

The INSIDE

LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

NOVEMBER 2019

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 4

45
YEARS

*Special 45th
anniversary
coverage*

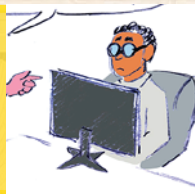
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ADOT

LEADERSHIP MATTERS

MY NAME IS Audra Merrick and I am the Northcentral District Engineer in ADOT's Infrastructure Delivery and Operations Division.

I began my ADOT career in the late 1990s as a construction resident engineer working on Flagstaff District road and bridge projects. I left for a few years to start a family and returned under the Construction Temp Tech contract with HDR, Inc. In 2007, I accepted ADOT's Flagstaff Development Engineer position where I managed the district's development and permit offices. For the past six and a half years, I've been the district engineer overseeing all district operations.

I'm a Lehigh University graduate, specializing in structures. My engineering career was initially kicked off in California, where I worked for Caltrans's Structures Division designing highway bridges, working in bridge construction and teaching bridge design prestressed concrete classes. I enjoy hiking, swimming, camping, scrapbooking and giving back to the local community through The Dawson Merrick Children's Foundation.

The Northcentral District has a unique geographical area requiring quick emergency responses to many natural disasters in rural settings. Since I became district engineer in 2013, we've experienced numerous fires, floods, landslides, winter storms, and even earthquakes, tornadoes, and roadway washouts. My biggest accomplishment is successfully creating and developing a diverse district team of leaders to be successful in these events. I set the overall direction, maintain the course through the duration, and provide hope and support. Yes, "hope" is always at the end of a good plan! In October 2018, US 89 — a major highway between Flagstaff and Page washed out in the middle of the night.

There was a well-orchestrated district response, reopening the roadway in approximately 32 hours. Forty-five percent of our maintenance forces were working like a well-oiled machine. I shared the extensive social media and personal responses with the team so they could feel the magnitude of their accomplishment and the meaning and emotional impact it had on the community.

The Arizona Management System deployment in the Northcentral District provided an opportunity to reassure a safe platform for employees to offer process improvements and make changes in a nonjudgmental environment. I'm a huge supporter of AMS and encourage employee innovation. This is displayed by staff far exceeding the FY2019 kaizen goal and taking the statewide district lead on project-level innovations. We currently have 13 innovative construction projects (IFS Projects) in varying stages. IFS Projects promote the use of innovative technologies and practices, receiving an increased federal funding share for participation. The Interstate 40 Meteor City Traffic Interchange Overpass is just one example of those projects.

My key takeaway from the 1:1 Coaching session at this year's Leaders Conference is the value of humble inquiry. Humble inquiry promotes positive communications and enhances professional relationships that are valuable and good. Invest in your employees by spending time with them; employees are our most valuable resource. ■



Audra Merrick
Northcentral District Engineer

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THE INSIDE LANE IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY
FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BY
ADOT COMMUNICATIONS.

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SUGGESTIONS TO InsideLane@azdot.gov.

A WEB VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER CAN
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Share your memories

In honor of ADOT's 45th anniversary on July 1, 2019, we are inviting employees to share their favorite ADOT memories. Please fill out this [form on ADOTNET](#), and tell us all about your time with ADOT.



This photo, which Video Services Supervisor **John Dougherty** shot with a drone, shows ADOT's bridge-improvement work using innovative methods on the Meteor City bridges on Interstate 40 at milepost 239, about 15 miles from Winslow and six miles from the turnoff for the Meteor Crater natural landmark. The project includes removing and replacing the existing bridges and reconstructing the roadway bridge approaches. More coverage, **Page 3**.

METEOR CITY BRIDGE AND TRAFFIC INTERCHANGE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN ARIZONA



JUST 15 MILES outside Winslow, ADOT has replaced the bridge and traffic interchange over Interstate 40 at Meteor City with a new structure that's a first for the state.

The old bridge and traffic interchange were from the 1960s — before ADOT was even a state agency — and very out of date. They required so many repairs that it was better just to tear it all down and start from scratch. This project also introduced innovative design and technology behind the new bridge and traffic interchange.

The new bridge uses a geosynthetic reinforced integrated soil bridge system — or just GRS. This new system uses geosynthetic materials to create a webbing between layers of compacted soil. From the outside, it looks like the kind of blocks you might see used for landscaping, but those blocks mask a tiered system of highly stabilized compact soil.

