

We Can't See the Work-Forest for the **Disabili-Trees** PAGE 10

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2022 40 Under 40 Honorees Bring New Momentum to the Industry

The magazine's 14th iteration of this signature recognition program spotlights the individuals pushing the transit industry to new levels.

Welcome to our 14th annual 40 Under 40 issue. Since 2008, Mass Transit has compiled a list of emerging leaders within the transit industry to showcase the drive, ambition, entrepreneurship and can-do attitudes of individuals who will be tasked with carrying the industry forward.

This year brought a record number of nominations, and the result is a group of professionals who represent the breadth of specialties required to keep transit a competitive and innovative industry. The Class of 2022 includes mechanics, operators, engineers, data specialists, planning and policy experts, safety professionals and transit-oriented development experts.

Close to 70 percent represent public entities from a mix of large, medium, small and tribal networks; 45 percent of honorees are women and the average number of years working in transit is around nine. Approximately half have earned professional, graduate or doctoral degrees or professional certifications.

Several honorees are pushing the envelope on best practices by piloting new and more reliable ways to integrate services, spearheading new service options and figuring out how to better engage with both their communities and colleagues.

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Beyond their professional development, honorees are involved in dozens of mobility-centric and urban planning associations with various aims and non-profits – some not attached to transit specifically – but all with missions that encourage the advancement of various groups of people. Mentorship is also a focus of this group with many involved in at-work or industry programs.

Outside of work, you'll find this group to be comprised of musicians, cooks and bakers, two former D1 football players, parents, an Eagle Scout and several world travelers.

All are positive change agents within their individual organizations and the transit industry. I sincerely hope you enjoy reading about this year's class as much as our team enjoyed getting to share their stories. Please visit the 40 Under 40 page on our website, masstransitmag.com/40-under-40; where you'll find additional facts about their work, deeper first-person viewpoints and more information about their accomplishments.

Mischa Wanek-Libman

Mischa Wanek-Libman, editor in chief

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PURDUE UNIVERSITY was awarded the first-place prize for its EASI RIDER project.

USDOT names three winners of Inclusive Design Challenge

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) named the first, second and third place winners of its first Inclusive Design Challenge. The challenge launched more than two years ago to spur innovation in automated vehicle accessibility. The \$5 million Inclusive Design Challenge awarded its first place \$1 million prize to Purdue University, the second-place prize of \$700,000 was awarded to AbleLink Smart Living Technologies and the third-place prize of \$300,000 was awarded to the University of Maine. The multi-stage program began in January 2020 with a Request for Information where applicants submitted their projects in writing. In January 2021, USDOT awarded \$3 million to 10 semifinalists in the challenge to develop prototypes of their design with the final winners selected from these projects.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21275514](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21275514)

which will help GRT as it continues to expand service frequency and services into new areas and communities within the region. The new building includes 22 maintenance bays, two service lanes, two bus wash stations and office space for GRT staff. The building will also support GRT's transition to a zero-emission bus fleet and will be home of the new electric buses and charging infrastructure pilot in 2023.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21274600](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21274600)

FTA issues NOFO for rail station accessibility program

► The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity for \$343 million available through the All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP). According to the National Transit Database, approximately 927 U.S. rail stations – about a quarter of all U.S. rail stations – are non-ADA accessible. However, when the data isolates legacy systems constructed prior to 1990, the percentage jumps to 48 percent being non-ADA accessible. ASAP targets legacy rail systems where transit riders with support devices such as wheelchairs or crutches, people experiencing a temporary disability, caregivers and parents with strollers are adversely impacted by the lack of ADA accommodations. Applications will be accepted through Sept. 30, 2022.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21275331](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21275331)

MTA announces universal subway wireless connectivity plan

► A public-private partnership was announced by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to provide cell coverage throughout all 418 track miles of subway tunnels, along with an expansion of Wi-Fi service to all 191 above-ground subway and 21 Staten Island Railway stations. All underground stations currently have cell service and Wi-Fi. The proposed agreement would expand this to provide connectivity in the tunnels between stations and in above-ground stations. Overall, the project is expected to result in more than \$1 billion in benefit for the MTA and its customers over the life of the agreement in terms of service provided, additional revenue and cost savings. Work on the project will begin immediately and be completed in 10 years. Riders will be able to use the new services as each section is completed.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21275524](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21275524)



THE NORTHFIELD Drive Maintenance Facility will support the modernization and growth of transit in the Region of Waterloo.

GRT celebrates opening of Northfield Drive Maintenance Facility

► Grand River Transit (GRT) celebrated the grand opening of the new Northfield Drive Maintenance Facility, which will support the modernization and growth of transit in the Region of Waterloo. After years of expanding service and growing ridership, GRT has outgrown two other maintenance and storage facilities in Kitchener and Cambridge. With space for 200 buses, the 305,000-square-foot facility can house articulated buses,

Continued ►

People in the News

Sound Transit

Julie Timm will begin in her new role as Sound Transit CEO on Sept. 26, 2022, following the unanimous

appointment from the board. She currently serves as the CEO of Greater Richmond Transit Company in Richmond, Va., and will relocate to the Seattle area. Sound Transit calls Timm a highly collaborative leader who forges strong relationships with community groups and partners and says she is known for building an agency culture focused on dedication to public service and equity. Her previous experience includes serving as chief development officer for WeGo Public Transit in Nashville, Tenn.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21272240](https://www.MassTransitmag.com/21272240)



Timm

Société de transport de Montréal (STM)

The STM Board of Directors selected Marie-Claude Léonard to be the agency's next CEO following a "thorough selection process." Léonard's 30-year transit career began at STM when she was a student. During her time at STM, Léonard spent 20 years in management and was appointed executive director of bus and metro operations in September 2021. She has been a member of the executive committee for the past six years and has served on several international committees. Léonard signed an initial five-year agreement with the STM Board.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21275162](https://www.MassTransitmag.com/21275162)



Léonard

South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA)

David Dech has been named by the SFRTA Governing Board to be executive director of the agency. He began his new role Aug. 15. He previously served as vice president of rail operations for Capital Metro in Austin, Texas, where he helped open a new downtown station, complete the construction of five passing rail sidings and install Positive Train Control four months ahead of the mandate. SFMTA says Dech joins during "a pivotal time" as the authority prepares to expand Tri-Rail service into downtown Miami.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21275931](https://www.MassTransitmag.com/21275931)



Dech

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Jennifer DeBruhl, who had been serving as acting director of DRPT since March 2022, was appointed by Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin to fill the role permanently. DeBruhl joined DRPT in 2016 as the chief of public transportation following more than 20 years of public service to the transportation community at the Virginia Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration. At DRPT, DeBruhl led the evaluation, assistance and execution of several programs through times of significant change.

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DeBruhl

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PEOPLE & PLACES

California State Transportation Agency awards nearly \$800 million for transit and intercity rail projects

► Nearly \$800 million was awarded by the California State Transportation Agency to 23 projects statewide to expand transit and intercity rail service and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The fifth cycle of Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grants kicks off a period

of historic investment to improve and expand public transportation throughout California while positioning the state to compete for new federal funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. In addition to the \$796.1 million awarded, the recently enacted 2022-23 state budget includes \$7.65 billion in TIRCP funding from the General Fund over the next three years. Projects receiving funding come from all regions of the



SFMTA WAS awarded \$116 million for its Core Capacity projects.

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state – from Humboldt and Sonoma Counties in the north to Riverside and San Diego Counties in the south – and will result in the purchase of 393 zero-emission buses, 51 zero-emission shuttles or microtransit vehicles, eight new light-rail vehicles and two zero-emission ferries. Since 2015, TIRCP has provided more than \$6.6 billion in funding to nearly 100 projects.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21273723](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21273723)

PTSTA to open SunRunner BRT in October

► The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority's (PTSTA) SunRunner bus rapid transit (BRT) will make its debut in the Tampa Bay region Oct. 21, 2022. The SunRunner features semi-dedicated lanes, limited stops and safety enhancements for riders including level boarding platforms and crosswalks. The 10.3-mile line will connect St. Pete Beach with downtown St. Petersburg. It will include 30 stations with buses running every 15 minutes during the day and every 30 minutes in the evening.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21274114](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21274114)

MORE NEWS AT A GLANCE

► RailWorks Corp. has entered a partnership with Miller Ingenuity to provide exclusive marketing and sales support for Miller's ZoneGuard product line.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21266324](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21266324)

► TripSpark and its parent company Modaxo Inc. acquired Routematch from Uber Technologies. Routematch's suite of solutions will be brought under the TripSpark umbrella.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21266324](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21266324)

► Transdev Rail Inc. has signed a contract with TekTracking LLC to implement the company's TIMPS and SITE platforms for management infrastructure inspection and testing.

➔ [MassTransitmag.com/21265013](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21265013)

For more information, visit www.MassTransitmag.com/21207835

The Passenger Experience Starts with a Stop

When it comes to transit stops, it's not enough to be durable, they must also reflect the character of the community they serve.

Tolar celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2021. How has the mission and approach of the company evolved during that time?

In 1991, our founder Gary Tolar noticed a need for safe, high-quality bus shelters and that's exactly what he built. To this day our mission remains steadfast, to fabricate quality-built bus shelters and outdoor street furniture from our 53,000-square-foot plant.

As times have evolved so have we, recognizing that bus shelters are critical community connectors. We take pride in helping communities recognize that clean, well-lit bus shelters that provide critical passenger travel information and promote multi-mobility choices, improve access to education, social services, healthcare and more.

So, while yes, at Tolar, we produce quality products using top-notch materials, we are equally committed to creating shelters and street furniture that connect people with communities and promote a welcoming landscape in downtowns, neighborhoods, on college and work campuses and at shopping centers.

As we look towards our next 30 years, we recognize this one simple truth - a passenger's journey starts at a stop. It's where their travels begin and where their impressions are formed. We take our role in their journey very seriously.

The transit industry aims to weave sustainability through all aspects; how is Tolar supporting these efforts with its products?

Encouraging sustainability is critical for any business to succeed. Those in public transportation know that attractive yet functional bus shelters encourage mass transit utilization, which is an environmental positive by itself. Tolar Manufacturing takes sustainability practices further by working with recycled materials



to fabricate shelters and benches and uses a powder-coat process that produces no VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds). Further, we offer LED lighting options powered by low-draw 110-volt and, of course, solar solutions have become common place. With climate change taking further hold on our planet, Tolar also recognizes the importance of providing shade equity for communities looking to provide sustainable relief for its residents.

Can you share the concept of creating a Sense of Place™ and why it should be an important consideration for transit agencies?

Our purpose-driven designs balance style with function resulting in bus shelters and outdoor furniture that provide modern amenities while transforming a community's outdoor environment into a memorable space that creates a true Sense of Place™.

Guided by this philosophy, we design and fabricate transit shelters that connect communities and help improve the ridership experience. In Baltimore, Md., we built nine industrial yet modern modular shelters on a 3,300-acre site. The highly branded shelters incorporate amenities crucial to the Baltimore area, including double wind screen walls, under roof security lighting, and overhead infrared heaters with controls and create a Sense of Place™ for the thousands of workers traversing this diverse employment property.


We're also proud of the 41 Papel Picado themed shelters we built for Santa Ana, Calif. These Mexican folk art themed shelters embody the delicate designs created from cutting colorful sheets of tissue paper; except we did it with steel. Not only

do the shelters blend form and function to create a Sense of Place™ for this largely Latinx community, they also serve an important purpose providing seating, solar-powered lighting, shade and shelter.

We strongly believe at Tolar Manufacturing that bus shelters can serve the needs of the community while promoting a sense of pride, which we call, creating a Sense of Place™.

Technology is helping move shelters to new levels of connectedness and safety; how is Tolar working to deliver smarter shelters?

Our line of shelters has grown to include SmartPlace® technology with digital passenger information displays, charging stations, solar-powered free-standing illumination and more. Regarding passenger information, the connectivity of real-time information within bus shelters allows transit agencies to communicate beyond next bus arrivals to include broader, and sometimes critical, in-the-moment advisories.

In San Luis Obispo, Calif., our shelters are in a high pedestrian traffic area and include low-draw LED lighting and oversize back-to-back media display kiosks along with real-time bus arrival information. Rounding out the passenger experience, the shelters are surrounded by ticketing machines and bicycle amenities to help support first-mile, last-mile connections. These third-party amenities exemplify the true flexibility of Tolar-built shelters as they provide opportunities to maximize passenger comfort, connectivity and convenience. 



Patrick Merrick is the executive vice president at Tolar Manufacturing Company, Inc.

We Can't See the Work-Forest for the Disabili-Trees

Equity for the disability community requires us to focus more on what people can do as opposed to what their disabilities might prevent them from doing.

By **Christian Kent**, contributor

We have known for years that a shortage of qualified transit professionals was looming, and we have seen a generation of workers retiring in great numbers. Exacerbated by the pandemic, the workforce shortage and loss of institutional knowledge has become an epidemic of its own.

Meanwhile, within the paratransit discipline, we have talked for decades about “20 percent of the U.S. population consists of people with disabilities and 70 percent are unemployed,” and “many people with disabilities can succeed in the workplace with or without reasonable accommodation or assistive technology, but both are available upon request.” Clearly, there are plenty of people with disabilities with the potential to work, yet the unemployment

rate in the disability community remains unchanged, even with the acute personnel shortages we are now facing.

