

The INSIDE

LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

SEPTEMBER 2021

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Stay Ahead of the Curve

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ADOT

LEADERSHIP

MATTERS

I AM THE DEPUTY Director for the Administrative Services Division. My team is responsible for public records, record management, insurance, claims, litigation, hazardous materials, employee safety and workers' compensation. I'm an Arizona native and University of Arizona alumnus. I have worked for a plaintiff attorney law firm, private sector insurers, a utility, local government, Arizona Department of Administration — and most of the last 12 years for ADOT. I have settled here because of ADOT's great people, and the meaningful purpose of our work.

How do you ensure an environment of no blame/no judgment?

A few years ago, an ADOT division director shared a story about one of his teams, where he perceived low morale and noted a feeling of constant tension. He invested the time to observe and understand — and learned that each visit from that team's direct supervisor was a negative experience because he only visited when there was a problem. I keep this story in mind to ensure the right setting for problem solving. As leaders, we need to be intentional about fostering an environment where leadership is trusted and relied upon as a support system — where our interaction with staff is positive and helpful — and employees know that leadership addresses problems rather than people. Such a setting facilitates a "no blame/no judgment" work environment.

Describe a kaizen success story.

As longer-tenured ADOT employees know, this agency has always had a culture focused on performance and process improvement. On our team, a favorite

success story predates the Arizona Management System.

For background, the Insurance Recovery Unit is a team of insurance claim professionals, who work to recover costs arising from damage to highway structures. These structures include all roadway features, such as asphalt, bridges, guardrail, fencing, signs and landscaping. The team expanded in 2012 and 2013, when it transitioned to staffing with insurance claim professionals from private-sector carriers. Immediate improvement in our lagging metric — the amounts recovered each year — was expected, but did not materialize. Unit leadership therefore examined the recovery process, mapping it thoroughly, and ultimately identified a waste — underutilized talent.

The process was revised to address this waste. Employees with higher level institutional knowledge and investigative skills assumed ownership of the front end of the process — to accelerate the collection of relevant records and information necessary to make a claim against the responsible party. Meanwhile, those with superior negotiation skills took on responsibility for the back end — communicating with the responsible party's insurance carriers to improve our efficiency in closing the recovery action. The results were dramatic. Prior to fiscal year 2016, the average total annual recovery was \$3 million. For fiscal year 2016 and beyond, the Unit has recovered an average of more than \$5 million. ■



Ted Howard
Deputy Director for the
Administrative Services Division

The INSIDE LANE

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ADDRESS ALL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS TO InsideLane@azdot.gov.

A WEB VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER CAN BE FOUND ON ADOTNET OR AT AZDOT.GOV/INSIDELANE.

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Share your best cover shot

Do you snap shots that show off the scenic side of transportation in Arizona? Share them with us and we might put your photograph on the next cover of The Inside Lane.

It can be a great picture of an MVD office, a beautiful highway shot or even an artsy photo of construction materials. Whatever the subject, the photo should highlight some aspect of the work happening here at ADOT.

Submit your original, digital photographs to InsideLane@azdot.gov in JPEG format (no larger than 10MB). Along with the photo, please provide a brief description and your name/title.

On the cover

This cover photo of the I-10/Broadway Curve Project team was taken by Videographer **Joe Larger** in front of a large map of the project. (Left to right) **Robert Samour**, project director/senior deputy state engineer; **Steve Mishler**, design manager; **Alex Arriaga**, deputy design manager; **Kim Noetzel**, deputy communications director for major projects; **Julie Gadsby**, construction manager; **Amy Ritz**, project manager; **Lisa DeForest**, community relations project manager; **Edika Zarbroudi**, assistant resident engineer; and **Karen Erwin**, office technician. Not pictured: **Kole Dea**, senior resident engineer; **Carmelo Acevedo**, deputy project director; and **Emily Christ**, P3 initiatives senior program manager.

View more photos and read about the I-10 Broadway Curve construction project on **Page 3**.



ADOT'S INNOVATIONS KEEP BROADWAY CURVE PROJECT #AHEADOFTHECURVE



John Dougherty, ADOT Communications

◀ Video Services Supervisor **John Dougherty** took this photo using a long exposure on the side of Interstate 10 on Belle Butte, which is adjacent to Broadway Road.

department, our customers and the region, and that has risen to the occasion. It's always rewarding to be part of something larger than yourself and to work alongside people who are committed to doing work we can all be proud of, and that will benefit our customers for decades to come," she added.