Furthermore, the entire project — both deconstructing the old bridge system and building the new one — only took a whopping 18 days. Using traditional methods, the project would've taken between three and four months, closing I-40 either partially or entirely for that entire time. This dramatic time savings meant travelers and commercial traffic could get back to their normal routes faster, with minimal disruption.

“ADOT is always looking out for motorists,” said Northcentral District Senior Resident Engineer **Tom Goodman**. “We wanted to minimize disruption to the traveling public, but at the same time, we wanted to build a nice bridge that's appealing to the public as well.”

For more information about this project, and to see the final product, check out the [video!](#) 📺

~ Dani Weber, Senior Communications Specialist

Photos: John Dougherty, ADOT Communications

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New agency report focuses on women in the ADOT workforce

Employee feedback, survey responses critical to the study

REMEMBER back in 2017 when ADOT employees were asked to complete an online survey with questions related to employment experiences at this agency?

The goal of the survey and subsequent interviews of randomly selected female employees was to provide a comprehensive look at the role of women in ADOT's workforce.

The feedback gained through the survey and interviews, along with additional research, was put into a report that was published in August and is now [available to view on the ADOT website](#).

Funded by the Federal Highway Administration and managed by ADOT's Research Center, the study was completed by the University of Arizona's Southwest Institute for Research on Women, explained ADOT Senior Research Project Manager **Bernadette Phelan**.

Phelan said the final report provides an overview of the feedback given by employees, along with opportunities ADOT may consider to help increase recruitment and retention of women in the ADOT workforce.

"I think the study basically confirms those areas where we can further improve the utilization of women across the board," Phelan said.

The report made some interesting finds:

- The report notes that having 39.7% of its workforce made up of women as of 2016 ranked ADOT ahead of five other state departments of transportation examined. A good deal of that percentage came from ADOT's Motor Vehicle Division, where 79.8% of employees were women. But ADOT still employed the highest percentage of women among the state departments of transportation examined, even when MVD employment was excluded, the report notes.
- Across nontraditional job categories where women were less represented in ADOT's workforce, including technicians, sworn law enforcement officers, skilled craft positions and service/maintenance positions, women who responded to the survey cited opportunities for advancement and childcare assistance among areas for improvement.
- An area of opportunity identified by the report suggests conducting outreach to women and girls to generate current and future interest in ADOT positions.
- Another suggestion focuses on expanding educational assistance and mentoring opportunities. It is also recommended that the agency consider extending practices that enable employees to fulfill both



their ADOT responsibilities and personal expectations for family caregiving.

- Employees identified benefits such as health coverage, the Arizona State Retirement System, paid sick leave, annual leave and holidays among the job attributes that women found most appealing for recruitment.

ADOT's Chief Human Resources Officer **Wendy Brazier** notes that many of the suggested opportunities from the report are actually already underway.

"Some of these things happened organically before the survey results were released," said Brazier, adding that the agency's tuition assistance policy is in the process of being updated and there has been a big push for more training through [#ADOTLeads](#), both things that were mentioned by employees in the survey. The [Infants at Work](#) pilot program

Chief Human Resources Officer **Wendy Brazier**, who will speak about the report at an upcoming AASHTO committee conference, said the report can also benefit other state DOTs, most of which are dealing with the same issues ADOT deals with when it comes to increasing the recruitment and retention of women.

is another effort aimed to assist with the work-life balance.

"We're also implementing one-on-one coaching, which helps open up those lines of communication," Brazier said. "We've gone through some iterations of our recruiting process ... we're striving to continually improve and streamline that process."

From here, the agency will look for ways to implement the opportunities outlined, Brazier said.

In total, 1,180 ADOT employees (men and women) responded to the survey. Researchers also interviewed 43 ADOT women employees across all job categories. Phelan said the response, about 32% of the agency, was great and helped the success of the report.

"We want to thank ADOT employees for responding," she said.

"Every form of diversity is welcome at ADOT, while biases, cultural mores and intolerance have no place here," ADOT Director **John Halikowski** said. "Our goal is and will always be providing equal opportunity for all and making ADOT a better place for everyone to have long and fulfilling careers."

To view the final report online, visit the [ADOT website](#). ■

~ Angela De Welles, Senior Communications Specialist

MOBILE PORT OPERATIONS UNIT WINS THE 2019 TEAM OF THE YEAR AWARD!