Another ubiquitous topic in the industry right now is equity. In recent years, inequities in race and gender have captured the attention of the country and the introspection on equity has extended to the delivery of public transportation services to various constituencies. U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg has added emphasis to this issue by pointing out the impact of inequitable highway and transit investments on disadvantaged populations and how profound and long-lasting this impact can be on economic development and opportunities for those affected. Secretary Buttigieg is attempting to channel some of his generous infrastructure budget toward righting some of these wrongs and realigning transportation investments to support economic growth and access to jobs and health care for disadvantaged populations. This is encouraging, but historically, the focus on “disadvantaged” seems to target low-income populations but without



recognizing that this often coincides with the disability community.

When it comes to disability, the notion of equity is oversimplified. After all, we have the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – so we have eliminated discrimination and architectural barriers for the disability community, right? If it were only so that curb cuts, sidewalks and accessible pathways were golden roads to employment, but they are not. They lead right up to the front door of agencies and businesses but, unfortunately, the path ends as soon as a person with a disability tries to enter. There are many reasons why the unemployment rate within the disability community remains so high and it starts with the collective perception of the community itself. Access for people with disabilities is often portrayed as furnishing paratransit service to a medical appointment or aiding people who are frail. This image suggests that people with disabilities cannot be independent, much less obtain gainful employment and

“With the significant increase in remote work options and assistive technology, people with disabilities can play valuable roles in the workforce now more than ever.”

thrive. When people with disabilities are seen in a work environment, they stand out because they are a super-minority and, unfortunately, this reinforces the misconception that the number of people with disabilities who can work is very small. But therein lies an opportunity.

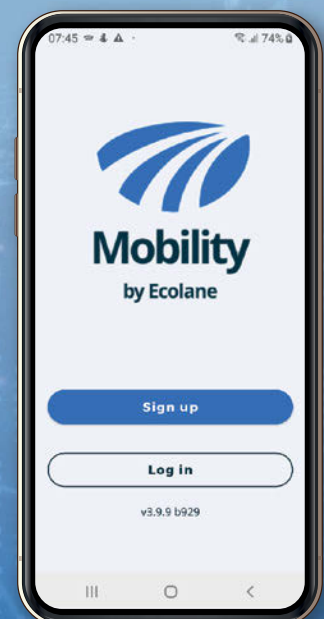
With the significant increase in remote work options and assistive technology, people with disabilities can play valuable roles in the workforce now more than ever. Within the public transit industry, not only can they perform work, but they can also bring a much-needed perspective to organizations on how to serve customers with disabilities. In this way, we make our transportation systems more disability

friendly, and we can draw from a largely untapped resource of future transit riders at a time when we really need them.

Equity for the disability community requires more focus on what people can do as opposed to what their disabilities might prevent them from doing, and when we make assumptions about people’s abilities before giving them an opportunity to demonstrate them, we are not only treating them inequitably, but we are also overlooking potential assets. It is the same concept as “having the right people at the table” – or in this parlance – “on the bus.” Speaking of which – when was the last time you saw a transit executive or board member with a (visible) disability? Some of the work that people with disabilities can do falls in the category of leadership and agencies and communities would be better served to have the disability perspective in leadership when policy and investment decisions are being made. This kind of talent is out there, but it must be a priority to find it. So how do we do this?



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Looking from the outside in, we must ask ourselves, do we appear to be a disability-friendly organization? Specifically:

• **Accessible facilities and services** – are they accessible and amply marked with accessible, directional signage? Are bathrooms accessible? Workspaces? Meeting rooms? Emergency evacuation plans? Transportation?

• **Accessible information** – are materials for employees, customers and other correspondents produced and offered in accessible formats? Is the website accessible? Customer surveys? Emails and attached documents? Video-conferencing and other software?

• **Technology** – do we have an awareness of existing assistive equipment and how to obtain it for employee use?

• **Marketing** – are people with disabilities featured in images of the work-

force and customer environment? As spokespersons?

• **Job advertisement** – do ads include “minorities, women and persons with disabilities encouraged to apply?” Do we place ads where people with disabilities will find them?

• **Job fairs** – do we have ADA personnel on site; accessibility accommodations; and/or participation of advocacy organizations?

• **Job descriptions** – do they include physical/mental ability requirements? Are we asking for the appropriate skill for the job (or are we asking for more than necessary to get the job done or for skills/experience that are not relevant to the work being performed)? Are there positions available within the organization that can be held by people with disabilities?

• **Training** – do we have people with disabilities participating in the training pro-

vided to the workforce for ADA compliance, sensitivity and safety instruction? Paratransit eligibility? Travel training? Emergency procedures and drills?

• **Compliance** – are people with disabilities included and engaged in self-assessments of items such as 508 compliance of web sites and other materials? ADA requirements?

• **Diversity, equity and inclusion policies and programs** – is disability included?

• **Leadership** – does it include people with disabilities? Is there a career path?

• **Equal opportunity** – although tracking of employment of people with disabilities is not required to the same extent as those protected classes under the Civil Rights Act, do we have a goal or metric for this?

• **Community engagement** – do we have or use an advisory committee to vet issues that could be impactful on riders with disabilities? Do we share ridership and other pertinent data with them to



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highlight how many people with disabilities are using public transit? Do we continually collaborate with them to increase this number?

- **Workforce culture** – do we make it clear to employees that public transit aims to be as accessible as possible, and that paratransit is the backup and not the mode of choice for all people with disabilities? Do we reinforce how our role is to facilitate independence and mobility for all customers? Do we emphasize how much this is a benefit to the agency and its workforce, both economically and socially?



• **Paratransit and other services for customers with disabilities** – are people with disabilities employed in these functional areas? What could be better than enabling people with disabilities to assist and serve other people with disabilities? Who would know the customer perspective better?

• **Paratransit and other services for customers with disabilities** – are people with disabilities employed in these functional areas? What could be better than enabling people with disabilities to assist and serve other people with disabilities? Who would know the customer perspective better?

If you have read this list of questions and think it is too heavy of a lift, consider that you are missing an opportunity to build relationships and add riders to your system (particularly if employees ride free or at a discount); and you are not living up to your full potential as a “world class” organization that truly seeks to be diverse, equitable and inclusive. But also, you are shutting the door on a viable option for filling vacancies in your organization – an untapped but fully capable resource that has been overlooked. If you are interested in elevating your profile as a disability-friendly organization, start with a self-assessment using the questions above, and then take action. Here are some suggestions:

- **Collaborate.** Invite disability advocacy organizations in your area to meet with you – centers for independent living (CILs) are a great start. They form networks with numerous other disability-related organizations and can be an excellent resource for both providing information to you and passing on your job opportunities and orga-

nizational interests to community stakeholders. Learn about the diverse talent pool in the disability community and the various capabilities that are available. Discover where best to advertise your opportunities. Connect with the resources you need to provide appropriate assistive technology for your new employees who may need it.

- **Communicate.** Convey to your various constituencies that you are taking affirmative steps to improve both the accessibility of your organization and inclusion of people with disabilities among its ranks. Host discussions with advisory groups and others to bring ideas forward and identify solutions to historical barriers to job entry. Display the accessibility of your fleet and host events that showcase this for the disability community. Host job fairs, and as suggested above, have

ADA personnel on site; accessibility accommodations; and participation of advocacy organizations.

- **Celebrate.** Share with your community the steps you have taken to become a disability-friendly organization and make it plain that all are welcome. Your success will build on itself as people with disabilities see others who “look like them” thriving in your organization and consider their own potential to do the same.

Following this path can be inspiring – as people with disabilities feel more welcome to join your team, they will seek to assume roles within your organization that you may not have considered could be held by a person with a disability. This is not only a means to fill vacant positions, but also an opportunity to expand our understanding and successful achievement of diversity, equity and inclusion. **MT**



Christian T. Kent is principal at Christian T. Kent Transit Management Consulting, LLC.



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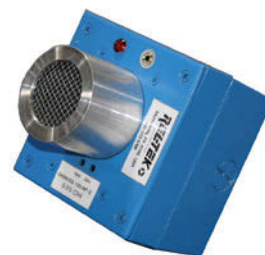
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MASS TRANSIT

PRESENTS

40 UNDER FORTY

NORTH AMERICA RULES THE TRANSIT ROOST

Global systems have been a favorite of past year's honorees and European systems were named at a higher rate this year than the past two. Whether driven by pent up wanderlust or a return to active travel with pandemic-era restrictions easing, systems in London, Paris, Barcelona and Germany were all named as favorites. Lima, Peru, and Brazil's Curitiba bus rapid

transit represented South America and Tokyo's system was the single Asian system to make the list. Most honorees stuck close to home with Vancouver's SkyTrain and New York City Transit among the top named systems. Other North American systems include BART, DART, Montreal, L.A. Metro, EMBARK and MBTA to name a few.



YEARS IN TRANSIT

Least

2.5

Average

9

Most

18



AGE

Oldest

39

Average

35.5

Youngest

27

TRANSIT USE

Run Errands



10%

Recreation



17%

Daily Commute



19%

Everything



24%

On Vacation



29%



For more favorites,
view honorees' online profiles.
MassTransitmag.com/40-under-40



FAVORITE MODE OF TRAVEL WHEN ON VACATION

7%



Bus

9%



Any
Transit

9%



Other

11%



Cycling

17%



Walking

37%



Rail

#1 SKYTRAIN AND NEW YORK CITY SUBWAY



TransLink



Marc A. Hermann/MTA New York City Transit

SMALL TO MID-SIZED SYSTEMS SUCH AS RABBIT TRANSIT, INDYGO AND COTA APPEARED AS FAVORITES



IndyGo

SYSTEMS IN LONDON AND PARIS ARE PERENNIAL FAVORITES AMONG HONOREES



Adobe78282690



TROY MACBETH ABROMAITIS

Director of
Development
Bucci
Developments



TROY MACBETH ABROMAITIS is a member of the Nlaka'pamux Nation. Abromaitis is a senior executive with nearly 20 years of experience, currently working as director of development with the Bucci Group of Companies. His portfolio of work includes successfully managing more than 30 transit-oriented development projects throughout western Canada. Current projects include the Orion Master Plan in Surrey (C\$580+ million/US\$451+ million), Dominion Towers in Calgary (C\$120+ million/US\$93.38 million) and Broadway projects in Vancouver (C\$180+ million/US\$14.01 million). He is a dedicated community builder who has balanced sustainable corporate growth with more than a decade of community service through his commitment to charitable causes, volunteerism and preserving local heritage.

Abromaitis currently sits on the boards of Canadian Home Builder's Association of BC Fraser Valley and Lytton Economic Development Corp. Abromaitis is also the president of the Rotary Club of West Vancouver and on the boards of the West Point Grey Community Center Association and Stó:lo Business Association. Abromaitis served as the president of the Real Estate Institute of British Columbia in 2017-2018 and on the Board of Governors from 2012-2019.

Abromaitis is also a builder, managing broker,

“If you are fortunate enough to find success, it is your opportunity to send the ladder down and lift others up.

mortgage broker, realtor and property manager. He's a registered professional member with the Real Estate Institute of British Columbia and was recognized as a Top 40 Under 40 by the National Centre for American Indian Enterprise Development, Business in Vancouver, Canadian Construction, Business Elite and *Professional Builder Magazine*.

Abromaitis is also a member of Lytton First Nation and his community was decimated by the wildfires in British Columbia last summer. Abromaitis recognized this was a serious issue and he personally fundraised more than C\$60,000 (US\$46,691) to help rebuild his community. He was fortunate to be selected for a National Philanthropy Award by the Canadian Mortgage Awards for his efforts towards helping his community.

FAST FACT: Abromaitis personally raised nearly US\$50,000 for the Lytton First Nation, of which he is a member, to rebuild the community following wildfires in 2021.

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JOSH BENDYK, P.E.

Director of Rail
Operations
VHB



JOSH BENDYK is a leader in rail and transit operations assessment, rail operations planning and railroad engineering, executing integrated and multi-disciplinary projects. During his 12 years with VHB, Bendyk's integrity for quality work, optimism and deep respect for his clients' vision has been instrumental in helping to grow VHB's transit and rail practice. Bendyk's approach is to view challenges as opportunities to deliver innovative solutions. He supports the development and expansion of VHB's Transit & Rail Operations Group and continually shares his service planning, train simulation and signal block and aspect design skills with his team.

He routinely partners with rail and transit agencies and has grown a team of operations analysts, engineers and planners that have a real world understanding when developing and interpreting operations models and railroad capacity. Bendyk has shared his experience with railroad signal design, signal block layouts and aspect design and safe braking analyses, and his team's combined knowledge of railroad operations and signals allows them to not only identify operational issues or challenges through the operations simulation models, but to also solve those issues.

In 2015, Bendyk was recognized with the VHB Innovation Award for his use of rail

“I have been very fortunate to have several excellent mentors so far in my career and those relationships are invaluable.

simulation modeling software to analyze unique and complex infrastructure environments and take the outputs from the software and convert the highly complicated technical information into easy-to-understand graphs and charts. As a result, Bendyk and his team have much more meaningful meetings and discussions with clients and stakeholders who are able to easily understand the complex operations being represented and provide valuable input and feedback.

Bendyk belongs and contributes to many industry organizations including the American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way Association (AREMA), Transportation Research Board (TRB) and New England Railroad Club.

FAST FACT: One of Bendyk's most rewarding experiences has been helping build and expand VHB's rail operations group, while becoming trusted advisors to the firm's clients.

