTS Annual Conference, being held in Austin, TX, May 18 – 20. As WTS International's flagship event, it attracts hundreds of corporate and governmental industry leaders worldwide, including executives, CEOs, government administrators, and leading engineering authorities. For more information about the conference and about the 2016 Recognition Awards winners, visit www.WTSinternational.org and <https://www.wtsinternational.org/about-wts/2016-recognition-award-winners/>

WTS International, headquartered in Washington, DC, seeks to attract, retain, and advance women in



transportation. As the industry's premier multi-modal association, WTS boasts a network of more than 6,000 transportation professionals—women and men from across the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. Every transportation mode is represented, as is every service within the industry. From federal leaders to engineers and planners, the WTS membership base represents nearly 1,500 companies and 400 agencies in more than 90 cities. More information can be found at www.WTSinternational.org.



Contact Information

Mary Petto

WTS International

<http://www.wtsinternational.org>

+1 (202) 955-5085 Ext: 105

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