Joe Larger, ADOT Communications

(Left to right) **Director John Halikowski** presents the Team of the Year Award to Mobile Port Operations team members: **Officer Elizabeth Kovacovich, Sgt. Curtis Adams, Officer Billy Outlaw, Officer Kevin Giese, Sgt. Joseph Brochu, Officer William Murray, Officer Robert Russ, Officer Mike Resultay, CSR Mike Mandel, Officer Jay Johnson, CSR David Hawley and Lt. Kathleen Kontz.**

ADOT IS PROUD TO announce this year's Team of the Year — Mobile Port Operations! They're a team that collaborates together, supports each other and commits to shared excellence and success. Together, they have innovated solutions to recurring challenges, worked with other agencies and companies to provide needed support services, and created new processes to streamline their work.

Mobile Port Operations (MPO) performs many of the same duties as the fixed ports of entry, but they are — as the name suggests — mobile. They move around the state — and sometimes on tribal land, by invitation — to monitor commercial traffic and record violations. They

also reach out to trucking companies to educate them on how they can keep their drivers and their cargo in compliance with commercial traffic laws.

"The dedication this team displays is impressive," said Lieutenant **Kathy Kontz**, the team's leader. "They have accepted the Arizona Management System and implement it on a daily basis. They conduct weekly virtual huddle board meetings, problem solve and always work together, and strive to be the best. They are constantly thinking and coming up with new and innovative ways to do things. Their dedication to Process Improvement and Problem Solving is remarkable."

One of the big accomplishments the team made this year was working

together to create and implement standard work in the form of a new statistical tracking system specifically designed for the MPO team. All members from the team gave input to ensure they covered all the bases for a successful system. As a result, the team is now able to track specific MPO statistics in the system.

And it's not just their own obstacles they work together to tackle. When the Navajo Nation was experiencing a high volume of speeding, overweight commercial vehicles traveling their roadways and not enough officers to patrol and correct it, ADOT's MPO team accepted their request for quarterly assistance. As a result of this outreach and its success, several tribal council members from other reservations have asked the

MPO team to conduct the same enforcement operations.

The MPO team's commitment to excellence and serving the motoring public has expanded in many directions.

- Some of their officers have been active in the Special Response Unit, which provides services to special events like state funerals and large sporting events.
- Others also participate in the yearly Shop with a Cop event, which takes Valley kids holiday shopping and provides a positive interaction with law enforcement officers.
- One officer instructs new drivers at the Yavapai College CDL Program, training them in safety, rules and regulations of commercial vehicles.
- On request, MPO officers are also available to conduct mock inspections for trucking companies so their drivers know what to expect.

Despite everything the team has done and continues to do, both for ADOT and the communities they serve, the 2019 Team of the Year Award was still a surprise.

"I was really excited for them, the award was well-deserved" Lt. Kontz said. "This team is motivated and consistently strives to fulfill ADOT's mission on a daily basis. They have great communication, they display teamwork on a daily basis and they have a great work ethic." ■

~ Dani Weber, Senior Communications Specialist



LEARN TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

The [Capitol Toastmasters](https://www.toastmastersclubs.org) will help you ease your speaking anxiety, present effectively, lead others and more. Join the fun from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Thursdays in the BECO Conference Room, 1801 W. Jefferson St. in Phoenix. For more information, email vpm-365@toastmastersclubs.org



WHAT DO YOU DO?

At ADOT, it's difficult to sum up anyone's job in just a few words. That's why we're devoting some space in this newsletter to give employees across the agency the chance to share a little bit about what they do every day. If you'd like to participate for a future issue, please send an email to InsideLane@azdot.gov and we'll provide you with a questionnaire.



Meet Kohinoor Kar

*Transportation Engineer Manager
Grant Coordination
Multimodal Planning Division*

Joe Larger, ADOT Communications

How long have you worked for ADOT?

More than 15 years. Prior to joining ADOT, I worked in the private industry and academia for about 15 years.

What training is required for your position?

The grant coordinator position is fairly new and serves three major transportation divisions. Understanding ADOT priorities and leadership skills is essential. Communication, coordination and collaboration are the key to succeeding in this position. In addition to understanding transportation engineering principles and economic analysis, this position requires innovative thinking and critical decision making within a tight deadline.

How do you describe your job to people outside of ADOT?