MassTransitmag.com/21276480

CASEY C. BLAZE is the rail equipment manager at the Central Rail Maintenance Facility for GCRTA. Prior to becoming the rail equipment manager, Blaze served as a rail shop supervisor and as a business analyst.

In his current position, he is responsible for the overall success of the shop, frequently communicating with all departments to create a high-performance shop that aligns with customer needs and wants. He consistently researches ways in which he can improve the work environment for his employees, the processes in the shop and the latest technology to improve rail vehicle reliability.

Blaze seamlessly integrates the big picture strategy with the day-to-day operation of the shop. Recently, Blaze spearheaded special committees with APTA and was instrumental in researching and acquiring the Moonbeam System, a UV light disinfecting system that was installed during COVID-19. He also assisted in the creation of the holiday trains.

Colleagues say he is one of the friendliest people and always arrives with a smile and a happy greeting for his co-workers. He can communicate effectively with all his co-workers, from the general manager level to hourly union workers. Despite the amount of work, Blaze consistently finds ways to help his co-workers and other departments. Staff members from

“I strive to pass along as much information as possible to help instill the same passion for public transit to new hires and the public transit community.

training, HR, legal and bus garages have all noted that Blaze is thorough in his knowledge, provides detail about the subject matter and he consistently follows through to ensure understanding by the other team members.

Blaze believes in knowing everything there is to know about the people, equipment and policies that are under his charge. The crew believes in Blaze and his leadership because he takes the time to learn. He is often seen on the shop floor with the crew, learning and growing his knowledge base.

Blaze's commitment and initiative have paid off through numerous industry recognitions, including the APTA 2020 Gold Award for Heavy Rail COVID Innovation and an APTA 2020 AdWheel Award.

FAST FACT: Blaze is an authorized volunteer for Operation Lifesaver, educating the public about rail safety.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276459](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276459)



CASEY C. BLAZE
Rail Equipment Manager
Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA)

40 UNDER FORTY

THE INTERSECTION OF TRANSIT and development is the perfect spot for Chessy Brady, who brings a passion for transit-oriented development (TOD) through her work at RTD in Denver, Colo.

Brady began her planning career in New York City before her family moved to the Denver area and she found an opportunity to join RTD in 2016. Brady created a system to prioritize RTD sites with potential for joint development and codifying an unsolicited proposal procedure that would make working with RTD more predictable for developers while also protecting RTD's operational and fiscal interests. The clarity of the unsolicited proposal procedure continues to help internal and external partners advance TOD projects that will generate ridership and revenue for RTD.

Brady and her team completed a parking study in 2020 that illustrated what many regional partners had known but had been unable to prove: the supply of parking at private residential buildings consistently exceeds demand and far exceeds it at mixed income buildings. Jurisdictions and developers have used the data in the report to reduce parking supply at new residential buildings within one-half mile of high-frequency transit.

In 2021, Brady proposed a new Equitable

“Persist. Planning for and around transit is never easy, but I find that if I stay on course and keep inching forward, change happens.

TOD Policy where RTD committed to push for 35 percent of residential units built on agency land in the following 10 years to be affordable, as determined by local standards. The policy creates flexibility in how RTD evaluates replacement parking when development will occur on existing park-n-rides and clarifies RTD's stance on parking replacement costs and its ability to negotiate the price of land sales and ground leases.

In 2022, Brady and her team advanced an affordable homeownership project on RTD land in a gentrifying neighborhood and issued an RFQ for a high-value site in a transitioning neighborhood. The combination of the unsolicited proposal procedure and Equitable TOD Policy have generated significant recent interest in RTD property.

FAST FACT: Brady had the development knowledge for TOD, but prior to joining RTD, her experience with transit was as a rider in the New York City region.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276437](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276437)



CHESSY BRADY, AICP
Transit-Oriented Development Manager
Regional Transportation District (RTD) of Denver

40 UNDER FORTY



CHARLI CHAMPAGNE, CIM

Workforce Development Manager
NFI Group



CHARLI CHAMPAGNE leverages her experience in learning, development and manufacturing to be NFI Group's champion of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). As a queer woman, Champagne always felt she had to work twice as hard to be taken half as seriously. Champagne joined NFI in 2017 where she started as a training and development specialist, ascending to her current role as workforce development manager where she works cross-functionally to lead NFI's DEI and workforce development initiatives.

Under Champagne's leadership, NFI administered its first ever data-driven organizational-wide DEI survey in 2021, introduced pronoun use in the workplace and worked to bridge the gap between pre-employment and employment with traditional and non-traditional support.

One initiative she's most proud of is New Flyer's Anniston Workforce Development Program. In partnership with the Transportation Diversity Council, Champagne is helping to create pathways and opportunities for individuals to enter the manufacturing industry, regardless of their experience or backgrounds. Champagne has helped 18 individuals from underrepresented, underserved and diverse backgrounds join the Anniston team and has provided support to transition them into new

“Never assume that you know everything and never stop seeking out new experiences.”

roles and opportunities for advancement.

Champagne works to support industry-wide DEI efforts including APTA's Racial Equity Commitment Program. She is part of a local employer consortium focused on building Indigenous representation in businesses and is collaborating in intensive workshops with the goal of identifying employment barriers for Indigenous youth and integrating findings and solutions to ensure NFI workplaces are inclusive to all cultures and people.

Colleagues describe Champagne as ambitious, passionate and with an energy that will impart lasting change on everyone she encounters. Navigating personally and professionally as a queer woman in visible roles will have its challenges, but Champagne's vision and expertise have propelled her ability to build greater inclusivity within NFI and across the transportation industry.

FAST FACT: Champagne has helped 18 individuals join New Flyer's Anniston team through the Anniston Workforce Development Program.
[MassTransitmag.com/21276481](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276481)



RYAN CHELSKI,

PSP, WSO-CSSD
Transportation Safety & Security Manager
Sound Transit



RYAN CHELSKI leads a team responsible for safety and security design and certification of capital projects at Sound Transit. He is also responsible operationally for station inspections, safety and security assessments, employee safety reports, regulatory safety reporting and the oversight of dozens of operational safety and security upgrades/projects.

Chelski served as the DHS/TSI Security Enhancement Through Assessment (SETA) lead, where he directed the design, planning and execution of SETAs for the agency. As a joint terrorism task force liaison, he helped plan and execute physical penetration testing of physical assets and infrastructure and coordinated information sharing. Chelski was instrumental in the security certification of Sound Transit's new Siemens LRVs, which is the one of the first cyber/infosec penetration testing of LRVs in the U.S. He built the case to justify penetration testing of the 152 new LRVs, explaining any vulnerabilities found during the testing will result in mitigation steps.

Locally, Chelski volunteers with the ASIS Puget Sound Chapter as a young professionals liaison to mentor and encourage involvement of young professionals through trainings and networking opportunities. Additionally, he was selected to participate with the Washington State Fusion Center as the Fusion Liaison

“It is a fine line between security and privacy/civil rights, and I believe it is our job as security professionals to proactively address these issues.”

Officer for Sound Transit where he attended weekly meetings to provide relevant information to law enforcement agencies and worked closely with them on identified threats or issues. Within the industry, Chelski is a member of the APTA Infrastructure System Security Working Group and was part of the APTA Emerging Leaders Program in 2022. His capstone project for the program, “Who Feels Safe on Your Transit System: How Transit Agencies Answer This Question by Collecting and Disaggregating Harassment Data,” explored how agencies are collecting safety and security data, if they focus on harassment and how they do or do not disaggregate data for a safer and more secure experience for their ridership.

FAST FACT: Chelski's team will conduct safety and security certification on 11.8 miles of track, with the possibility of multiple tunnels and a bridge over the Duwamish River, as well as 13 new stations as part of the agency's historic expansion plan.
[MassTransitmag.com/21276441](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276441)

RUBY DANIELS began her career at Metro Transit as a bus operator and has advanced to agency management by showing a capacity for innovation, empathy and commitment.

Daniels practices and promotes servant leadership, a philosophy centered in trust, caring and focusing on the value of people. This leadership approach has been helpful during the past few years with the upheaval caused by the pandemic. Daniels focused on keeping operator morale up. One example involved a contest where operators posted a photo of themselves as babies on a wall and whomever guessed the most correct won a gift card. She recognized the importance of keeping connections strong among operators. She also works with Metro Transit's Fit for Life program to help operators find ways to reduce stress and be healthy.

Daniels successfully initiated, planned, executed and monitored the transit operation's response to a major highway construction project that heavily impacted transit in the Twin Cities area. She also played a big role in the security screening of post-game buses during Minneapolis Super Bowl 52, helping Metro Transit earn a passing grade for the event. Additionally, Daniels was an integral part of executing the CX360 program, which took a wholistic approach to improve

“ I practice servant leadership with operators because it is my belief that happy operators make happy passengers.

troubled routes. She joined the On Time Performance Committee to assist with schedule adherence, noted what caused routes to lose time and devised a plan to decrease boarding times. Overall, the results of the CX360 program showed major improvements to the agency's on-time performance and overall customer experience.

In January, Daniels became the chair of Metro Transit's first employee resource group, Advancing Women in Transit (AWT). In this role, she is promoting and encouraging women to advance within transit by providing them with skills, resources and the confidence to do so. Since Daniels became chair, membership, attendance and engagement in the group has increased.

FAST FACT: Daniels is an avid traveler and has experienced several unconventional forms of mobility including her favorite, camionetas, also known as chicken buses in Central America.

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RUBY M. DANIELS

Assistant Transportation Manager/Chair of Advancing Women in Transit
Metro Transit



Leading the new mobility era through innovation and inclusion

Congratulations **Charli**.
Top 40 under 40 Honoree.

Charli Champagne
Workforce Development Manager

nfigroup.com



For more information, visit www.MassTransitmag.com/10064883

Metro Transit congratulates Ruby and her fellow leaders.

Thanks for helping transit thrive in the Twin Cities!



Ruby Daniels
Assistant Transportation Manager



For more information, visit www.MassTransitmag.com/10758044



CARLOS CRUZ-CASAS, P.E.

Chief Innovation Officer
Miami-Dade County
Department of
Transportation and
Public Works (DTPW)

40
UNDER
FORTY

CARLOS CRUZ-CASAS does not let an opportunity pass him by. Whether it's a chance to experience a community's needs firsthand, build a new partnership or challenge the status quo, he is prepared to take advantage of those opportunities and affect change for the betterment of the Miami-Dade region. His enthusiasm for transit innovation has delivered improved mobility options, while his leadership and visionary approach is credited with creating a dynamic work environment.

Cruz-Casas has been working on mobility improvements within Miami-Dade County for more than a decade. He began in the private sector as an engineer on a variety of projects and his varied background equips him with a holistic approach to mobility.

As chief transportation manager at the city of Miami, he launched the Miami Trolley, introduced a carshare program, as well as a bikeshare program. At Miami-Dade County DTPW, he delivered a bus network redesign, led Miami-Dade's Vision Zero program, Miami-Dade's AV Vision Plan, Miami-Dade's Shared Mobility Plan, and the Knight Foundation AV Initiative among many others.

During the pandemic, he leaned into innovative solutions to solve several challenges including investigating how to retrofit buses for real-time information and using

“Putting ourselves in the shoes of the users is the best way to really understand their needs. And when that isn't possible, find ways to elevate their voices.”

supplemental contracted service on high-demand routes that suffered overcrowding due to social distancing requirements.

These efforts take a motivated team and bringing a group of people together to work toward a common goal is something Cruz-Casas has perfected. Colleagues say he promotes a positive environment where he supports and facilitates their professional intellectual growth.

As one colleague noted, Cruz-Casas is involved with pushing the innovation agenda across the mobility industry. His advocacy is cited as a reason for the annual CoMotion conference that is held in Miami and brings startups and innovative companies together. He serves on the board of directors at the Open Mobility Foundation and speaks regularly around the country on pressing mobility topics.

FAST FACT: Cruz-Casas marks one of his great accomplishments as instilling an appreciation of safe mobility in his young children.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276489](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276489)



JENAPHER L. DUES

Manager of Human Resources
C-TRAN

40
UNDER
FORTY

JENAPHER L. DUES joined C-TRAN as a staffing generalist and was then promoted to recruitment and compensation specialist. She is currently the human resources manager and has been integral to the selection and retention of the organization's employees since 2014.

Dues is known for her passion for public transit and what it represents to the community and her compassion for applicants and employees. Dues spent the majority of 2020 and 2021 tirelessly navigating myriad of COVID-19 issues. She managed the vastly increased number of unemployment claims, and she helped the team manage the multitude of absences related to COVID-19 exposures or illness. She also oversaw vaccinations efforts for more than half the workforce. But she never lost her desire to help, routinely checking on colleagues who were ill or awaiting test results, regularly working evenings and weekends to provide support for staff.

Dues is credited with keeping C-TRAN's service levels intact through engaging recruitment ads, crafting a multimedia program that featured C-TRAN employees across the organization, showcasing the positive culture by allowing employees to speak unscripted in a genuine, impactful way. Applications started increasing soon after the ads started airing

“I enjoy working with people who believe in the mission of what transit does for the community.”

locally. The attrition from the training program has dropped from approximately 30 percent to less than five percent, creating significant savings related to hiring and training costs.

Her efforts also make C-TRAN an example to other employers. In Clark County, Wash., minorities make up 22.5 percent of the overall population while women make up 50.6 percent. Today, two-thirds of C-TRAN's executive leadership team are women; the minority workforce has grown to 30 percent; and the overall female workforce holds steady.