Construction Manager **Julie Gadsby** agrees.

"Major projects like the Broadway Curve allow me to utilize the existing skills I have learned over the past 22 years working in construction while exposing me to new construction administration tools that come with P3 projects," she said.

The project runs along 11 miles of I-10 between the Loop 202 (Santan/South Mountain Freeway) and Interstate 17 near Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. Improvements being built through 2024 will enhance safety, reduce travel time, ease airport access and support the economy.

Several cutting-edge communication and construction methods are being implemented for the Broadway Curve project.

The #AheadOfTheCurve paid-advertising campaign launched this summer to raise awareness about the project on [TV commercials](#), radio, billboards, online and social media, Sky Harbor Airport's baggage claim and rental car areas, and even at gas pumps. The project team used virtual tools to host one of ADOT's largest-ever public meetings in August with about 6,000 participants.

ADOT employees are encouraged to tell their friends and family about obtaining project information through the [The Curve mobile app](#) and website, [i10BroadwayCurve.com](#), which features traffic alerts, maps, photos, videos and more.

"The Broadway Curve is going to impact traffic on I-10 for the next few years. I'd really like to encourage everyone to find alternative routes to avoid the construction area as much as possible," Project Manager **Amy Ritz** said.

Here are some of the project's state-of-the-art solutions:

- Adding collector-distributor roads parallel to I-10 between Baseline Road and 40th Street to separate through-traffic on I-10 from local traffic entering or exiting the highway.
- Utilizing real-time traffic data software to watch patterns during closures to be able to make real-time changes to keep people moving.
- Building the new 48th Street and Broadway Road bridges over I-10 adjacent to the existing bridges so there are no long-term closures on cross roads during construction.
- Using 3D modeling of CCTV cameras in the design to ensure there are no obstructions by bridges, signs or other elements when the project is built. ■

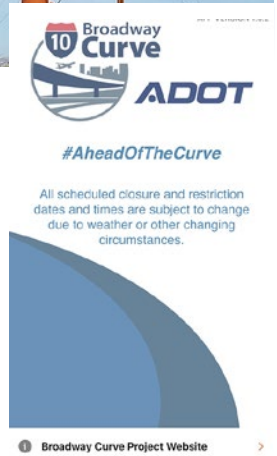
~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist



Courtesy of Lane Terralever

▲ This is one of ADOT's billboards along Interstate 10 to raise awareness about the Broadway Curve construction project.

► The Curve mobile app screenshot



1 Broadway Curve Project Website >

ADOT goes to the head of the class for environmental inspection

WHEN IT COMES to environmental quality inspections, ADOT is at the head of the class, thanks to the Equipment Services' exceptional planning and use of Arizona Management System principles.

The A+ rated-inspection for Equipment Services' Phoenix shop in May came about through continuous improvement — performance management and problem solving. The shop at 2225 S. 22nd Ave. generates a very small quantity of hazardous materials. It means the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality conducts inspections randomly, but no more than every two years. The team doesn't depend on ADEQ inspections to ramp up its efforts to exceed standards, however.

"Every year our shops get better and better," said Environmental Engineering Specialist **Kirk Flamm**. "It's not based necessarily on the ADEQ requirements, but on our internal program to maintain continuous improvement."



In 2006, Equipment Services developed the [Green Shop Program](#) to uphold high performance standards for its shops statewide. A 119-page best practices manual helps teams excel at environmental quality and safety, with a checklist to prepare for internal inspections.

Sixteen main and eight smaller satellite shops compete to be the best environmental stewards possible. The 2020 Environmental Green Shop Award recipients were [Holbrook](#) (main shop) and the [Capitol Mall](#) (satellite shop).

"Accountability is key," Flamm explained. "Our rigorous internal auditing ensures that we adhere to the environmental standards outlined in the best practices manual. The checklist and manual have helped us improve the process and the performance of our shops."