My job is to research, coordinate and develop applications seeking federal discretionary grants. Decision making on ADOT's grant applications goes through a comprehensive process, which was designed and standardized using Arizona Management System tools, including reviewing merit criteria, vetting on

project selection, securing matching funds and obtaining approval from ADOT's executive grant team. The next step is to coordinate with several entities to gather data, information and existing studies, as well as to obtain letters of support from stakeholders and elected officials. I provide input and oversee grant development from brainstorming on ideas to completing application packages to final submission. If we win, I coordinate with appropriate agencies/entities for project initiation, funding authorization and reporting to the grantor agency following grant-specific requirements.

Describe a typical work day

It varies depending on whether I am working on a grant approaching deadline versus doing research and coordination for potential grant opportunities. I like to stay busy with meaningful contributions to ADOT and my professional world.

What do you like most about your job?

Working with people within and outside ADOT having different roles, expertise and experience.

What do you want other ADOT employees to know about your job that they might not know?

I am happy to talk with anyone interested in federal transportation capital grants. Please contact me with ideas at 602.712.8239 or KKar@azdot.gov. More information about our grant development process is available on azdot.gov/grant.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

Almost all discretionary grants have become extremely competitive across the nation. There are grants like BUILD that are open to any agency, not just state DOTs. For example, the 2018 BUILD grant attracted 851 applications and awards were made to only 91 of them. Identifying compelling projects and prioritizing them based on scope, schedule, budget and available matching funds is probably the most challenging part.

What is the most interesting/exciting thing that has happened to you on the job?

Winning the \$90 million [Infrastructure for Rebuilding America](#) (INFRA) grant for the I-17

Flexible Demand project. This was the first outcome of major grant applications that I developed and submitted since I started working in this position. While attending an AASHTO meeting, I saw an email with advance notice of the INFRA grant award for the I-17 project from a senator's office. Within a month, I came to know about another success securing about \$10.4 million of [Competitive Highway Bridge Program](#) grant for the US 191 Bridge Bundling project in the Navajo Nation. Congratulations to everyone who provided input to the winning grant applications!

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I like challenging work under commendable leadership. I enjoy spending time with my family. I also do some volunteering activities and, occasionally, hit the road with my photography gear. 📷

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

ADOT employees wear purple to support Domestic Violence Awareness Month



Equipment Services



Capitol Complex



Northwest District Kingman



Southeast District Globe



Fleet Management



Southcentral District Tucson



Northwest District Prescott

KAIZEN KORNER

KAIZEN 2020 CHALLENGE

Here's what you need to know: We are aligning kaizens to ADOT's long-term strategies. The goal is to have 7,200 Kaizens by June 30, 2020 with 100% participation by all employees. The goal is to have 50% of the kaizens align with the long-term strategies as identified in ADOT's Strategic Plan. Through Dec. 31, the focus is on transportation safety.

KAIZEN COUNT

The number of kaizens submitted by ADOT employees so far this fiscal year is

1,741

For a complete breakdown by division, visit the [Office of Continuous Improvement page on ADOTNet](#).

Fried snowplow simulator repaired just in time for operator training ahead of winter

AS WINTER APPROACHES, many of ADOT's maintenance crews are starting to knock the rust off their snowplow skills by jumping into a snowplow simulator. Recently, however, there was one problem — a lightning storm had fried the simulator's power supply. With the clock ticking down to the first snowfall, PC/LAN technicians **Jase Tilton** and **Jim Sabados** got it working again.

Every year, both new and veteran snowplow operators have to practice to ensure they're ready for whatever scenario they encounter on icy roads — but you can't practice when there's no snow on the ground.

That's where the simulator comes in to help refresh operators with hazards they might encounter on the roadway. While the operator sits in the simulator, an instructor controls and changes the scenarios they have to react to — a pedestrian in the road, uneven roadway, an emergency vehicle ahead, you name it. Practice in the simulator ensures the safety of both the snowplow operators and everyone else on the road.

"It doesn't replace hands-on experience," Highway Operations Superintendent **Thomas Threlkeld** said of the simulator, "but it's important for the operators to familiarize themselves and get a feel for what to expect."

However, after lightning struck the trailer that houses the simulator, the machine would not turn on. Equipment Services Software Engineer **Mike Pope** traced the electrical problem to the power supply on the instructor's computer. Tilton and Sabados worked together to fix it as soon as possible

so that snowplow operators could get in the hours of practice they need before winter gets here.