Dues is active in the Washington State Transit Association and regularly contributes to a web-based job description repository used by transit agencies across the state. She also responds to American Bus Benchmarking Group requests for information and data analysis.

FAST FACT: Dues was a founding member of C-TRAN's Diversity Team, helping choose participants and plan the curriculum.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276465](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276465)

ANDREW “ACE” EVERETT has been a mechanic in Mountain Line’s Fleet Department for more than 13 years. His nomination form explains chief problem solver is a more apt title for his role as he is the go-to person for any mechanical or technical issue. Not only does he have the technical know-how to help his own team, as well as neighboring transit systems, but he is also credited with developing innovations that have saved Mountain Line money and ease potential strife for his colleagues.

Everett fabricated and installed his own safety barriers on the entire fleet that offered protection from the spread of COVID-19, and it prevented a person from entering the driver’s space. Additionally, he has fabricated tools that have improved mechanic shop efficiency, developed a battery mount to remove hybrid batteries from vehicle roofs, made a tester to diagnose the electrical system of a hybrid bus, designed a battery jump cart compatible with all vehicles, redesigned the snow traction insta-chain to work with buses, as well as cutaway vans, and redesigned the fare console and farebox based on driver specifications to eliminate distractions and bolster driver convenience.

“ Always ask questions, even if you think it’s dumb, because it could be a good one.

Everett is also credited with becoming proficient in multiple maintenance techniques, such as fiberglass work, matching paint and other cosmetic repairs to ensure vehicles can be serviced in-house rather than outsourced.

Everett’s level of commitment goes above and beyond his job description; he regularly clears snow at the shop, on roads or at stops to ensure employees have a safe route to enter the facility and buses and riders can better access stops. Additionally, Everett volunteered his skills to refurbish a donated hot pink motorized wheelchair for a colleague’s grandson into a one with slick black paint with flames, which, reportedly brought “a huge smile to the young man” who would be using it.

FAST FACT: Everett was the first mechanic hired at Mountain Line and helped transition fleet services in house.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276452](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276452)



ACE EVERETT
Mechanic
Mountain Line

40 UNDER FORTY

ALICIA B. GOMES is the dedicated and dynamic leader of the MBTA’s Light Rail Operations Division which is comprised of 14 operations superintendents and supervisors and 650 front line employees and administrative staff.

Gomes has been deeply involved in the planning and implantation of several successful safety critical projects, including light rail speed mitigation and GPS speed monitoring. Gomes has also led the charge on numerous administrative projects, including the implementation of HASTUS, a new digital employee resource management and work scheduling tool. Another administrative project Gomes led was the implementation of a new customer communications monitoring tool.

In May of 2022, the MBTA opened the expansion of its light-rail system into the cities of Somerville and Medford. This project included a new rail yard and vehicle maintenance facility. Gomes was engaged in every detail of this project, from the safe operation of train movement and storage to all the employee logistics that are involved with opening new areas and facilities.

Gomes continues to lead projects within the MBTA Light Rail Division, including GLTPS, a train collision avoidance system that will be installed on all light-rail vehicles. She is also involved in the procurement to

“ Pride yourself in playing a role that helps to cultivate an environment that promotes teamwork, creativity, innovation, diversity, equity and inclusion.

replace the entire light-rail vehicle fleet.

Gomes is a fearless and balanced leader who has a complete and high-level understanding of the technical aspects involved in delivering service in light-rail operations and the administrative responsibilities involved in the human resource and rules and policy compliance aspect. Colleagues say Gomes is a valued leader who has shown tireless support for delivering safe and reliable train service to her customers, while also being a respected colleague to her peers and a supportive manager to her employees.

She consistently works to further develop her knowledge and skill set. She has completed all courses required by the Transportation Safety Institute and earned a Transit Safety and Security Program Certificate.

FAST FACT: Gomes was selected to participate in a week-long, immersive manager training course hosted by ENO Center for Transportation.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276457](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276457)



ALICIA B. GOMES
Division Chief for Light Rail Operations
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)

40 UNDER FORTY



LYNN FENG

Transportation
Planning Manager
AECOM



LYNN FENG is a planning manager at AECOM. Born and raised in Urumqi, China, Feng came to the U.S. to pursue her master's degree in planning at the University of Southern California (USC). Feng has dedicated her entire career to the transportation industry, starting as an intern for L.A. Metro seven years ago.

She strives to leverage innovation in infrastructure and planning to connect people to opportunities and advance equity. She combines her experience in the public, private and nonprofit sectors to serve clients with a focus on urban and transportation planning. She has worked on numerous projects across several modes in a variety of contexts.

Feng has worked with AECOM's teams for a range of clients from L.A. Metro and L.A. 2028 Olympics Committee to Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) and Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), as well as internationally for NEOM and Al Soudah.

Feng is an active member of WTS. She received a WTS scholarship while attending USC and has been the liaison for USC students to participate in WTS events. She is currently serving as the Awards Dinner Committee co-chair. Additionally, she has been participating in mentorship programs organized by USC Sol Price School and by METTRANS

“The exposure I have been able to get on projects of vastly different scales and scopes really broadened my horizon and reinforced my passion and devotion to the transportation industry.”

Transportation Centers for the past three years as a mentor to graduate students and emerging professionals in the transportation industry.

As part of AECOM's response to the pandemic, Feng led the development of a global best practices report for transit agency response for SEPTA, as well as a transformational policy direction report for CMAP. Feng is also a key player in AECOM's Transportation Electrification (TE) strategic initiative, recently authoring a white paper for service fleet electrification that has caught the interest of several potential clients.

FAST FACT: Feng volunteered with the WTS-LA for three years before serving as the chair for the Mentorship and Professional Development Committee between 2018 and 2020, where her work and leadership was highly regarded by the board and program participants.

MassTransitmag.com/21276469



XAVIER HARMONY

Senior Program
Manager
Transit Resource
Center, Northern
Virginia Transportation
Commission



XAVIER HARMONY'S journey to the North American transit sector started half a world away in his native country Australia before an internship brought him to the U.S.

Harmony is credited with breaking down jargon and is talented at communicating important concepts without coming across as condescending. He works to engage and empower those beginning their careers. For example, he has invited others to learn and participate alongside him including in proposals for the Transportation Research Board (TRB) to better understand the submission and research processes.

Harmony has intentionality with his engagements of colleagues and strives to uplift people who are traditionally underrepresented in the transportation industry. This is demonstrative of his belief and practice that involving people from nontraditional backgrounds from the beginning will enable more robust and stronger transportation planning results.

Harmony juggles parenthood, being a full-time professional, as well as a Ph.D. student, yet makes time to review resumes and paper submissions, offer career advice and guidance to young professionals, mentor colleagues who enter the field later in life and ensure there is representation of nontraditional

“Taking the time to understand local and regional politics, learning how to navigate the politics and building strong relationships can go a long way to helping achieve transportation policy and project goals.”

transportation industry professionals.

Harmony is proud of how he has been able to advance transportation equity discourse and share it with a larger audience through an essay for Eno Center for Transportation, as well as his research on bikeshare equity that he presented at TRB.

Outside of work, Harmony's efforts support transit and transportation focused entities. He has served in numerous roles for Young Professionals in Transportation and his transportation research includes work with the Transit Cooperative Research Program and TRB.

FAST FACT: Harmony's essay, "A New Bus Priority," was awarded first place in The Martin Wachs Memorial Centennial Essay Contest through Eno Center for Transportation.

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Celebrating transit's future

We congratulate Lynn Feng on being recognized by *Mass Transit* magazine as part of its 2022 40 Under 40.

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Lynn Feng



MARCELLOOUS GRIGSBY, MBA, PMP, CSP,
Prevention/Mitigation
Specialist
Washington
Metropolitan Area
Transit Authority

40 UNDER
FORTY

MARCELLOOUS GRIGSBY is a prevention and mitigation specialist at WMATA. Grigsby facilitates data-driven risk management by leading effective After-Action Reviews for incidents and accidents with internal and external stakeholders. He conducts fire life safety facility/equipment inspections to evaluate for hazards impacting customers and staff, including life safety risks and fire hazards related to building and fire codes or internal policy/procedure. Grigsby also developed an interactive dashboard for fire life safety inspection to create reports, analyze data and assign tasks to mitigate inspection findings to resolution. In addition, he periodically serves as a Mission Assurance Coordinator in WMATA's Rail Operations Control Center, effectively collaborating with essential personnel to improve outcomes during incidents and events and to help continuously improve safety, emergency response and preparedness activities across WMATA's systems.

Grigsby started with WMATA as a bus operator in 2015 and received a safety award after one year of service for outstanding safety performance. A promotion to the department safety coordinator for the Office of Bus Transportation in 2016 helped direct Grigsby's career path at WMATA. In this role, he monitored safety goals, tracked leading

“Building relationships and networks are essential in this robust transportation industry. The bigger your resource network, the less challenges are faced.”

and lagging key performance indicators and measured the effectiveness of risk mitigations. Grigsby was promoted in 2018 to serve as a safety investigator and shortly after was promoted to his current role.

Grigsby has been recognized for his safety and customer service efforts by WMATA and is part of the APTA Emerging Leaders Program, Class of 2023.

Off the job, Grigsby gains extensive fire prevention and safety knowledge assisting his community as a Prince George's County, Md., certified volunteer firefighter and emergency medical technician.

FAST FACT: Grigsby is a volunteer firefighter and EMT who has responded to numerous medical emergencies, fire events, performed rescue operations and gained valuable experience as a first responder.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276436](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276436)



MARTIN KAREITHI
Director - Systemwide
Accessibility
Capital Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority (CapMetro)

40 UNDER
FORTY

MARTIN KAREITHI serves as CapMetro's director of systemwide accessibility, but his contributions to the community have spanned more than 12 years with the agency. He has held several positions designed to improve the authority's operations and make CapMetro's services truly accessible to the entire community. Working in the accessibility space requires Kareithi to understand many, if not all, the agency's programs, services, facilities and technologies to not only assess CapMetro's compliance with law, but to ensure the agency is leading with its values.

In transitioning to leading the systemwide accessibility team, Kareithi's focus is on the complete pedestrian experience. He has been a leader in ensuring accessibility is a core value and is top of mind when building out Project Connect because he understands the architectural decisions will last decades.

Kareithi believes technology can break down barriers for people with disabilities. He played an important part in the rollout of one of the first fully accessible mobile ticketing apps in the nation, serving as a subject matter expert on accessibility in the design phase. Kareithi champions the ways technology can empower people with disabilities by providing more information about the built environment and oversaw a beacon technology pilot that

“Each day I play a part in making my community a better place to live, work and play all the while, literally, getting a chance to play with buses and trains for a living.”

provided directional wayfinding and real-time rider information to people with disabilities.

The opportunity to be involved in this work is meaningful and he works to create more opportunities for others. Kareithi served as president of the Austin chapter of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) for four years and is the chair of COMTO's national Accessibility Advisory Council. As both an African American and a blind individual, he has shared that it's important to him that COMTO provides a platform to minority professionals and people with disabilities. This is more than work for Kareithi. This is a passion, a mission. It's also a legacy for his two young children.

FAST FACT: COMTO's Accessible Innovative Mobility Track at its annual conference was established during Kareithi's time as chair of the national council.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276487](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276487)

TED GRAVES has dedicated almost a decade to improving public transportation in a professional, academic and volunteer capacity and encouraging young people to join and advance the industry. His professional background sits at the convergence of technology, data and public transit, and his work is dedicated to helping the industry implement data-driven transit planning and operations processes that improve services, connectivity and ridership numbers.

Following internships at the San Francisco County Transportation Authority to support the update of the San Francisco Transportation Plan and at Fehr & Peers supporting data collection, Graves went on to work as a bikeshare program manager at the National Association of City Transportation Officials. There, he analyzed bikeshare user behavior using GIS, Excel and Python, developed a specification for trip and membership data, constructed a toolkit to increase data quality and reduce costs and created reports on best practices for bikeshare network design, pricing and outreach.

Graves' data analysis skills won him the role of transit data analyst at the New York MTA, coding new business approaches to meet passenger needs. He brought his public sector skills and data-driven approach to the

“Some of the things I've felt most proud of in my career and some of my most often-used skills came from taking on things I wasn't sure I could do when I first set out to do them.

e-scooter start-up Bird, where he helped to bridge public and private sector transit entities.

In his two years at Optibus, Graves has been promoted to manage a team of engineers that support agencies in deploying data-driven processes, building intelligent transport systems and delivering more efficient, equitable and sustainable services for all.

Graves has taken on several volunteer positions including serving on state transit association and Optibus programs. In 2022, Graves was accepted into the APTA Emerging Leaders Program, Class of 2023, and regularly encourages employees to collaborate on special projects and supports their desires to join industry initiatives and committees.

FAST FACT: Graves was a one-person team at his employer, but with support from his boss, has grown the department into an eight-person team.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276453](https://www.MassTransitmag.com/21276453)



TED GRAVES
Lead Solutions
Engineer
Optibus

40 UNDER
FORTY

Metro congratulates Marcellous Grigsby for being chosen as one of Mass Transit's Top 40 Under 40.