Vehicle Maintenance Operations Manager **Lionel McFarlane** reiterated the importance of AMS in their operations. "AMS provided us with the tools to continue to improve, to be better environmental stewards. It was a natural progression for the Green Shop Program." ■

~ Kim Larson, Senior Communications Specialist

Equipment shops are taking steps to reduce their pollution footprint. They include organization and labeling (top right) and a solvent cleaning tank substitution (bottom right). Also, spill prevention using absorbent materials on top of drums and a hazardous cleaning product substitute (left).



Kirk Flamm, Equipment Services

Hazmat team achieves 100% cost avoidance in 2020

IN 2020, THERE were 230 hazmat incidents on the road or materials left abandoned in an ADOT right of way.

When that happens, one of the two emergency response specialists, **Travis Qualls** or **Joe Logue**, are on scene or on the phone to ensure the materials are cleaned up and disposed of properly. The team of two is on call 24/7, ready to head to any part of the state at any given time.

To say that Qualls racks up a lot of miles in his job is an understatement.

"Let me put it this way: my work vehicle is two years old, and it has 65,000 miles on it," Qualls said.

On scene, the team works with law enforcement to keep the public safe, then they contact the responsible parties for the cleanup efforts. For 2020 those mitigation costs totalled \$7 million.

"That amount fluctuates from year to year, depending on how many incidents occur," said Administrative Services Division Deputy Director **Ted Howard**. "The consistent factor is the hard work of the HazMat team, to be able to transfer 100% of the remediation costs to the responsible parties year after year."

Logue and Qualls ensure that a contractor is hired, provide a scope of work and track the project. They receive a closure report, including analytic testing data, photographs and a waste manifest. ■

~ Kim Larson, Senior Communications Specialist

KAIZEN KORNER

KAIZEN 2021 CHALLENGE

We are all being challenged to embrace [AKA-The ADOT Way](#) and practice our skills of problem solving and process improvement. To do this, everyone needs to:

- Focus on improvement of core processes
- Reduce waste using (Plan-Do-Check-Act)
- Document and submit a kaizen via the [kaizen tracker](#) while in the ADOT network

To reach our goal of 7,200, everyone is expected to complete a kaizen on their own and do one additional kaizen.

KAIZEN COUNT

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

509

For more information on the Kaizen Challenge, visit the [Kaizen Challenge page on ADOTNet](#).

New process accelerates technical training materials delivery

WITH ADOT'S technical training switching from in-person instruction to virtual learning due to the pandemic, it's been a challenge to deliver training kits to trainees around the state.

The trainees work in the road construction and maintenance fields in ADOT highway maintenance yards, and various local public works departments. Because of COVID, maintenance yards are not staffed at all times because some employees work remotely.

"We observed delays in responding to FedEx notifications that packages could not be delivered for a variety of reasons. Only the person who initially sent the package could track it and respond with additional instructions for delivery," said Course

Administrator **Kimberlee Emerson** in Technical Learning and Development.

To ensure trainees receive their kits, the Technical Learning and Development team used the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) method to improve the training kits' deliveries. They embraced a customer-focused approach to identify why the kits could not be delivered.

"We worked with FedEx to set up a generic Technical Training user ID and password that all administrators could use to send, view and track packages for maximum efficiency in delivering them to our training customers," Budget and Procurement Specialist **Louisa Koistinen** said.

About 34 trainees monthly participate in virtual learning about flagging, traffic control and other topics.

Besides Koistinen and Emerson, other PDCA members were Marketing Course Administrator **Jendayi Edmeade** and Arizona Local Technical Assistance Program and Operations Program Manager **Rebecca Mayher**. 🍌

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist



Budget and Procurement Specialist Louisa Koistinen gets technical training materials ready for a FedEx delivery to a trainee.

Jendayi Edmeade, Technical Learning and Development

2021 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The Inside Lane is featuring a series of articles about teams of employees working on [ADOT's 2021 Strategic Initiatives](#), which are excellent examples of doing things [AKA - The ADOT Way](#). Employees are adapting to new concepts, using a total systems effort and highlighting a process in action.

New documents outline project investment terms, transportation maintenance budget

A NEW, COLORFUL tool puts easy-to-understand information on ADOT's project budgeting at your fingertips. An SDCA (Standardize-Do-Check-Act) group has finalized work on two documents that work together to simplify, standardize and explain key aspects and terminology.

