

# The INSIDE

# LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

JANUARY 2023

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1



Employees share ADOT's 2022 highlights, 2023 goals

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**ADOT**

# ADOT goes BIG in 2022

**HAVE YOU HEARD** the expression “Go big or go home?” It means to act boldly. By reflecting on what we have begun or accomplished so far, I can wholeheartedly say ADOT has gone BIG in 2022.

## Big transportation projects in 2022

Improving safety while enhancing commerce and economic development was the focus of the [State Route 189](#) project in Nogales, which opened in March. This project was a huge success for the region and showcases the importance of international trade between Mexico and Arizona.

With construction already underway, the [I-10 Broadway Curve](#) project is the largest urban freeway reconstruction project ADOT has undertaken. If you drive Interstate 10 in the East Valley, you can see the progress the team is making in improving this important 11-mile stretch of freeway.

Relief is coming to Interstate 17 north of Phoenix with the [I-17 Flex Lane](#) project. It improves 23 miles of interstate and installs an eight-mile flex lane system — a new feature for Arizona’s highway system.



Marcy McMacken, ADOT Communications

*This photo shows the new Broadway Road bridge deck pour over eastbound Interstate-10 lanes as part of the I-10 Broadway Curve Improvement Project. The deck is the portion of the bridge that motorists will drive on.*

ADOT is finishing the [study](#) to widen Interstate 10 between Loop 202 and State Route 387. This segment, known as the Wild Horse Pass Corridor, represents the last stretch of interstate between Phoenix and Casa Grande to be enhanced as a [Key Commerce Corridor](#).

We have been installing fiber-optic cable in our right-of-way along the interstates as part of the [state’s broadband initiative](#), in partnership with the Arizona Commerce Authority. This effort will enhance internet connectivity to many rural communities in our state.

We have other projects to complete around the state due to the generosity of the Arizona State Legislature and the monies from the federal [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#).

Transportation was a big winner in 2022 when it comes to federal and state appropriations.



John Halikowski  
Director

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## The INSIDE LANE

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A WEB VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER CAN BE FOUND ON ADOTNET OR AT [AZDOT.GOV/INSIDELANE](http://AZDOT.GOV/INSIDELANE).

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## Share your best cover shot

Do you have photos showing 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](mailto: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

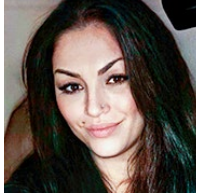
From Chandler to Window Rock, ADOT employees working in various jobs around the state are shown in this photo collage on The Inside Lane’s cover. The ADOT @ Work Photo Contest winning photo, selected by random draw, is of [Stephanie Ortiz](#) and her co-worker [Rebecca Aguirre](#) (in hard hats), both of the Civil Rights Office. Read more about Ortiz and Aguirre on [Page 6](#). View more ADOT Employees @ Work photos in ADOT’s [Flickr album](#).

# ADOT VOICES

## Employees reflect on 2022, look forward to 2023

As ADOT transitions to a new year, we asked employees: What was ADOT's top milestone in 2022 and what are you looking forward to in 2023? ■

~ Compiled by Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist



I am looking forward to helping our local public agencies initiate new projects in 2023. Many new funding grants and programs will hopefully improve funding future local projects, which will help improve and benefit Arizona cities and counties. That is the goal, to achieve our mission: Connecting Arizona. Everyone. Everywhere. Every Day. Moving Arizona. Becoming the safest, most reliable transportation system in the nation.

### **Chandra McMillan**

*Traffic Engineering Specialist/ Project Coordinator, Local Public Agency, Infrastructure Delivery and Operations Division (IDO)*



In 2022, the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) was one of the top focus areas. We looked into eligible grant opportunities, submitted proposals and received major and minor grant awards, such as the USDOD-DCIP grant for the US 95 corridor improvement near the Yuma Proving Ground. In addition, we supported several local entities for their grant initiatives. In 2023, we will compete for additional discretionary grants and continue to support local entities.

### **Kohinoor Kar**

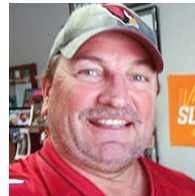
*Transportation Engineer Manager/Grant Coordination, Multimodal Planning Division*



The ADOT project that affected me the most in 2022 was the widening of the [Loop 101 from Interstate 17 to Pima](#). I am so happy that the project is finished and that most of the congestion issues are solved. Everyone traveling east and west on the 101 can easily get to their destinations. Everyone should subscribe to the [ADOT email updates](#) for future highway construction notifications and detours.

