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SECRETARY NORMAN Y. MINETA TO KEYNOTE GRADUATION OF MASTERS IN TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

Graduation banquet Saturday, June 27, also to include comments by Congressman James Oberstar, RITA Administrator Peter Appel, Caltrans Director Will Kempton, and others

San Jose, Calif., June 22, 2009 - [The Mineta Transportation Institute](http://www.mtineti.org) (MTI) will award the Masters of Science in Transportation Management to 19 candidates on Saturday, June 27 at the San Jose State University (SJSU) Student Center. The festivities will commence with hosted wine tasting at 5:30 p.m. followed by the graduation and banquet at 6:45 p.m.

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Speakers for this year's ceremony include Secretary of Transportation (ret.) Norman Y. Mineta, Congressman James Oberstar, US DOT's RITA administrator Peter Appel, Caltrans director Will Kempton and other transportation officials. Special guest is Yasumasa Nagamine, Consul General of Japan in San Francisco.

Valedictorian Ray Salvano, a City of San Jose employee and resident, took a unique path to MTI. In 2006 he was asked to teach an engineering course at SJSU. The positive experience of teaching students and seeing them apply their skills to new jobs within the City's Department of Transportation, where Salvano has worked for nearly 18 years, inspired him to enroll in the program.

In June 2008, Salvano was promoted to Division Manager of the City's Regional Projects/BART Division. "I found that with every class in the program, I gained knowledge and skills directly applicable to my career growth," said Salvano. "The required research and writing provided the fundamental, topic-by-topic understanding of how complex the transportation industry really is."

The MTI program has also provided Salvano with what he sees as a competitive edge, an edge that he is willing to share. "I was recently recognized in our department newsletter. As a result, a lot of my co-workers have asked about the MTI program, and I've encouraged them to pursue the MSTM degree."

Salvano will use his degree to continue to apply what he has learned through the program. He said, "With this program, as with so many other things in life, you get out what you put in. However, in this program I felt that I got so much more."

Since 1991, MTI students have graduated from the program after completing 10 courses in topics that include finance, leadership and management, law, planning, and other topics related to surface transportation. Evening classes are offered by teleconference throughout California allowing students to earn their degrees while maintaining their jobs. In 19 years, the program has 143 students, who have earned their MSTM degrees or their certificates in transportation management or transportation security.

- More -

“There is a growing need for management-level transportation professionals,” said Rod Diridon, Executive Director of the Mineta Transportation Institute. “As transportation leaders move toward retirement, new leaders are needed to address America’s growing transportation challenges in the 21st century. Improvements to our transportation infrastructure, accessibility, demands and security are vital to both our economy and quality of life. MTI graduates have a great challenge and great opportunity to take what they have learned from this program and to apply that knowledge into the transportation sector.”

Middle-school students from the School of International Studies in Norfolk VA, winners of the recent Garrett Morgan Symposium on Sustainable Transportation competition, also will be honored at the event. Their project on ways to increase ridership on public transportation earned their class a \$1000 cash award and a plaque for their school.

Proceeds from the banquet will benefit the MSTM scholarship program, which has given over \$265,000 since 2001 to help students complete their educations. MTI graduate students also have won prestigious national awards, including the Eno Leadership Fellowship, APTA Foundation Scholarship, and Krambles Scholarships. They also have been hired and promoted to positions of increasing management responsibility at the local, regional and state levels.

Sponsors for this year’s graduation banquet include AAA, US Dept of Transportation, Caltrans, Talgo, Parsons Corp., LTK Engineering, HNTB, WMH Corp., Japan Central Railway, and many others.

ABOUT THE GRADUATES:

June 2009 Master of Science in Transportation Management Candidates include Bruce A. Buck, Long Beach; Kaki Jiaqi Chen, Salinas; Boris Deunert, Oakland; David M. Dias, Newark; Garth Desmond Fernandez, Fresno; Daren T. Grilley, Seattle; Richard Jefferis, San Francisco; Ashish K. John, San Leandro; Matthew J. Jue, Newark; Roger L. Martin, Long Beach; Christine D. Miktarian, Fresno; Robert M. Navarro, Fresno; Bonny A. N. Nyaga, Pittsburg; Denise Joy Patrick, Mountian View; Nina T. Rohlich, San Francisco; John Raaymakers, San Jose; Ray L. Salvano, San Jose; Eugene Thomas, Burlingame; George Theodore Yurek, San Francisco.

ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE:

The [Mineta Transportation Institute](#) (MTI) was established by Congress in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and was reauthorized in 1998. The institute is funded by Congress through the US DOT’s Research and Innovative Technology Administration, by the California Legislature through the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and by other public and private grants and donations. The US DOT selected MTI as a national “Center of Excellence” following a 2002 competition.

The Institute has a Board of Trustees whose internationally-respected members represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI’s focus on policy and management resulted from a board assessment of the industry’s unmet needs and led directly to choosing the San José State University College of Business as the Institute’s home. MTI conducts research, education, and information and technology transfer focusing on transportation policy and management topics and issues. Visit www.transweb.sjsu.edu

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