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Ahron Hakimi Named Mineta Transportation Institute Alumnus of the Year

Executive Director of Kern Council of Governments is first to win the honor.

San Jose, Calif., June 25, 2013 – Ahron R. Hakimi, executive director of the Kern Council of Governments, has been named the first Alumnus of the Year for the Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI). He earned his Master of Science in Transportation Management (MSTM) in 2003 through the MTI program at San Jose State University. His award was given at a scholarship banquet and convocation on campus Saturday evening, June 22.

“The MTI Alumni Association members nominated candidates online,” said Peter Haas, PhD, education director for MTI. “Criteria were stringent, and the Institute is pleased to have such an outstanding transportation professional rise to the top. Even as a student, Ahron demonstrated notable leadership abilities, which he has continued to carry into his impressive career.”

Mr. Hakimi assumed his position with the Kern Council of Governments (COG) in June 2012. A colonel in the Army Reserve’s Logistics Corps and a supervising transportation engineer with Caltrans, he was previously the lead state official for the Thomas Road Improvement Program (TRIP), a unique multi-agency coalition comprising the City of Bakersfield, County of Kern, Caltrans and Kern COG.

Arriving in Bakersfield in 1991, Mr. Hakimi worked in the local Caltrans office, reporting to District 6 officials in Fresno. In 2003, he began working on joint projects with the city of Bakersfield. He has been personally accountable for delivering several high-profile, politically sensitive federal highway projects valued at more than \$1.5 billion, including auxiliary lanes installed at the State Route 58/99 interchange in 2007, easing traffic flow for thousands of drivers.

Mr. Hakimi has served as a TRIP liaison among Bakersfield City Council members, Kern County supervisors, and state and federal legislators to ensure projects are completed on schedule and within budget, including the Westside Parkway now under construction.

With more than 26 years of military service, including combat tours in Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan, he was awarded the Bronze Star in 2005 and has received the Meritorious Service Medal four times. In addition to his MSTM, Mr. Hakimi received his Master of Strategic Studies from the US Army War College and a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the Polytechnic University in Brooklyn NY.

Walter Allen, a transportation planner with Parsons Transportation Group and president of the MTI Alumni Association, said, “Ahron exemplifies all the necessary criteria for this award. He has attained notable achievements in his career; succeeded in other areas of professional or personal excellence; and demonstrated distinguished commitment and leadership within the transportation industry. The Alumni Association is very happy to inaugurate this annual award with someone of Ahron’s caliber.”

ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE (MTI):

MTI conducts research, education, and information transfer programs focusing on surface transportation policy and management issues, especially related to transit. MTI was established by Congress in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act and won national re-designation competitions in 2002, 2006 and 2011. The Institute is funded by Congress through the US DOT Research and Innovative Technology Administration, by the California Legislature through Caltrans, and public and private grants. In 2006 the US Department of Homeland Security selected MTI as a National Transportation Security Center of Excellence. The internationally respected members of the MTI Board of Trustees represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI is affiliated with San Jose (CA) State University's College of Business. Visit transweb.sjsu.edu

ABOUT THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT (MSTM):

The College of Business at San José State University, with support from the Mineta Transportation Institute, offers a Master of Science degree and three graduate certificate programs. The curriculum is led by nationally recognized instructors who are academic or industry experts. The MSTM program is fully accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). The program is accelerated, enabling students to complete an MSTM degree in five semesters. Classes are held in the evening so students can continue to work full time while earning their degrees. The program is available statewide at designated Caltrans district offices and other participating transportation agencies. Classes are delivered by two-way video conferencing supplemented by video streaming and web courseware. Visit transweb.sjsu.edu and go to the Education tab.

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