

NOMINEE

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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WTS Phoenix Metropolitan Chapter

NOMINATOR

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I am pleased to nominate the Arizona Department of Transportation for the WTS Phoenix Chapter Employer of the Year award for its support and promotion of women in transportation. ADOT's mission is to provide a safe, efficient, cost-effective transportation system that improves the quality of life and leaves a legacy for the benefit of future generations of Arizonans. One of ADOT's focus areas is Workforce Development, which supports, engages and empowers our employees as fundamental elements needed to achieve a high-performing organization.

“Being a new employee and resident of Arizona, I really appreciated the connections and support I received through WIN.”

- Deborah Mayers

In 2012, women made up 47 percent of the United State labor force, and 52 percent of all workers in management positions. Of the 4,164 employees currently at ADOT, 1,698 are female, which represents 41 percent of the ADOT workforce. In addition, there are 780 male and female in management, of which 278 are women, which is 35 percent of all workers in management. While ADOT does have a diverse work force, it does have a slightly lower percentage of women in the agency compared to the national labor force, and we can always do more.

ADOT provides technical and professional training for all of its employees located throughout the state, but it also provides an opportunity for women who are managers and supervisors to network and learn from each other through a program called Women Information Network (WIN). This program, led by a group of senior level leaders called the WIN Innovators, provides an opportunity for women supervisors and managers to meet fellow ADOT employees they typically wouldn't have an opportunity to meet; to network and discuss common issues; to learn from each other through brown bag lunch sessions and mentoring; and identify growth opportunities in the agency.

“One of the most gratifying things that I have done in my career is to mentor and help women to advance in their careers. Transportation is a predominantly male field but our organization is helping to change that one woman at a time. Most recently I helped one of our female engineers prepare for a job interview. I don't know who was more excited when she got the job; me or her.”

- Sonya Herrera

WIN Brown-Bag Lunch Programs

WIN provides brown bag lunch programs, held throughout the state twice each month, that provide programming in leadership, human

resources, managing at a distance, recruiting, mentoring, work-life balance, dressing for success, and personal marketing. Since 2012, more than 275 women supervisors and managers have participated in these diverse programs. The most popular of these lunch programs, “Wear This Not That” included WIN Innovators in a fashion show of outfits that cost less than \$20 (not including shoes), a discussion on where to find professional clothing at a reasonable cost, and a clothing exchange. A call for clothing donations was made to ADOT staff and friends, and a boutique was set up for women to purchase three complete outfits for a \$5 donation, with the proceeds to benefit the State Employees Charitable Campaign and ADOT Awards and Recognition Program. The remaining clothing was then donated to the nonprofit Dress for Success, a local non-profit organization that promotes the economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire and career development tools.

“As a WTS member for several years, I was amazed by the WIN Fashion show and the talk afterwards about women's business clothing. Several ADOT women of different heights, sizes, and ethnicities participated in the fashion show. It's not just the thin, tall supermodels that can dress professionally but also any woman who puts her mind to it even at a modest budget.”

- Stephanie Huang

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WTS Phoenix Metropolitan Chapter **Employer of the Year** Nomination

“It doesn’t matter what your vision might be. WIN will provide you with the information, the advice and the know-how needed to make it a reality.”
- P. Gibson

WIN Mentoring Program

This mentoring program was set up in Fall 2012 to foster professional mentoring relationships among women across ADOT divisions by encouraging female managers and leaders to informally coach and help other women, including emerging female leaders, to develop knowledge and skills that will enhance and develop their professional and personal growth and development. The mentor and mentee work together to develop goals and make a commitment to meet face-to-face on a monthly basis. There are currently 12 Mentor/Mentee matches at ADOT.

“Through the WIN program, we see the women united in learning, networking and celebrating being an ADOT employee. It is not only empowering, it is transformational.” - Marthajane Vincent

WIN Education Encouragement Connection for Women

This initiative was launched in July 2014 as a collaborative support for working women going to school (or those considering it) to enable an exchange of problem solving and encouragement that is needed when attempting higher education. More than 30 women attended the first program meeting held and discussion group topics were created such as school loans, scholarships and grants, time management, learning styles, online opportunities, and fellowships.

Leadership Forum 2014

Another opportunity provided to both men and women in transportation was the April 3, 2014 Leadership Forum 2014 co-sponsored by ADOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Arizona Chapter Associated General Contractors (AZAGC), American Council of Engineering Consultants (ACEC), WTS Phoenix Chapter, and Valley Metro. This forum focused on the challenges and opportunities for women in the transportation industry, the business case for hiring women, and what programs are currently in place for women. Jennifer Toth, ADOT Deputy Director for Transportation moderated, and the speakers included The Honorable Susan Kurland, Assistant Secretary for the US Department of Transportation; The Honorable Mary Peters, former US DOT Director, FHWA Director and ADOT Director; Marcia Ferranto, President and CEO of WTS International; Zoe Richmond, Public Affairs Director for Arizona and New Mexico, Union Pacific Railroad; and Alan Wulkan, Senior Vice President, HDR/InfraConsult. Facilitators worked with groups to capture the barriers and opportunities cited by the attendees, and this information was compiled into a report.

“I have only been a manager with ADOT for a short time and the WIN program provides me with insightful leadership and guidance on a regular basis to help me navigate the day-to-day decisions I need to make. My mentor has helped me understand how to work more effectively with other groups within ADOT and the overall program has allowed me to connect with and interact with women in ADOT whom I might never have had the opportunity to meet otherwise. WIN is a wonderful program!”
- Barb Domke

The next steps include 1) instituting a Shadow Program for female students and young emerging leaders to attend conferences, meetings and networking events with a senior leader, and 2) a research project to capture data regarding the number of women in transportation in Arizona and how to identify, train, employ and retain women in technical positions.

“The Women’s Information Network (WIN) is a positive and supportive group of professional women. I have personally heard many appreciative comments from women within ADOT about the luncheons, meetings, and presentations we have conducted over the years. This group provides a safe encouraging environment that allows women to share and collaborate with others.”
- Nicci Zumbrunnen

Providing resources for women supervisors and managers is important to ADOT Director John Halikowski and he supports the Women Information Network by ensuring that there is full-time staff dedicated to providing these programs. It is important that ADOT provides role models and mentors for women leaders, and the WIN programs are a great start. As you can see from the quotations from the participants, they are appreciative!

“ADOT is pleased to provide the resources necessary to support these programs and I am pleased to support this nomination.”
- John Halikowski,
Director, ADOT