For more information, visit www.MassTransitmag.com/10261508

CONGRATULATIONS

TO OUR OWN

Ted Graves

40
under
40



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transportation industry
forward

optibus

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SHARAREH (SHERRY) KERMANSHACHI,

PH.D., P.E., PMP, LEED AP, DBIA
Associate Professor,
Director of RISE Lab,
and Technology
Transfer Director
of Center for
Transportation,
Equity, Decisions and
Dollars (CTEDD)
at the University of
Texas at Arlington



SHARAREH (SHERRY) KERMANSHACHI, PH.D.,

is an associate professor in the Department of Civil Engineering, Technology Transfer director of CTEDD and director of the RISE Lab at the University of Texas at Arlington, where she specializes in the deployment of autonomous vehicles (AVs). Kermanshachi teaches various undergraduate and graduate courses and is currently leading the RISE lab with more than a dozen graduate students.

Kermanshachi has made significant contributions with the integration of AVs into transit services through leading research efforts with the Arlington RAPID (Rideshare, Automation and Payment Integration Demonstration) project. Kermanshachi evaluated how AV-based transit services enhance transportation equity, accessibility and safety. The project was led by Kermanshachi with the goal of providing a blueprint for combining AVs and mobility-on-demand technologies to develop more effective, efficient, safe and accessible transit networks in low-density settings where traditional fixed route is impractical.

In addition to Arlington RAPID, Kermanshachi has published more than 250 books, scholarly articles, conference proceedings and research reports and has conducted several national- and state-level research projects.

Kermanshachi is an active technical member

“One of the aspects of my job that I truly enjoy is developing the future workforce and training the next generation.

of eight American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) committees and two Transportation Research Board (TRB) committees, among others. She also serves as an editorial board member of three academic journals.

Kermanshachi has received several national and regional awards including the 2022 Texas Women Foundation Leadership Award; 2020 Rosa Parks Leadership Diversity Award from WTS; and the ASCE Excellence in Civil Engineering Education, among several others. She was the only academic recipient of the 2017 Texas and Louisiana Engineering News Record Top 20 Under 40 award and was invited to serve as the judge for the 2017 and 2018 ENR Best Projects.

FAST FACT: Kermanshachi received federal funds for the “TCRP SD-O5: Mitigating Third Rail Insulator Failures through New Technologies,” conducting research to investigate the causes of third rail insulator failures and to develop mitigating strategies to overcome these challenges.

MassTransitmag.com/21276478



SASHA (PETER) KUCHARCZYK

Co-Founder
and COO
Preteckt



SASHA (PETER) KUCHARCZYK is an entrepreneur from a family of doctors who chose to apply his penchant for data and analytics to the world of vehicle health instead of human health. His passion is to find ways to change the world and he is always interested in learning about new innovations that use data or to learn new opinions on how AI may change the world. This led him to co-found Preteckt, where he helps build tools for maintenance personnel to allow them to make the best data-based decisions possible through the latest advances in IoT, AI and cloud computing technologies.

Preteckt is an AI technology company that is changing the maintenance of trucks and buses with predictions that prevent breakdowns, enhance technician productivity and make vehicles safer to operate. Memphis Area Transit Authority was the first to provide an opportunity for Preteckt to try out its product. Kucharczyk then led the successful application for a “Bus Maintenance Challenge” issued by the Transit Tech Labs in co-ordination with the New York MTA.

Seeing success in the transit market, Kucharczyk laid out a strategy to engage with transit agencies. Kucharczyk also holds a Master of Engineering Design with

“Things not going as planned multiple times made me learn how to reflect on different situations and find new opportunities to grow and capitalize on them.

a specialization in product design and machine learning where he did his thesis project on the fleet adoption of electric vehicles. That background allows the entire team to gain additional insights on how to adapt Preteckt technology to electric and hydrogen vehicles.

Since co-founding Preteckt in 2015, Kucharczyk has spearheaded efforts to raise funding, grow the team from three to 25 and develop relationships that resulted in Preteckt winning its two largest customers. Colleagues say in areas where he lacks specific expertise, Kucharczyk is humble and seeks out guidance from a network within the transit and startup community.

FAST FACT: Kucharczyk completed his MBA program at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, as a Bregman Scholar for graduating in the top 10 percent of his class.

MassTransitmag.com/21276477

JESSE HEIMOWITZ'S career in engineering and project management has seen continuous upward momentum and progression. From his start as a project coordinator at the MTA's LIRR in 2008, he expeditiously achieved management status and led several high-profile rail infrastructure projects as part of LIRR's Capital Program Management Department. His career with LIRR culminated as a director of special projects, making him the youngest manager to be promoted to a director position in the history of the department. Here, he led more than \$2 billion worth of capital program projects, including the Jamaica Capacity Improvements Program.

During his time at LIRR, he evaluated best-value and value-engineering solutions on each of his projects; championed alternative project delivery methods; formed partnerships within MTA to ensure successful project delivery; and provided technical leadership and guidance on several transformation committees, helping usher in a new agency-wide organizational structure for capital program management.

Currently, Heimowitz is the associate vice president of rail transit at Tectonic Engineering where he serves as the division lead of the company's newly established rail transit sector. Since his addition to the team in 2021, he has helped to more than double the

“Some of the most valuable knowledge I've gained as a rail transit professional has come from spending time with rail transit boots-on-the-ground labor forces and understanding what they do and how they do it.

rail transit related contract pursuits, form new partnerships with other engineering and construction management firms and spearhead business development activities. He's currently leading the pursuit of tens of millions of dollars in professional services and contracts for several entities. He has revamped the company's approach to rail projects by performing a full coordination of services across all the business lines.

He also volunteers as a voting member of AREMA Technical Committee 11 and a member of the Construction Management Association of America's (CMAA) Professional Development Committee.

FAST FACT: Heimowitz is a CMAA mentor for young construction management professionals on track to achieve their CMM certification.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276466](https://www.MassTransitmag.com/21276466)



JESSE P. HEIMOWITZ, CCM
Vice President
of Rail Transit
Tectonic Engineering

40 UNDER FORTY



LIRR Atlantic 6 Bridge, Queens, NYC



New Platform, LIRR Jamaica Station, Queens, NYC



Vice President - Rail Transit



LIRR Bridges over Powell Creek & Hog Island Channel, Nassau County, NY

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Congratulations to Jesse Heimowitz!

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NICOLE HE,
Transportation
Planner III
Santa Clara Valley
Transportation
Authority (VTA)

40
UNDER
FORTY

OVER THE PAST SEVEN YEARS, Nicole He has built her career in the transportation industry through various positions in public transit and private consulting firms across North America. During her graduate study of urban planning, her passion for transportation planning thrived after completing a transit ridership analysis of L.A. Metro's rail extension and local Culver City Bus. The analysis explored different factors causing the decline in transit ridership and recommended strategies to reduce operational costs and increase productivity.

She then worked for two years as an analyst and engineer-in-training in Vancouver. Her research on minimum residential parking standards and transportation demand management guidelines advanced the elimination of minimum residential parking requirements in downtown Vancouver. She also completed macro-level transportation demand forecasts in different city center redevelopments.

She's currently transportation planner III at Santa Clara VTA and is leading competitive grant programs under the 2016 Measure B local sales tax program. In this role, she helped create an online interactive program manual and maintains a transparency website for the sales tax measure. Both features received positive feedback because they promote transparency and facilitate the coordination between

“The transportation industry is evolving rapidly in every aspect: technology, policy and human behavior. It is important to stay informed about the changes and be ready for new transportation challenges.

VTA and local jurisdictions. She serves as a key liaison with 16 jurisdictions and develops the program framework for countywide bicycle and pedestrian projects, grade separation projects and innovative transit service models.

He is active in advancing women in transportation and science by hosting several career workshops for young women in science and engineering during her time in Toronto. She participated in WTS and Young Professionals in Transportation. She's also currently pursuing her Professional Engineer license in California.

FAST FACT: Through her current work at VTA, He grows her interest in the integration of big data, transportation planning and social equity by self-learning various data analysis tools that she hopes to apply to the scheme of funding infrastructure projects.

MassTransitmag.com/21276472



DERICK M. LEE
Maintenance
Analyst Supervisor
Utah Transit
Authority (UTA)

40
UNDER
FORTY

IN DERICK M. LEE'S role of maintenance analyst supervisor for UTA, he analyzes data for 350 buses located at two of the five bus maintenance garages and supervises two coach cleaners at one of the garages. This puts him in a unique position to see areas where uniformity would improve processes between the shops.

He has primarily accomplished this by emphasizing to the mechanics the importance of properly annotating maintenance accomplished on the buses in each work order line item, as well as the time taken for every repair. This increased overall paid versus labor time coding from 60 percent to more than 95 percent.

Using historical data, Lee researched and determined predictive modeling to replace expensive voltage regulators, alternators, turbos and radiators on a time determined basis rather than waiting for a road call from these parts wearing out. This led to increased miles between maintenance road calls. Lee has also learned to understand maintenance work and develop data visualization. He tested the overall cost savings between the diesel bus power modes and determined which was most cost effective and most desirable for operators. He facilitated 11 LEAN initiatives with bus maintenance employees, resulting in savings of more than \$250,000.

“Lead with humility and remember to always strive for the best. It's not all about your successes, but how many times you pick yourself up from when you fall.

Lee often adjusts his schedule to meet with all shifts to discuss goals and KPIs. He engages with personnel and has cleaned the buses with coach cleaners to better understand their responsibilities and issues they may have.

He's also a member of the UTA Continuous Improvement team. His contributions have led to better budget oversight and uniformity of charges to correct budget lines throughout the bus maintenance shops, as well as ensuring mechanics return used parts for warranty recovery.

Lee is a member of the American Bus Benchmarking Group, providing information that is not normally included in the normal information request process.

FAST FACT: Lee is pursuing two master's degrees, Master of Science in Business Administration and Master of Science in Business Analytics, expecting to graduate from both by the end of spring 2023.

MassTransitmag.com/21276464

JOREL JOSEPH arrived in transit after a career in finance and client service left him wanting more. He found a way to impact communities and push boundaries through new technologies and methodologies in his role in business development at Keolis.

Joseph is a first generation American and credits his parents for instilling a work ethic and sense of community in him from a young age. This drive coupled with his natural born leadership abilities has helped as he developed the technical skills needed in his transition and growth in the transit industry.

Joseph secured successful bids during the pandemic and served as the bid lead on more than \$80 million a year in revenue during the past three years. In his current role, he leads preparation and execution of oral presentations to agencies and supporting contract negotiations, while serving as an integral team member and project manager for multiple winning bids, creating in-depth proposal packages consisting of financial analyses, models, pricing and persuasive technical writing. He strategizes and collaborates with C-suite executives to establish winning strategies based on customized service provision and cost composition for each proposal.

Outside of work, he partnered with former

“Dare to be great. If you fail, fail forward, striving valiantly in a worthy cause. Nothing will work unless you do. Credit goes to the competitor, not the critic.”

student athletes to help construct the sponsorship of an award for select undergraduate business school students to visit New York City and meet with high-profile companies and he volunteered for a non-profit, Crossover Academy India, a basketball/academic camp for orphans and underprivileged children in India.

Joseph continues to focus on his professional development. He recently completed the Eno Center for Transportation's Transit Mid Manager Accelerate Program and participated in a program through the London School of Economics and Political Science, focusing on data analysis and visualization for management, a critical skill for his career progression.

FAST FACT: Joseph was captain of his college football team, a role that prepared him for the fast-pace and level-headedness required of business development.

MassTransitmag.com/21276430



JOREL JOSEPH
Director of Business Development
Keolis North America

40 UNDER FORTY

Congratulations Nicole He *We're proud of you!*



Nicole He
Transportation Planner III
- Grants & FA •
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KEOLIS JOREL JOSEPH DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MASS TRANSIT TOP 40 UNDER 40 CONGRATULATIONS!



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ALICIA LEITE

Transportation
Supervising Planner
Connecticut
Department of
Transportation



ALICIA LEITE'S career with CTDOT spans nearly a decade marked by steady career advancement starting with the Office of Transit & Ridesharing. She helped launch CTfastrak, Connecticut's first bus rapid transit system and took an active role in various start up activities in service planning, station maintenance and safety and security planning, fare collection and transit technology procurement, and customer and community outreach.

Leite was also involved in the CTrail Hartford Line customer experience task force and facilitated CTDOT's ambassador program for the opening of the Hartford Line. In 2019, she worked in CTDOT's government relations office. Leite served as CTDOT's staff legislative liaison for the entire agency, and is credited with successfully leading CTDOT's robust legislative package through the state House and Senate for passage in 2019.

In her current role, she directs CTDOT's customer experience office where she is spearheading an effort to engage thousands of daily transit riders across the state and connect with other important stakeholders. She is engaging her team members and other agency staff to canvas the state for input on the current customer experience and to hear ideas for future improvements. The outreach includes pop-up events at stations and

“People want to be heard. Actively listening and engaging with people is the best tool we all have.”

stops, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, community events and online outreach.

She is also responsible for CTDOT's service and fare equity program to study how service and fare changes affect different populations of transit users and her team will be responsible for leading the effort to integrate the statewide fare system. She is described as outcome focused and thinks deeply about the perception of CTDOT's outreach efforts, as well as what improvements might be delivered quickly to build credibility with riders.

Leite's contributions to the industry extend to the many professional associations: APTA's Emerging Leaders Program, Class of 2018, and leadership roles with the Connecticut Chapters for Women in Transportation Seminar (WTS) and Council of Minority Transportation Officials.

FAST FACT: Following a layoff in 2012, Leite leveraged an internship and developed her network at Connecticut Chapter of WTS, which led her to a transit career.