The new [Projects Investment Categories](#) document uses simple terms to outline the agency's five major project investment categories. The [Maintenance Budget](#) document breaks down the numbers and organization of ADOT's transportation maintenance budget. The documents are posted on the [IDO page on ADOT Net](#), providing easy access for the employees, key stakeholders and the public.

"This new resource takes complex processes and makes them understandable," said Systems Management Group Assistant State Engineer **Jerry James**, who is helping lead the SDCA. "They'll be a handy and

hopefully well-used tool to bring more clarity to some key ways ADOT invests in projects that benefit communities."

The new documents were created as part of ADOT's 2021 strategic initiatives: Infrastructure Prioritization and Maintenance Funding Prioritization.

SDCA team members represent Transportation Systems Management and Operations, Infrastructure Delivery and Operations, the State Engineer's Office, Multimodal Planning, Government Relations, Enforcement and Compliance and Communications. SEO Lean Coach **John Nichols** is facilitator. The next step will be working through a plan to share the new resources with groups both inside and outside ADOT. 🍌

~ Jon Brodsky, Communications Director





Chad Auker has been with ADOT for more than 18 years, and currently serves in the Northcentral District as the Assistant District Engineer.

What's your typical work day like?

I provide engineering and operational support to the district maintenance workforce, which repairs and maintains the assets on ADOT highways. Coordination with district management, maintenance superintendents and supervisors, other groups and external agencies are a big part of each work day. In maintenance operations, there is no typical day. Flexibility and adaptability are needed to support the tasks at hand. Many days, I am supporting projects and assisting units with challenges in their areas. Other days, I am involved with natural disasters, like wildfires or floods, or winter snow operations. Our district covers a large geographical area so driving to the different areas to evaluate problems can be challenging.

At ADOT, it's difficult to sum up anyone's job in just a few words. That's why we're devoting space in this newsletter for employees across the agency to share about what they do every day. If you'd like to be featured in a future issue, please email us at InsideLane@azdot.gov.

~ Compiled by Kim Larson, Senior Communications Specialist

What do you enjoy most about your job?

What I enjoy most about my job are the people. The Northcentral District has a great group of employees who do their best, work together and take pride in their work. Even though the challenges are ever-present and often increasing, the employees and separate units always come together as a tight-knit team to keep the highways system in the best possible condition. It is rewarding to be a part of a group that values teamwork and lives by the AIR values.

What's on the top of your bucket list?

A hunting trip to Alaska. The Alaskan wilderness has always intrigued me and I want to experience it with some good hunting friends someday soon.

Do you have a hobby that people would be surprised to know about?

I was fortunate to learn construction skills from family members growing up, and over the years, I built a couple of my own homes for my family in Flagstaff. I use this skill on mission trips to Mexico, where my wife and I lead a team every spring to build homes for families. Our last trip, in 2020, resulted in homes for eight families.

What's the best vacation you've ever taken?

The best vacation place in the world is Kauai, Hawaii. My wife and I love it, and try to get back there every few years.

Best concert you've seen?

I'm not a big concert guy, but I was able to see Garth Brooks in State Farm Stadium a couple of years ago. The older Garth can still excite a crowd!

WINNER,

WINNER

We received many creative entries in response to last month's caption contest, but there could only be one winner. Congratulations to Yuma Port of Entry Enforcement and Compliance Division Officer **Robert Poole**, who submitted the winning caption! Assistant Communications Director for Internal Communications **Kathy Boyle** presented him with a special gift bag, including an Arizona Highways Arizona Best Recipes book, Arizona Highways Magazine, Inside Lane stress ball and other goodies. 📦



Maybe I should have been more specific when I said you had to wear a mask if you weren't vaccinated.



Kathy Boyle, ADOT Communications

ADOT TRIVIA

CHALLENGE

How well do you know your ADOT trivia? Test your knowledge by answering the questions below. Everyone who submits the correct answers to InsideLane@azdot.gov by **Sept. 14** will be entered into a prize drawing. We'll reveal the answers in next month's newsletter. Good luck! (Here's a BIG hint — you'll find the answers on ADOT's Fast Facts web page, azdot.gov/fast-facts.) 📦

- How many traffic signs are there throughout ADOT's statewide system?
- What is the volume of traffic in the Phoenix Metro area?
- How many striping miles are there in the state?

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