A call to the manufacturer revealed they would be on their own in fixing the problem. The machine was six years out of warranty, according to Sabados, and it would cost ADOT \$3,000 just to get a technician to look at the problem, not including any repairs.

But the team wasn't discouraged. Sabados said, "The computers are old enough that they don't make them anymore, but they still make the parts."

It took about a week to fully repair the simulator, and meanwhile, the generator to the trailer kept overheating, requiring fans to keep them cool. After replacing the power supply, the instructor's computer now worked as expected, but the simulator still wouldn't "talk" to it. Tilton and Sabados traced this fault to two network switches and replaced them. With the help from Equipment Services team members volunteering to test the simulator, and Pope offering his invaluable soldering skills to help the new parts fit the machine correctly, the team was able to get the machine up and



The snowplow simulator is comprised of four large screens, where the operator sits, and a computer terminal, where the instructor controls the conditions and scenarios for the operator. The simulator is housed in a trailer for easy mobility throughout the state.

Steven VanEnwyck, Northcentral District

running — just in time for snowplow operators to start practicing for winter.

"I really liked how everyone came together and helped each other," Tilton said. "We talked about it in team huddles, everyone was always ready to help — it really was a team effort. I'd never done a project like this one before." ■

~ Dani Weber, Senior Communications Specialist

Cameras on snowplows

Installation of cameras in 25 trucks is on schedule for completion by the end of next summer. Camera coverage will include most of I-40, I-17 from Camp Verde to Flagstaff, US 60 from Salt River Canyon to Show Low, and SR 89A. Transportation Systems Management and Operations, Information Technology Group, and Infrastructure Delivery and Operations teams gave an outstanding effort to move this important initiative forward. Special thanks to **Brent Cain** and **Mark Trennepohl** (TSMO), **Steve West** and **Mark Flahan** (ITG), and **Steve Boschen** and **Jesse Gutierrez** (IDO).

THANK YOU, ADOT

BECO team congratulated for reducing form errors

GOVERNOR DOUG DUCEY'S OFFICE has congratulated the Business Engagement and Compliance Office for developing a new process that dramatically reduced errors in Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) affidavit forms from 61% to 13%.

Bidders are required to provide information in the [DBE affidavit form](#) about DBE companies that would be working on federally funded construction projects. Form errors caused bids to be rejected and ADOT had to re-advertise projects, which was costly both in time and money.

To develop a new process to reduce errors, a Standardize Do Check Act (SDCA) group was created, consisting of ADOT staff and construction industry representatives. Process owner and BECO Contract Compliance and Training Officer **Tina Samartinean** worked with her team and the group that developed targets, identified root causes and created these countermeasures:

- Updating the DBE affidavit forms and instructions
- Contacting past bidders who submitted forms with errors to provide guidance to avoid future errors
- Internally producing a training video tutorial on how to fill out the forms correctly
- Highlighting where contractors can find more information to fill out the forms

BECO's new process to reduce form errors is part of ADOT's agencywide commitment to the Arizona Management System (AMS), championed by Governor Ducey, to improve how state government does business and interacts with customers.

"This success submission is customer service at its finest," Deputy Chief of Operations for the Office of the Arizona Governor **Sarah Pirzada** wrote in a thank-you email regarding the new DBE affidavit form process. "We would like to thank you for recognizing a deficiency within the business process and then taking the steps to address it. We always want to ensure that we are doing everything we can to make the lives of our customers easier,"

View the entire thank-you email on [ADOTNet](#). ■

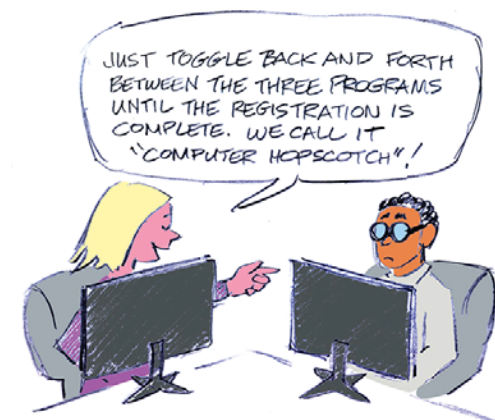
~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

ADOT JUMBLE

Directions: Unscramble each of the clue words, then arrange the circled letters to form the answer. Email your answers to InsideLane@azdot.gov by Nov. 13. Everyone who solves the puzzle will be entered into a drawing for a prize. We'll reveal the answers in next month's newsletter. Good luck!