### **Michelle Fink**

*Programs and Project Specialist II, Communications, Offices of the Director*



The top milestone in 2022 was opening the 5-mile extension for [State Route 24 from Ellsworth Road to Ironwood Drive](#), which allowed traffic to continue east to use the crossroads of Williams Field, Signal Butte and Meridian roads, and Ironwood Drive. I am looking forward to retiring in June, after 34 years of service to ADOT, and going on a Puerto Penasco, Mexico vacation to celebrate my retirement and my youngest daughter graduating with a master's degree.

### **Roger J. Vial**

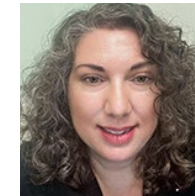
*Transportation Engineering Specialist, Santan Construction Field Office, IDO*



One of the top 2022 accomplishments is the "MVD Office of the Future," including a faster network with new computers, new scanners that don't require customer service representatives (CSR) to get up to make copies, and new payment devices that create a streamlined process for customers. We also installed new virtual CSR stations for [Mobile MVD](#). For 2023, I'm looking forward to having all the field offices on the "Office of the Future" track.

### **Lizbeth**

**Gallardo Apodaca**  
*MVD Customer Services Process Manager*



A top milestone for ADOT this year has been its commitment to [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#). We have seen positive messaging regarding strengthening our culture at ADOT through newsletters, meetings, leadership conferences and in job recruitment notices. It is a great benefit to the agency. As we move into 2023, I look forward to participating in our ADOT mentoring program, and in leadership and professional development courses.

### **Jennifer Catapano**

*Local Public Agency Oversight and Monitoring Manager, IDO*



One of the MVD Contact Center's biggest accomplishments in 2022 was the deployment of a live chat function on [azdot.gov](#). This chat improves the way customers interact with us, compared to our previous Envoy email system. Customers can now get real-time responses and no longer need to wait. They can contact us via chat to address their concerns even if the phone queue is down.

### **Kit Yourison**

*Contact Center Customer Service Unit Supervisor, Motor Vehicle Division*

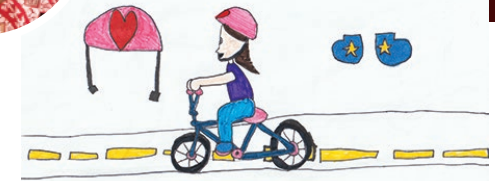
# Lights, Camera, SAFETY!

Young artists featured in 2023 ADOT Safety Calendar



Rukmini Kar

HELMET + SHOES  
PROTECT FROM BRUISE



**W**ITH THE START of 2023 just a few weeks away, it's time to ring in the new year with a new ADOT Safety Calendar. More than 50 young artists related to ADOT employees submitted drawings focusing on safety for this year's contest. Fifteen were chosen to be featured in the calendar.

**Jamila Brown** oversaw the contest as project manager. She worked with calendar committee members **Karen Eatherly, Leah Almond, Marcella Gonzalez-Reyes** and **Christine Baptisto**, along with **Viridiana "Genesis" Meraz**, who designed the calendar, and **Gabriel Meza**, who helped get the calendars printed. Brown has served on the committee for several years and said it's one of the most fun and gratifying projects to work on.

"The kids are so happy and excited; it really brings me joy," said Brown, an executive assistant with the Administrative Services Division. "It's great to do something that involves children and can make them proud of their artwork. It also recognizes that safety starts young, and hopefully these kids will keep safety in mind as they grow up."

Nine-year-old Wyatt Allen's drawing about carpooling was selected for the cover.

His grandfather, Right-of-Way Project Management Manager **Richard Erickson**, said Wyatt loves to take part in the contest each year.

"I am grateful that Wyatt and other kids participate so they can continue the tradition and share their insights and talents with us," said Erickson.



Wyatt Allen

For many of the young artists, this was their first time entering the contest. Dexter Bone was excited to submit his drawing, but his parents had some rules before he could participate.