[MassTransitmag.com/21276266](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276266)



ADRIANNE R. MALASKY

Special Assistant to
the Administrator
Federal Railroad
Administration



ADRIANNE R. MALASKY'S interest in transportation and pursuit of public policy led to roles within the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

Malasky is described as a respected leader and strong influence in national and international transportation policy. She began her career in transportation as a policy analyst in FTA's Office of Safety, where she served as one of the lead drafters of FTA's core safety regulation—the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Rule; an accomplishment she names as a high point in her career. While at FTA, she led the department's strategic planning efforts in the safety arena, helping to develop new technical assistance tools, guidance and a long-range vision for transit safety across the nation. Malasky's efforts with strategic planning and with the rulemaking helped establish a new line of business for FTA as a direct safety regulator when, historically, the agency served primarily as a grant-making entity.

In 2022, Malasky made the leap to rail and her current position as special assistant to the administrator of the FRA, where she assists the administrator with policy and program decisions related to passenger and freight rail across the country and provides her transit

“Take the opportunities that feel right to you and put yourself out there to have those opportunities come your way.”

expertise to help facilitate better, more climate efficient options for travel across the country.

Malasky's influence on the transit industry runs deeper than the worthy policy accomplishments under her belt. Malasky is described as a strong advocate for women in transit and transportation in general, serving as a mentor and role model through her work at FTA and FRA and chairs the Women in Transportation Group of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation.

In her nomination for the 40 Under 40, she is said to bring “an open mind to problem solving” and succeeds at “creating and maintaining strong relationships.”

FAST FACT: Malasky is the primary author for a research report on pregnant transit riders entitled, “Analysis of Challenges Facing Pregnant Woman Riding Transit.”

[MassTransitmag.com/21276488](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276488)

SOPHIA MALETZ FRANKLYN entered the transit industry in 2013 as a technology consultant with Avanade on the Accenture Fare Management Solution where she worked to help transit agencies implement new fare collection systems. In 2016, she joined moovel North America as a technical project manager. In this position, she simultaneously managed three mobile payment projects including complex backend integrations with competing vendors.

In 2017, she was promoted to R&D program manager to help advance payment innovation by explaining and demonstrating technology such as Bluetooth-enabled fare validation. She took on successive responsibilities and ended up being a critical driver in R&D efforts. She participated in panels, discussions, workshops and think tanks to share knowledge on technology and payment best practices, while also serving as an advocate for public transit as a critical backbone to Mobility-as-a-Service. She understood how to think like an engineer, a product manager and a salesperson and would approach situations knowing how to use that perspective to reach people and bring the best out in their own potential. She thought outside of the box and invented new ways for transit technology to serve riders, resulting in her securing four patents.

“While working for a tech consulting firm, I was assigned to a fare payments project to support Toronto Transit Commission’s launch of the Presto card. I haven’t turned back since!

In 2020, she joined TriMet as manager and senior analyst of fare systems. Less than two years later, she was promoted to her current position of director of fare revenue and administrative services, where she oversees a department of 50 staff, including five direct reports and a unionized workforce to collect fare revenue for TriMet, C-TRAN and Portland Streetcar. She oversaw the collection of \$55 million in fare revenue in FY22, a 36 percent increase over the previous fiscal year, and helped maintain 10 Hop Fastpass® sales channels to reach customers across the region. Her efforts resulted in an eight percent increase in riders utilizing contactless bank cards and mobile wallets—up 135 percent from FY21.

FAST FACT: Maletz Franklyn has achieved the trifecta of working in the transit industry as a client, consultant and a vendor, giving her a unique breadth of knowledge.
[MassTransitmag.com/21276549](https://www.masstransitmag.com/21276549)



SOPHIA MALETZ FRANKLYN, MBA
 Director of Fare Revenue & Administrative Services
 TriMet



Sophia Maletz
 TriMet's Director of Fare Revenue & Administrative Services

Congratulations Sophia Maletz!

Named Mass Transit's Top 40 under 40

Whether managing our fare system, or creating new products to enhance the rider experience, your dedication, creativity and style makes a difference every day! TriMet is a better agency because of you.

Congratulations on this amazing achievement!

Your TriMet Family





CHRIS MANDRELL
General Manager
Citibus, RATP Dev
USA

40
UNDER
FORTY

CHRIS MANDRELL started at Citibus in 2008 out of Lubbock, Texas, as the human resources manager. He subsequently applied for his current position of general manager and immediately jumped into the role where he focused on bringing the company into the 21st century by investing in modern technology.

From RT-GTSF to mobile ticketing and on-demand services, Mandrell took the antiquated services and forged a new wheel in the public transit industry. He addressed overdue vehicle maintenance issues. The average age of the Citibus fleet was more than 18-years old. After working with the city and pursuing local and federal grants, he brought the average vehicle life down to 15 years in the first two years into his new role, and then brought it down again to an average of 10 years.

After the pandemic hit and ridership plummeted, Mandrell saw an opportunity to launch Citibus On-Demand. A curb-to-curb microtransit service to help bridge the gap in transit during COVID-19, the new service brought ridership not only to pre-pandemic levels but then forged on to bring in passengers who hadn't previously used transit.

Finally, Mandrell focused on company morale. After a dip in employment due to the pandemic, then facing driver shortages in 2021,

“ Navigating our agency through the pandemic [is the accomplishment] I am most proud of. Our agency is much more resilient and is better prepared for future success having gone through the pandemic.

Mandrell found new ways to overcome the hurdles. He worked with the city to raise the wages of all staff to national wage averages. He then partnered with a local CDL training program to bridge the gap in the new CDL testing requirements. He also fostered a cultural shift to empower his staff to take part in the reorganization, cross-training, education and line of advancement for seasoned employees. By early 2022, employee retention increased to all-time highs, and he brought staffing levels to pre-pandemic numbers. For the first time in two years, the company is not only back on track, but it's also rolling full steam ahead with momentum.

FAST FACT: Mandrell is the youngest executive at Citibus and colleagues say he has changed the face of transportation for the city of Lubbock and is setting trends across the Southwest.

MassTransitmag.com/21276463



PAIGE MALOTT
Chair
Cascadia Rail;
Founder
TrainExplainer.com;
Principal
Consultant
PM Creatives

40
UNDER
FORTY

PAIGE MALOTT founded Cascadia Rail, an advocacy organization supporting Washington Gov. Jay Inslee's plan for building high-speed rail in the Pacific Northwest. She has served as chair of the organization for four years.

Her research has guided federal delegates to recommend international best practices for U.S. intercity rail, with contributions to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the American High Speed Rail Act. Locally, she has worked with the business community and Washington state legislature to secure \$150 million in matching funds for the state to apply for federal high-speed rail grants.

Malott brings 15 years of practice creating digital communications strategies for passenger rail. She has worked with Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Downtown Seattle Association, Seattle DOT, Amazon.com and more. She brings experience with researching and analyzing policy, project challenges and community sentiment to develop written and visual content. Malott integrates digital strategies into traditional communications plans. Her work has been published in several national outlets: Eno Center for Transportation, Mineta Transportation Institute, American City Business Journals, PBS, E. W. Scripps, Sinclair Broadcast Group, Amazon.com and The Urbanist.

“ I enjoy simplifying complex information to help a wide variety of people understand, support and advance a project.

Malott serves on the planning committee for the APTA High Speed Rail conference. She taught best practices for hosting events and creating diverse panels, developed the format of the programming and analyzed an audience survey on topics of interest. Malott developed content for three sessions and presented on two panels. The conference attracted more than 300 attendees and improved diversity participation with 52 percent women speakers and 37 percent speakers of color.

Malott is also a leader for building support of streetcar projects. She developed a digital strategy to build awareness and support for the Seattle Streetcar system and address challenges facing Center City Connector streetcar expansion.

FAST FACT: Malott's research has been selected for publication in two academic journals: *Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics* and *Annals of Entrepreneurship Education & Pedagogy*, Volume 5.

MassTransitmag.com/21276486

MATTHEW D. MOORMAN is a seasoned transit professional with more than 17 years of operations management and strategic planning experience. His passion for transit started when he began as a part-time operator in 2004 for The Ohio State University. After graduating and joining the SORTA team, he quickly rose through the ranks as street service supervisor, division manager, fixed-route transit scheduler, manager of planning and scheduling and now serves as the senior manager of service planning and scheduling. During his tenure, he provided critical assistance with bus stop infrastructure enhancements and Intelligent Transportation Systems initiatives.

He kept SORTA's wheels turning as the agency faced unprecedented challenges due to COVID-19 by adjusting schedules to maintain service for essential workers while reducing exposure and ensuring SORTA continued operating efficiently with reduced ridership.

During COVID-19, voters passed the Issue 7 sales tax levy and Moorman was responsible for implementing the largest service expansion in SORTA's history with the first phase of the Reinventing Metro Plan. This led to 24-hour service on seven routes, reducing nearly 10 fare types down to three, increasing Sunday frequency on six routes, adding new

“Transit can change lives. We can improve the quality of life for many, and I think that's worth fighting for.”

Sunday service on two routes and improving weekday frequency on two routes.

Moorman also worked with Cincinnati Public School to restructure service to area high schools. The results included increasing frequency on 12 routes and launching two new crosstown routes to connect three SORTA transit centers, making transfers easy and seamless. This improved students' ability to get to and from schools by decreasing average trip time by 10 minutes, decreasing average walk time and making it possible for no student to need more than one transfer.

Moorman is a member of the Cincinnati Chapter of Conference of Minority Transportation Officials. Outside of the office, he's the music director for St. Aloysius Gonzaga Parish.

FAST FACT: Outside of work, Moorman plays piano and composes music, as well as volunteers as cubmaster for Cub Scout Pack #3044.

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MATTHEW D. MOORMAN

Senior Manager of Service Planning & Scheduling
Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA)

40 UNDER FORTY

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ALLISON MAYOS, PMP
Property Team Lead
WSP Canada

40
UNDER
FORTY

ALLISON MAYOS started her career in the rail and transit industry 14 years ago as the executive administrative assistant to the senior vice president of the project management division for an engineering firm based in Toronto, Ontario, specializing in government infrastructure projects, including public transit.

Realizing there was a fruitful career for herself within the industry, Mayos enrolled herself in the Project Management Certificate Program, successfully completing the program and gaining her PMP certification. Most recently Mayos acquired her Real Estate License.

One of her most impressive contributions to the industry started in March 2016, where she took on multiple positions for the Metrolinx Eglinton Crosstown Light-Rail Transit Project. First acting as the property acquisition manager, she was directly responsible for leading a department to manage and acquire 300-plus properties and ensure access to businesses and residences along this corridor was preserved during construction. She then transitioned to being the development integration manager where she created new processes and procedures that contributed to the success of TOD modernizations across the line. Lastly, she acted as commercial manager during the interim maintenance period where she was part of a team that innovated

“I really enjoy being part of something in which you can physically see your works come to life and know that the outcome of those works will be used by so many people for the years to come.

QR code technology for asset management.

Mayos currently works at WSP as a consultant. She centers her work around property acquisition, third party approvals, TOD implementation and initiating a third-party team within WSP's current rail and transit department.

Mayos participates in industry events, webinars, courses and conferences. She also attends events for women in transportation, organizes her own personal events and volunteers at women shelters.

Colleagues say Mayos embodies a sense of purpose, passion and vocation and is a dedicated person who does well under pressure.

FAST FACT: WSP has recognized Mayos as a future leader within the corporation, and she will be attending the Great Traits Corporate Champions Program in the coming months.

MassTransitmag.com/21276458



DARWIN MOOSAVI
Deputy Secretary
for Environmental
Policy & Housing
Coordination
California State
Transportation
Agency (CalSTA)

40
UNDER
FORTY

IN DARWIN MOOSAVI's first seven years with the state of California, he rose from an entry level role as a transportation planner at Caltrans to be appointed as a deputy secretary of CalSTA under Gov. Gavin Newsom's Administration. But what makes Moosavi stand out is his skill in leading major change in transportation policy.

Moosavi spearheaded and delivered a substantial policy change for California on behalf of CalSTA: the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI). Adopted in 2021, it is now enshrined as a key policy for transportation planning and infrastructure investment in the state. As a funding framework, CAPTI guides decision making on more than \$5 billion of annual transportation investment in California, centering investment in transit, rail and active transportation networks by prioritizing it over investment in traditional highway expansion.

While any major policy change is always a team effort, his colleagues have attested that CAPTI would not be what it is today without Moosavi. He helped initiate it, was the lead author of it, served as its public face and saw it through to publication. He now oversees its implementation. Moosavi's work has been acknowledged in several publications, including the New York Times.

“With every great opportunity to influence policy changes comes great challenges and political resistance. It takes time, leadership, coalition building and finding the right opportunity to make changes happen.

CAPTI is not his first major accomplishment. In his previous role at the California Strategic Growth Council, Moosavi was the program manager and one of several co-creators of the Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities program, a grant program for transit-oriented development that revolutionized the way housing developers work with transit agencies and transportation departments to create seamless transit connections for residents.

Additionally, he serves on the Leadership Council for the National Center for Sustainable Transportation and is passionate about furthering research and innovation in the field.

FAST FACT: In 2014, as part of his graduate studies in urban and regional planning, Moosavi served as the project manager for the design of a microtransit system for Cherriots, the transit agency in Salem-Keizer, Ore.

MassTransitmag.com/21276461

Question today *Imagine tomorrow* Create for the future



“Joining WSP in 2021, I was drawn to the culture of diversity, inclusion and empowerment. I get to work on exciting and innovative projects and am part of a team where we recognize each member’s contributions, ideas, and aspirations.”