- 1) ITPECRU ○ _ _ _ _ ○
- 2) GAONKARO _ ○ _ ○ _ _
- 3) CECHANMI ○ _ _ _ _ ○ ○ _
- 4) WALSL _ _ ○ _ ○
- 5) GMY ○ ○ _

It was only his second day on the job, but Brad was already annoyed by his new coworker, Janet. She still wouldn't tell him where the breakroom was and only seemed interested in:



This cartoon was drawn by ADOT Graphic Designer **John Walradt** and it illustrates an example of motion, one of the eight wastes identified in Continuous Improvement. Motion can include walking to use shared equipment, searching for files or anything related to movement that wastes time and effort.

WINNER

WINNER!

eyethink

WE HAD A fantastic response to last month's ADOT EyeThink contest with 61 entries, but there can only be one winner. Congratulations to Contract Specialist **Jacque Shivers** of the Engineering Consultant Section! Her name was selected from a random draw of entries. She received a special gift bag from Internal Communications Director **Kathy Boyle**, including an Arizona Highways 2020 wall calendar, Arizona Highways magazines, a stress ball, a cup and other great gifts. ■



Answers:

1. The bin
2. The wheels
3. The boxes
4. The speed lines
5. The stacks
6. The expression on his face

Kathy Boyle, ADOT Communications

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KNOW SNOW

WINTER HASN'T officially started, but at ADOT, we know colder temperatures and icy conditions are on their way. We also know that our snowplow fleet is prepped and that our operators are trained and ready to go.

Our team is prepared, but we really need drivers to be ready, too...

Each year, I use this Driving Safety Home column to remind everyone that when you're behind the wheel, you need to know how to handle your vehicle in snowy and icy conditions. As I've said previously, winter travel safety tips generally don't change much from year to year, but that doesn't mean we can become complacent.

So I'd like to encourage you to review the winter-driving safety tips on our [Focus on Driving website](#). As always, be sure to share what you learn with your loved ones.

I also want to remind you about keeping your vehicle ready for winter trips and the importance of a winter emergency kit. Just like in the summertime, it's crucial to be prepared and to expect the unexpected. You never know when a storm or a crash might create the need for an unplanned road closure that might last for hours. Drivers should be prepared.

Before you even head out on a trip, make sure your vehicle is in good working condition by paying special attention to the battery, ignition and exhaust systems, thermostat, defroster, heater, tires, and brakes.

You should never drive into snowy, icy or cold conditions without a fully charged cell

phone, drinking water, and winter coats, warm blankets or both. But also consider keeping these items available too:

- Gloves, scarves, caps and extra socks
- Necessary prescribed medication(s) and pain relievers
- First-aid kit
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Ice scraper
- Small bag of sand (or kitty litter) for wheel traction
- Small folding shovel for snow removal
- Travel tool kit and battery cables
- Safety flares
- Plastic bags or containers for sanitation
- Healthy snacks
- Road map

Also be sure to stay informed. You can visit ADOT's Travel Information site at [az511.gov](#) or call 511 to get the latest highway conditions. ADOT's Twitter feed (@ArizonaDOT) is an excellent source of information, as is ADOT's free app that sends critical information directly to app users in affected areas — find details at [ADOTAlerts.com](#).

For more information and tips on staying safe on the road this winter, visit our [Know Snow](#) and [Focus on Driving](#) sites. ■

~ Dallas Hammit, Deputy Director for Transportation



Dallas Hammit



If you have an AMS moment or breakthrough to share, please send the information to InsideLane@azdot.gov and provide a photo.

AMS SPOTLIGHT BY DIRECTOR JOHN HALIKOWSKI

Congratulations to our Insurance Recovery Unit (IRU) for achieving the second highest recovery amount at \$5.82 million and in handling 2,663 claim files for Fiscal Year 2019. Using a combination of Arizona Management System (AMS) principles, the team has steadily and successfully increased the amount of funds returning to the State Highway Fund from claims since 2015. Normal expectations had been at \$3 million a year before 2015. So, how did the team do it, and what AMS improvements have been implemented?

The real change began in 2015. Previously, a member of the team would take a claim and work it from start to finish. Such a process was demonstrating one of the eight wastes — unutilized talent. Certain members of the team had skill sets that lent themselves to the discovery phase of a claim, handling investigations, while others had skills sets as adjusters and could negotiate and finalize a claim. By instituting a Dispatch/Triage/Closer model in the summer of 2015 (which is unique in Arizona compared to other state DOTs), the IRU team has seen the amount of recovered funds dramatically increase from \$2.1 million to \$6.5 million during the past four years. This model demonstrates having the right person in the right position with the right skill sets.