The 9-year-old had to finish his homework first. His aunt said a recent trip inspired his drawing about preventing forest fires.

"He went camping with his parents up by the Mogollon Rim, and as they were leaving the area, they noticed a fire and that trees were burning down," said **Mary Lopez**, a Casa Grande Motor Vehicle Division customer service lead 4. "He then realized that everyone should think of safety first."

Eleven-year-old Lexy Caballero was inspired to submit her drawing after seeing previous safety calendars.

"She was impressed by the other young artists and their art skills," said her father, Highway Operations Supervisor **Juan Caballero**. "It showed her that someone as small as a kid can have a big impact on safety."

All the artists will be honored at a Dec. 22 ceremony, which is taking place in-person for the first time in three years. The kids will be recognized for their work and presented with their framed artwork. This year's theme is "Movie



Braxton Harding



602.712.8163 or [MMedina2@azdot.gov](mailto:MMedina2@azdot.gov) with questions regarding receiving the calendar. ■

~ Ashley Richards, Senior Communications Specialist

## This year's winners and their ADOT representatives are:

- Wyatt Allen (**Richard Erickson**, Infrastructure Delivery and Operations Division)
- Lexy Caballero (**Juan Caballero**, IDO)
- Dexter Bone (**Mary Lopez**, Motor Vehicle Division)
- Karthik Vadlamani (**Saroja Devarakonda**, Transportation Systems Management and Operations Division)
- Bernadette Porter (**Antonio Toscano**, MVD)
- Emma Moseke (**Douglas Moseke**, IDO)
- Samantha Sophia Sorto (**Maria Amador**, MVD)
- Abriana Washington (**Bridget Washington**, MVD)
- Asher Henderson (**Angela Henderson**, Information Technology Group)
- Rylee Wagoner (**James Wagoner**, IDO)
- Madison Ballard (**Dianna Ballard**, IDO)
- Braxton Harding (**Ryan Harding**, Communications)
- Rukmini Kar (**Kohinoor Kar**, Multimodal Planning Division)
- Ilina Bahor (**Klimentina Risteska**, ITG)
- Aria Castro (**Irene Del Castillo**, IDO)

# KAIZEN KORNER

## KAIZEN MARKETPLACE

With the new [Kaizen Marketplace on ADOTNet](#), employees can share their kaizen improvement ideas with other ADOT groups or adopt a shareable kaizen idea from someone else.

This year's Kaizen Challenge goals are:



- 7,200 overall agency kaizen target
- 100% of team members will implement at least one kaizen
- 100% of team members will identify at least one kaizen that could be implemented by another team
- Leaders will continue to support and recognize kaizen thinking

## KAIZEN COUNT

The number of kaizens submitted by ADOT employees so far in fiscal year 2022-23.

# 2,427

(including 1,072 shareable kaizens)

For more information, visit the [Kaizen Challenge page](#) and the [Kaizen Marketplace page](#) on ADOT Net.

# IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

WITH *Giovanni Nabavi*



*AT ADOT, it's difficult to sum up anyone's job in just a few words. That's why we're giving employees across the agency the chance to share a little bit about what they do every day. If you'd like to be featured in a future issue, please send an email to [InsideLane@azdot.gov](mailto:InsideLane@azdot.gov) and we'll provide you with a questionnaire.*

**Giovanni Nabavi** has worked at ADOT for 24 years. He is a senior project manager and facilities planner in the Administrative Services Division.

### How do you describe your job to someone outside the agency?

Each year, I manage up to 10 new capital improvement and renewal projects from development through construction. I have also managed the rehabilitation of ADOT rest areas since 2011. We have renovated 26 rest areas since the program started. We will complete the final projects within the next two years.

### What's your typical work day like?

I manage projects for ADOT Facilities Management statewide, which can be somewhat challenging. However, staying busy with challenging work is just another part of what I enjoy doing. A usual day consists of construction meetings, project coordination with ADOT staff, contractors and design consultants on sites across the state.

### Name the most exciting/interesting thing that's happened to you on the job?

The most exciting thing I can think of was being on the project team that designed and constructed 24 vehicle wash facilities in four years. These facilities are

located on maintenance yards statewide. It truly was a great team. I also enjoy seeing the rest area facilities being used by travelers across the state. It's rewarding to know that I have a part in making the rest areas pleasant, safe and functional for travelers to use. It's also nice to get positive comments from the public about how nice the facilities are after the completed renovation. For me, that's enjoyable.