Allison Mayos

Senior Property Advisor, Rail & Transit

Congratulations to Allison on your impressive growth and leadership as recognized with this Top 40 under 40 achievement! Thank you for your contributions to the team and the rail and transit industry.



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RACHEL A. MALONEY JOYNER

Manager, Bus and Special Service Operations
Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority
(NFTA-Metro)

40 UNDER FORTY

RACHEL A. MALONEY JOYNER can see things from various vantage points, connect the dots and always consider the human aspect of every decision. With more than a decade of service to the industry she brings experience in planning projects, facility construction, grant management, public engagement, policies and regulations and operations.

She's been with the NFTA since 2012 in roles including senior transportation planner and planning project manager for the Metro Rail Expansion Project. She also helped plan the redevelopment of the light-rail transit facility; worked on various corridor projects; and worked on a project called Go Buffalo Mom that helps at risk moms save for a transit pass to attend their prenatal doctors' appointments.

In her current role as manager of bus and special service operations, she's responsible for the success of more than 500 operators, supervisors and station managers for fixed-route bus and paratransit. She's helped negotiate a new ATU contract, is working to rebuild relationships with the operators and has helped reengage and bring a renewed sense of purpose to the accessibility advisory committee. She sees her most important responsibility as supporting, developing and providing guidance for those who carry out the critical daily operations. As a regular bus

“I've worked on projects big and small and firmly believe that no matter the scope the most important thing you must do is build relationships with stakeholders and the public.”

rider herself, she experiences and sees the challenges of both the operators and riders, bringing a unique perspective to her position.

She has received both state and national industry recognition. She has participated and graduated from multiple development programs, including New York State's Public Transportation Association's mid-manager program and APTA's Emerging Leader, Class of 2016. She recently served her first term as a national alumni mentor. She's also an adjunct professor in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Buffalo where she teaches a graduate level course.

FAST FACT: Joyner is on the local Leadership Board for the American Lung Association and is the co-chair of its main event, the Fight for Air Climb, helping raise hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years for the critical mission of healthy lungs and air for all.

MassTransitmag.com/21276473



ANDREW QUINN

Deputy Executive Officer, Office of Strategic Innovation
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
(L.A. Metro)

40 UNDER FORTY

ANDREW QUINN joined L.A. Metro in 2015 as a senior environmental specialist in the Environmental Compliance and Sustainability Department and has continually contributed to the improvement of the agency as he's risen through the ranks. He was promoted to senior manager in 2019, then served as interim senior director in 2021, and was promoted to deputy executive officer in 2022. In these roles, Quinn planned and managed the expansion of L.A. Metro's EV charger program from 20 to 100 chargers, including piloting the electrification of the non-revenue fleet. He mentored staff in learning new skills, and organized training sessions on zero-emission bus technologies, project delivery methods, financial analysis and contract structuring.

Since moving to his current role at the Office for Strategic Innovation, he has led the value for money analysis for the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor light-rail project; supported the development of the Sepulveda Pre-Development Agreement (PDA); and oversaw the development of Early Works and Public Private Partnership delivery methods for the West Santa Ana Branch light-rail project. He also leads the partnerships team in preparing business cases for the Sepulveda, West Santa Ana Branch and Zero Emission Bus projects.

Quinn was instrumental in developing the

“Finding that balance of multiple perspectives and interests to achieve the best outcomes for a project, the agency and the region is a process requiring patience, persistence and open-mindedness.”

Sepulveda PDA, a first of its kind competitive PDA enlisting two private sector teams to design two solutions. His work focused on the development of the scope of work and its relationship to the CEQA/NEPA environmental processes and value for money evaluation process, PDA evaluation criteria and PDA compensation structure. He's currently leading the financial workstream and value for money analysis to fulfil the requirements of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and to recommend the best delivery method for the project.

He speaks at conferences and works with other agencies to exchange best practices.

FAST FACT: Quinn is supporting the development of CALInfra, a non-profit focused on educating and informing governments and transit agencies on various forms of project delivery.

MassTransitmag.com/21276462

GARY R. SCOTT, JR., serves as senior project manager for paratransit services at Pace, where he specializes in managing paratransit contracts. The author of his nomination commended Scott for working to meet the goals of both operations and planning departments to achieve exemplary performance. He further works to integrate planning and operations through his involvement with the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU).

Scott started with Pace in its quality assurance department for paratransit, where he worked to maintain customer satisfaction. In his current role, he utilizes hard work, problem solving and partnerships to make positive change. Scott project manages the contracts and performance for paratransit operations in three suburban counties, a regional call center and three coordinated countywide dial-a-ride projects, which included the expansion of MCRide and Ride Lake County.

Scott is credited with a passion for paratransit service that elevates it as an example of transit performance and function. Scott is part of a regional innovation study that focuses on innovative projects to improve operations in paratransit and serves as project manager on a cross-departmental team that is developing a Mobility-as-a-Service pilot for the agency.

“Public transportation is a system, there are constant moving parts that act like a puzzle, so always keep learning about each aspect and how you can be more efficient and effective.”

Scott's ability to forge connections extends beyond his job. Scott was the youngest chapter representative elected to the CNU Board; he served CNU Illinois for three years and led a merger with another chapter to create the CNU Chicago subchapter. Scott has worked to connect with Transportation Camp, an organization that uses new formats and technology to attract entry level professionals into the transportation profession and continues his relationship with DePaul University by returning to critique master's level capstone projects.

Additionally, he is a co-founder of the Emerging New Urbanists and now serves as an advisor to the group. He is also a board member of the Place Initiative.

FAST FACT: Scott is an Eagle Scout, as well as the go-to genealogist in his family.

MassTransitmag.com/21276484

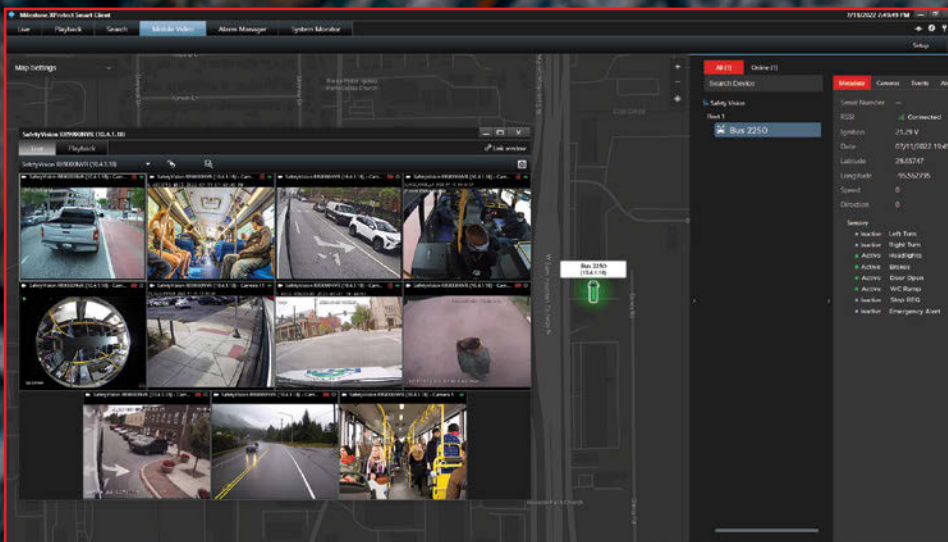


GARY R. SCOTT, JR., MPA
Senior Project Manager,
Paratransit Services
Pace Suburban Bus (Pace)

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SAPNA SHAH, P.E.
Superintendent
MTA New York
City Transit (NYCT)

40
UNDER
FORTY

SAPNA SHAH, P.E., is a certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt with 15 years of experience in enterprise asset management, reliability engineering and project management. She leads the asset management program for buses at MTA NYCT and delivers on the program's asset management roadmap.

Shah is credited with pioneering the Bus Asset Condition Assessment Program to understand operational risk, improve safety, reliability and customer satisfaction and meet the FTA Transit Asset Management Plan guidelines. She created the Lifecycle Cost and Reliability Model for buses to prioritize investment decisions and is now working on bringing prognostic maintenance and asset life prediction to the department of buses. She completed a two-year pilot to prove the value of prognostic maintenance using machine learning layered on top of telematics data to reduce in-service breakdowns and the cost of maintenance.

Shah's interest in improving legacy maintenance practices has led her to use data analysis and process improvement to optimize major maintenance strategies that have reduced waste and improved effectiveness. She is leading the transition to a new enterprise asset management system and is applying her skills to zero-emission buses and infrastructure to create a maintenance

“Communicate results, whether good or bad, to enable your team and gain the support of stakeholders.”

program to support a successful transition to a full zero-emission fleet by 2040.

Shah facilitates reliability studies and training at MTA to ensure the workforce is equipped with the tools to follow in this asset management journey. She seeks to increase her knowledge and abilities by participating in industry networks and grows the asset management knowledgebase by presenting her work at conferences and meeting with peer agencies.

She co-founded the employee resource group, Empowering Women in Transportation, to increase awareness of the gender gap, amplify the voices of women and provide support and tools for upward mobility. She also mentors New York City high school students in underserved areas through the non-profit Global Kids to empower the leaders of tomorrow.

FAST FACT: Shah co-founded the employee resource group, Empowering Women in Transportation, to increase diversity, inclusion and representation in the transit industry.

MassTransitmag.com/21276485



ROMAN P. STEICHEN
Director of
Transit Services
Frederick County

40
UNDER
FORTY

AS THE DIRECTOR of transit services of Frederick County, Md., Roman Steichen oversees the delivery of transit services countywide. Steichen's transit career began in 2004 as a driver for Shuttle-UM, where he rose through dispatch and daily operations supervision, spending six years as senior transit operations supervisor. From 2011-2012, Steichen served as a part-time driver for Frederick TransIT. In fall 2012, he joined Johns Hopkins University as transportation manager, where he was responsible for all Hopkins-sponsored passenger transportation, overseeing a partnership with Lyft to supplement the on-demand night ride service and doubling ridership in two years.

Steichen returned to Frederick TransIT in spring 2018 to serve as the deputy director, moving into the director role in February 2020. Steichen began an internal program that not only solicited feedback from staff, but also circled back and described if and how the feedback would be implemented. He created an open-door policy for staff, and posted route-specific questions, soliciting insight from drivers weekly. The organizational culture changed dramatically due to Steichen's willingness to engage directly with staff, empowering them to identify and address issues.

During the pandemic, which began impacting operations one week into Steichen's role as

“Through experience and repetition, you can learn how to do just about anything, but focusing on the day-to-day tasks is important.”

director, he implemented a hazard pay differential for drivers, as well as recruitment and referral bonuses. He also changed the way that TransIT works alongside other organizations. TransIT drivers identified food insecurity in riders. Working collaboratively with the local Meals on Wheels and the Senior Services Division, TransIT reassigned a team of drivers and activated transit vehicles to assist with food distribution. TransIT also partnered with the health department to create a mobile vaccination clinic, where several hundred people were vaccinated on the “vax bus.”

Steichen was recognized as one of Frederick County Office of Economic Development's Top 50 Under 40 in 2021. He also convenes the county's Transportation Services Advisory Council.

FAST FACT: Steichen and his team received the COVID-19 Above and Beyond Award from the Transportation Association of Maryland in mid-2021, where he was later elected to the organization's board of directors.

MassTransitmag.com/21276476

KAYLEIGH CLEEK has been with Greenlink since January 2019. She serves as the transit planning manager, overseeing all transit planning and grant-related work.

Upon arriving to Greenlink, Cleek was tasked with installing more than 90 new bus stops across four different governmental jurisdictions to implement Greenlink's Comprehensive Operations Analysis. The success of the initial upgrades led to additional investments from the city and county that is currently in its third phase. To ensure equity in installation, Cleek developed and oversaw a bus stop amenities prioritization system, which rests on elements such as public participation and geographic consideration for upgrades.

Outside of the approximately \$32 million in formula grant funding Cleek currently manages, she has been awarded three competitive grants totaling \$8 million since 2019. Cleek created an internal grants management system to ensure grant funds are utilized both efficiently and effectively.

Cleek also developed a Human Trafficking Awareness campaign and serves as Greenlink's Disadvantaged Business Enterprises Liaison Officer. In this role, she overhauled the program, resulting in greater opportunity for collaboration with

“I thoroughly enjoy collaborating with others. I find that consistently working with a variety of people leads to greater insights and better projects.”

potential DBE and SBE contractors.

Greenlink is in the process of replacing its more than 40-year-old maintenance facility. Cleek worked closely with FTA Region IV to complete the necessary NEPA and Section 106 process and to secure final obligation of grant funding to make the future move possible.

Cleek spearheaded an update to the 2018 Transit Development Plan. The latest version now includes the consolidation of routes to improve efficiency and capital costs. This update is referenced to assist in long-term planning.

Cleek serves on the board of Bike Walk Greenville, is a member of WTS and a local chapter member of the Grant Professionals Association.

FAST FACT: Cleek created an interactive transit planning exercise, “Blueville,” that is now requested as a training opportunity among nonprofits and major employers in the county. MassTransitmag.com/21276448



KAYLEIGH CLEEK, MPA,
Transit Planning
Manager
for the City of
Greenville on behalf of
the Greenville Transit
Authority

40 UNDER
FORTY

REBECCA TAHCHAWWICKAH'S goal is to create an environment that promotes safety and security for passengers while making mobility for all an everyday reality. She does this by using education to change the perspective of public transit as a starting point.