To make sure the team stayed on track, the IRU team conducted daily huddle meetings and met weekly, way before the agency embraced AMS. The team now holds weekly huddle meetings to review metrics and identify any problems or concerns during the claim process.

I want to recognize the IRU team for embracing our One ADOT philosophy. Recently, the team has been reaching out to our maintenance units, to build partnerships and work together to recover funds to repair our roads. The team calls it MOP (Maintenance Organization Partnership). It makes perfect sense because our maintenance crews are usually tasked with repairing guardrail, cable barriers, bridges, asphalt burns and landscaping due to crashes or incidents in our system, which are the basis for the insurance claims.

My thanks to Acting Safety and Risk Management Administrator **Mike Dwiggins**, Insurance Recovery Supervisor **Jim Cupp**, and the members of the IRU team: **Barry Friedman, Lucia Penuelas, Deb Moles, Rick Foltz, Marty Vargas, Sharon Chubinsky, Elizabeth Vega** and **Heath Slaughter**. The Insurance Recovery Unit is part of Safety and Risk Management, and is under the Administrative Services Division.

LeRoy Brady adds splendor to Arizona highways for 45 years

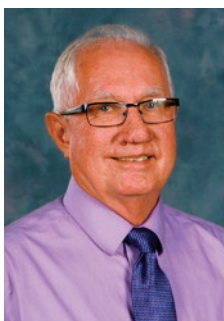
FROM COLORFUL wildflowers and native plants to artistic designs on highway bridges, sound walls and slopes, Arizona's history, diverse culture and varied climates are reflected in its roadsides.

The beautification of Arizona roadways is a testament to the leadership of ADOT Chief Landscape Architect **LeRoy Brady**, who for the past 45 years, has been leading the Roadside Development Section's team of landscape architects and designers.

Brady became the Chief Landscape Architect for the Arizona Highway Department in June 1974, a month before the Arizona Department of Transportation was created. He had moved to Arizona with his wife and two young daughters after serving eight years as a landscape architect at the Idaho Highway Department.

"It's important that we design our roadside developments carefully and artfully because what we do is seen by more people than any other kind of public work," Brady said. "People enjoy seeing beauty."

Landscaping is an important functional element in roadway design. Besides improving air and stormwater quality, landscaping creates a sense of place that is compatible with roadway surroundings, both environmentally and biologically, he added.



LeRoy Brady

When Brady began his ADOT career, plants from California were primarily used to landscape roadways. Revegetation after highway construction to stabilize disturbed soil was left up to chance, and tumbleweeds were common.

Under Brady's direction, native Arizona plants became the standard for roadsides and rest areas. Each year, about 1,800 acres of roadsides are seeded. Seed

mixes, including more than 20 diversified types of perennial, biennial and annual native plants for wildflowers and low grasses, are tied into Arizona's varying climates and terrains.

"We are concerned about the decline of pollinators like butterflies, bees, bats and other insects, so we make sure our seed mix includes native flower species that provide pollen and nectar in multiple seasons," Brady said.



This fin design on the South Mountain Freeway sound walls is a nod to architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Over the years, ADOT worked with industry leaders to develop new boxing methods to improve survival rates of transplanted saguaros, ironwood trees and other native plants that lived in the path of new or expanded highways.

Native plants are carefully uprooted before construction begins, cared for during construction and then replanted alongside the new roadway. Examples include the [Loop 303 expansion in the West Valley](#) and the [Loop 101 Pima Freeway widening in Scottsdale](#).

Before construction started on the [Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway](#), crews salvaged saguaros, ironwoods, palo verdes and other native plants in the 22-mile corridor. Many of those plants have already been replanted.

"ADOT takes great pride in maintaining the highway scenery by preserving some of these



ADOT Communications

Trees and other plants were relocated to a nursery then replanted along the Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway.

long-standing plants that are part of Arizona's history," Brady said. "It helps promote sustainable practices and contributes to the long-term viability and health of the functional desert ecosystem."

Besides vegetation, ADOT adds splendor to highway construction through cost-effective aesthetic designs in the concrete façade of sound walls and bridges, and on landforms and slopes. For example, plans call for the monarch butterfly to be depicted in bridge walls, piers and landforms as part of State Route 189 improvements in Nogales because of the butterfly's migration through this region.