### What's your favorite holiday?

Christmas is my favorite holiday. My wife and I love spending time with family, enjoying great food and opening gifts.

### What is your favorite show/movie/documentary?

My favorite actor is Roberto De Niro. I pretty much have seen every movie he's done.

### What's your favorite dessert?

Tiramisu with Cappuccino ... Perfetto.

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

Every time going back to Firenze (Florence) is wonderful. Italia (Italy) is the best place for a vacation. ■

*~ Compiled by Kathy Boyle, Assistant Communications Director for Internal Communications*

## IN CASE YOU'RE ASKED ABOUT IT

### ADOT seeks public comments about DBE goals for federally funded projects

ADOT is gathering public input about the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program's new goals.

Every three years, ADOT must set overall goals and obtain public input for DBE participation in federally funded transportation contracts. Comments are being accepted through Dec. 30 regarding goals set in the [2022 DBE Availability Study](#).

"The new study determines the availability of women- and minority-owned companies to participate in ADOT work. Information from the study will help ADOT evaluate and refine our efforts to encourage the participation of minority- and women-owned businesses in contracts and help inform any adjustments that ADOT might make to the implementation of the DBE Program," said Contract Compliance and Training Officer **Gabe Demarbiex**, who works in the Business Engagement and Compliance Office (BECO).

Read this [news release](#) to learn more. ■

### ADOT SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT

on its overall DBE Goals for federally funded contracts and its 2022 DBE Availability Study

[LEARN MORE](#)



Continued from page 2

LEADERSHIP  
MATTERS

with Director John Halikowski

### Operational wins in 2022

I'm proud of the innovations we've had within the agency in 2022. We are creating a Motor Vehicle Division office of the future, in collaboration with our Information Technology Group. We are thinking outside the box to see how we can enhance the customer experience at MVD offices.

Our Awards and Recognition Office launched a new recognition program, making it easier to send a Shout Out or GEM (Going the Extra Mile) to colleagues. We have a new way to recognize leaders who are modeling our AKA leader behaviors with special coins. Have you nominated your manager for an AKA Leader Coin?

We had a very successful Leaders Connection Conference, where we, as leaders, learned that perception is not the same as reality, and to be open to learning what we don't know. We also reiterated the importance of DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) as part of our AKA culture.

I believe ADOT has had a big year in 2022 with more to come in 2023. We each have an important role to play in accomplishing the projects before us and delivering quality customer service to the people we serve. We are indeed making ADOT better than we found it, each and every day — Go Big or Go Home. ■



WINNER

WINNER !!!

WE INVITED EMPLOYEES to share photos of themselves and/or their co-workers for our ADOT @ Work Photo Contest whether they were working in the field, in the office or remotely. We received dozens of great photos but there could only be one winner!

**Stephanie Ortiz**, Civil Rights Office's Contractor Compliance Program Manager, was chosen in a random draw of entrants. She submitted photos of herself with her co-worker, **Rebecca Aguirre**, a Civil Rights Office Specialist for the Contractor Compliance Program. Ortiz received an Inside Lane goodie bag, including an Arizona Highways magazine, Arizona Highways cowboy ornament, Inside Lane stress ball, candy and more from Assistant Communication Director for Internal Communications **Kathy Boyle**.

Ortiz took the winning photo using her smartphone at the Yuma Maintenance Yard where she and Aguirre had completed a compliance review onsite meeting with a prime contractor, during which they discussed their efforts to comply with Equal Employment Opportunity and affirmative action requirements.

View more ADOT Employees @ Work photos in ADOT's [Flickr album](#).



**CONGRATULATIONS TO Amirul I Rajib**, a roadway safety assessment program manager in the Transportation Systems Management and Operations Division, who correctly identified last month's "Where in AZ??" photo as the San Simon Rest Area, located on Interstate 10 about three miles west of the New Mexico state line. Rajib was presented with an Inside Lane gift bag, including a 2023 Arizona Highways wall calendar, Arizona Highways magazine, a lanyard, stress ball, pen and candy by Assistant Communications Director for Internal Communications **Kathy Boyle**. ■



## Employees are motivated by:



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