Tahchawwickah started her career in public transit as a dispatcher for Comanche Nation Transit and worked her way up to her current role of transit asset management. Her determination from day one helped her become the wave of change that played a key role in making Comanche Nation Transit the safe system that it is today. During her tenure, she created an asset organization system and data collection system that led to an improvement of service. She also created an internal safety reporting tool that has given employees a way to express concerns or safety issues. In addition, she has worked to improve the quality of education and ensure proper risk assessment for each step of training and safety for clients and employees, underscoring her commitment to setting safety standards and nurturing the safety culture of the transit system.

In 2021 and 2022, Tahchawwickah was awarded the Oklahoma Transit Association Award of Excellence in Safety and Training. This award recognizes the finest efforts in providing safe, reliable, efficient and coordinated public

“I'm most proud of looking back and seeing where our transit system started and seeing where it is today. I can't wait to see where it continues to go.”

transportation that meets the mobility needs of all Oklahomans, as well as efforts to build, promote and advocate for public transit.

She also spoke at the National Transportation in Indian Country Conference in 2021 on how Tribal transit can be on the lookout to combat human trafficking, touching on how implementing human trafficking awareness and tools can help bus operators learn, identify and report possible incidents.

Tahchawwickah has been a member of the Comanche Nation Transit for nine years and continues to serve in many capacities for the system, including managing the agency's daily operations, TAM plan, grants, data analysis, asset management, dispatching and bus operating.

FAST FACT: Tahchawwickah's experience working as a bus operator shaped the way she felt about transit and opened her eyes how impactful transit is to the community it serves. MassTransitmag.com/21276475



REBECCA TAHCHAWWICKAH
Transit Asset
Management
Comanche Nation
Transit

40 UNDER
FORTY



**CHRISTOPHER
TUFF, MBA**

Deputy Chief
Executive Officer
Central New
York Regional
Transportation
Authority



CHRISTOPHER TUFF was exposed to transit at a young age when he would ride along with his mother as she practiced her bus routes in the family car. At 23, Tuff started as an accountant at CENTRO before leaving the industry to explore career opportunities with the state of New York, but he remained involved in CENTRO's Bus Rodeo.

Tuff returned to CENTRO as a senior transportation analyst, which allowed him to apply his experience analyzing state policy and regulations to the transit world. He progressed through the organization and was promoted to deputy CEO in 2020, just as the pandemic was starting. From CENTRO's COVID Command Center, Tuff held daily meetings with in-person and remote staff, communicating daily changes to ensure vital transportation services continued to operate seamlessly under an entirely new set of safety standards and policies.

In the wake of the pandemic, he has led the development and implementation of a robust incentive program designed to retain CENTRO's workforce. The Reaching Productivity Milestones (RPM) program was developed as an upgrade to the previous operator of the month and perfect attendance programs.

The RPM program has been a key to building morale by recognizing the efforts of fellow

“Every day [working in transit] is different. It keeps me on my toes and always thinking.

employees who are going the extra mile to make CENTRO successful while continuing to provide transportation to the community.

Tuff is also the point person leading CENTRO's research team towards zero-emission technology. Additionally, he oversees the planning and organization of CENTRO's shuttle services to the 13-day Great New York State Fair. Typically, CENTRO will provide more than 550,500 rides to fairgoers during the nearly two-week event. Planning for this event is non-stop; meetings for the next fair begin as soon as the previous one winds down on Labor Day.

Tuff is a graduate of the New York Public Transit Association Public Transit Leadership Institute 1 and 2, a member of several APTA Committees and a member of the Syracuse Southeast Gateway Steering Committee.

FAST FACT: Tuff helps where aid is needed; he even obtained his CDL so he could help drive during special events when operator demand is at its highest.

MassTransitmag.com/21276482



**CHRISTOPHER
ZDANIS, MBA**

Chief Operating
Officer
Susquehanna
Regional
Transportation
Authority dba
Rabbittransit



CHRISTOPHER ZDANIS has been in the transit industry for nine years and during this time, he has made a significant impact on not only Rabbittransit, but also on those with whom he has worked. Today he holds the position of chief operating officer at Rabbittransit. From day one, Zdanis jumped into the organization, eager to learn from bottom to top the way things were done.

In 2018, there was a shift at Capital Area Transit (CAT) as a management agreement with Central Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (CPTA) was implemented. Replacing the CEO, this left Zdanis as the still new, yet top-position leader of CAT. Jan. 1, 2022, advanced the merger of CPTA and CAT into the new Susquehanna Regional Transportation Authority, operating as Rabbittransit.

With this change, Zdanis now provides leadership to a planning department of six team members and a maintenance department of 47 with a total revenue fleet of 431 vehicles, in addition to his previous responsibilities overseeing the Dauphin and Cumberland County operations team of 123 individuals.

He played a central role in several initiatives, including connecting employees with employers across the service area such as the 15,969 riders to Chewy in Mechanicsburg; realigning

“I started my transit career as a dispatcher [which] allowed me to gain a good understanding of the frontline work in transit, [and] I used this experience to help me achieve where I am today.

fare prices and eliminating zone fares to streamline routes and create a more organized system; implementing a mobile ticketing app; participating in CAT's network redesign; contributing to new fare box installation on CAT buses; improving on-time performance in fixed route and paratransit; contributing to the partnership between CAT and the Dauphin County Commissioners to provide free transportation to and from Lebanon VA Medical Center; and spearheading renovations in the driver area at the Harrisburg location.

He has participated in transit training programs with APTA, CTAA and PPTA, as well as graduating from the local Leadership Harrisburg Program.

FAST FACT: Zdanis is a Marine veteran, which allows him to collaborate on the creation of veteran promotional materials for the agency.

MassTransitmag.com/21276460

K. GRACE VIGER is a mechanical engineer with 14 years of experience. She's currently associate principal of mechanical design engineering at Wendel, where she serves as an equipment specialist for public transit facilities. In this role, she works directly with the end users and product manufacturers to ensure that equipment is provided and installed appropriately.

After high school, Viger was offered an internship at a small engineering firm in Buffalo, N.Y., where she stayed for eight years, specializing in plumbing and fire protection engineering and working full time while attending Buffalo State College. When Viger joined Wendel, she saw a need for an in-house expert in equipment specialization and took it upon herself to fill that role. Previously, the MEP department had several people who worked in equipment and process systems for public transit facilities, though it had not been anyone's full-time focus. She has since developed working relationships with major equipment manufacturers, staying up to date with industry changes and new available equipment.

Most people do a double take when seeing a female equipment specialist, but when she begins discussing their needs, her abilities become evident. The Greenville Transit Authority's Operations and Maintenance

“I had a background doing vehicle maintenance and am now able to apply this to transit. I felt like a kid in a candy shop getting to learn the ins and outs of heavy-duty maintenance equipment, process fluids and fueling systems.”

Facility exemplifies this. Thanks to her collaborative efforts, the bus wash system was purchased early on, and the selected manufacturer submitted installation drawings within two weeks of the award. The result was a successful project that ran smoothly from start to finish without many changes after initial decisions had been made.

Colleagues describe Viger as the epitome of diligence, adding that her “commitment and hands-on approach have singled her out as an extraordinary member of Wendel’s team.”

Outside of work, Viger serves as technical vice president of the Buffalo Niagara Chapter for the American Society of Plumbing Engineers.

FAST FACT: Viger's love for engineering began in middle school.

MassTransitmag.com/21276468



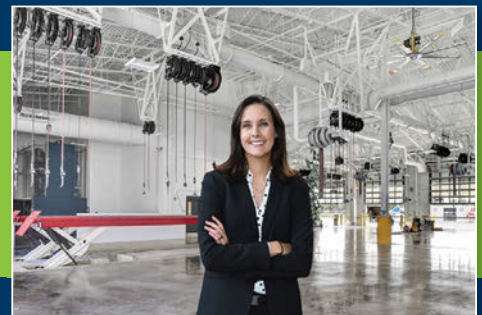
K. GRACE VIGER
Mechanical Design
Engineer, Associate
Principal
Wendel

40 UNDER
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For more information, visit www.MassTransitmag.com/12059202

Congratulations
K. GRACE VIGER
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Thank you for your leadership and dedication to the Transit industry.



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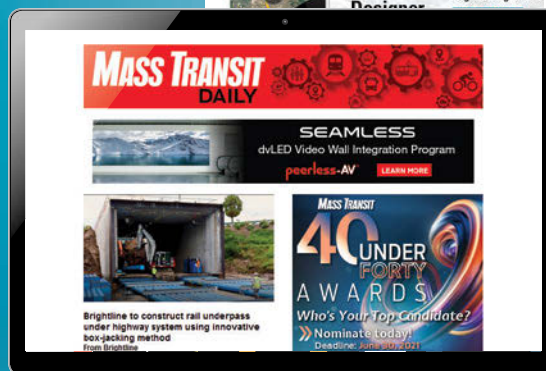
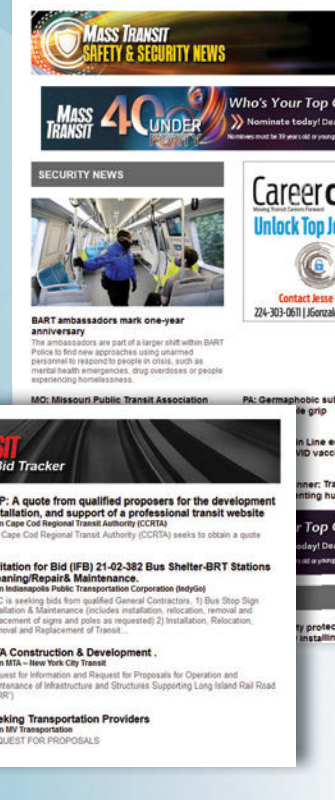


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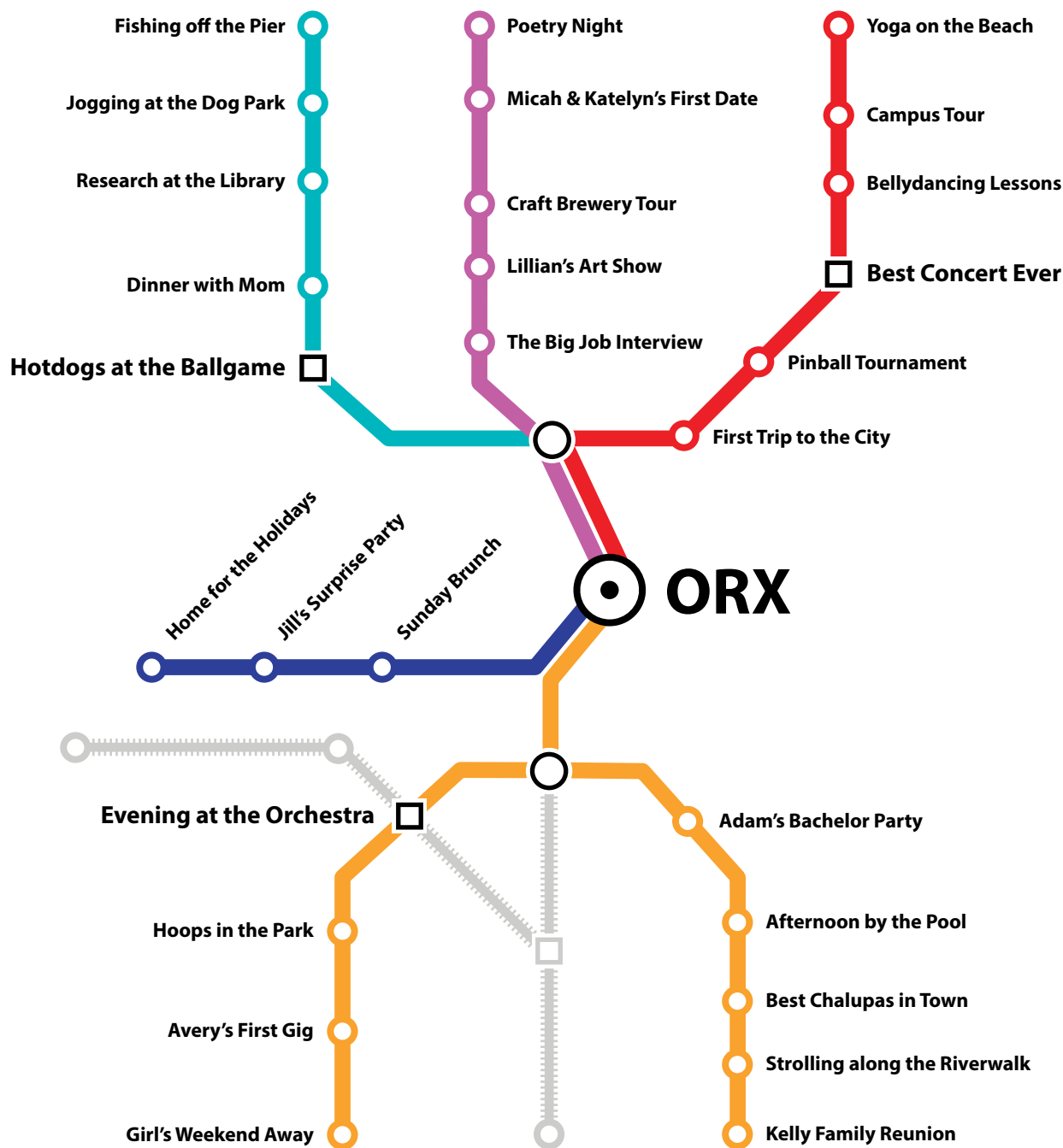


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