For more information, go to [ADOT's Roadside Development web page](#). ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

We're marking ADOT's major milestones in honor of the agency's 45th anniversary. See previous issues for earlier segments of the timeline.

2018

- Expanded office hours and new online services resulted in shorter wait times at MVD offices.

Permit Test @ Home



- The Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway, the first public-private partnership construction project and the most expensive in ADOT's history, reached its halfway construction point.

- The first-in-the-nation wrong-way vehicle alert system featuring thermal cameras was installed on a 15-mile stretch of Interstate 17 in Phoenix.



- Pavement improvement along 12 miles of I-40 was completed.

TYSON GOREE

*Transportation Engineering Specialist
Infrastructure Delivery and Operations Division
8 years with ADOT*

ADOT MEMORIES

What is your favorite ADOT memory and why?

Manning roadblocks at Fortuna Wash on Highway 95 in Yuma during rain storms. We worked together as a team. We kept the traveling public safe and always managed to have the roadway reopened in time for morning traffic to the Yuma Proving Grounds. You got to know the person you were there with all night.

How has your job changed?

From a worker in highway maintenance to a traffic engineering specialist in construction, my job has changed quite a bit. Instead of repairing a guardrail, picking up litter or responding to accidents, I'm now conducting weekly meetings, writing change orders, doing Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program inspections and monitoring construction estimate partnering with the contractors. I have a better understanding of how we work as a whole, and the systems we have in place.



How has the transportation industry evolved?

I think it's more streamlined. We're doing more with less and doing it smarter with less waste in both man hours and materials.

What do you like most about working for ADOT?

What I like most is that ADOT is more than just a job; it is a career. It's challenging and demanding at times, but it's a great place to work. I love that how far you go in ADOT is completely determined by no one but you. There are so many people that will help you achieve whatever goals you have for yourself. I like that I've achieved more than I started out to do and still have a lot more to accomplish. I'm grateful to be a part of something way bigger than myself. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

DON DASSINGER

*IT Specialist
Information Technology Group
14 years with ADOT*

ADOT MEMORIES

What is your favorite ADOT memory and why?

I like to recall the Information Technology Group training of Arizona Management System principles, which are both very informational, and I like the no-name/no-blame part of the ADOT Continuous Improvement campaign.

I occasionally see very old photographs of the Arizona Highway Department and recall that ADOT has a successful history of striving for excellence, and Lean principles, and continuous improvement.

From the early days before my time, with some horse-drawn road grading equipment, to gas and diesel power, to the fast-paced and real time information of current processes, the evidence of change and advancement is clear when taking a look back.

How has your job changed?

The hardware is faster. Information is more readily available in real time, or near real time. The applications are more web-page and cloud based, while faxes were a mainstay of some reporting activities to other entities. Resubmissions or reentries

Share Your ADOT Memories

Send us your favorite memories by filling out this [form on ADOTNet](#) by Nov. 18.

of submitted data seem to be significantly reduced. ADOT continues to strive and advance, always applying principles of continuous improvement.

How has the transportation industry evolved?

Road funding has changed and will likely continue to change from funding through fuel taxes to current considerations of how to maintain and develop infrastructure in a car-sharing, ride-sharing, mixed fuels/electrical propulsion and increased public transportation environment. Gravel to asphalt to concrete, diamond interchanges to roundabouts, to artificial intelligence augmented guidance and control and driverless transportation and the advent of neighborhood store-to-door automated delivery, transportation has changed and will continue to change and improve.

What do you like most about working for ADOT?

ADOT continues to be dynamic, fast-paced and forward looking. I like to participate in and to see the positive effects of continuous improvement. Changes and challenges continue and ADOT is an agency committed to meeting its mission serving its Arizona and national customers. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

2019



• ADOT launched a website focused on safe driving, [FocusOnDriving.com](#).



• Construction was underway on the first-in-the-nation dust detection system on Interstate 10 between Casa Grande and Tucson.



• The State Route 260 widening project between I-17 and Thousand Trails Road was completed, including a four-lane divided highway and seven roundabouts.



• I-10 was expanded to three lanes in each direction between Tucson and Casa Grande.



• Governor Doug Ducey announced \$300 million in improvements for I-17 north of Phoenix to improve safety and reduce congestion.

The INSIDE

LANE

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