

Mineta Transportation Institute Executive Director Rod Diridon Retires

Deputy Executive Director Karen Philbrick assumes leadership

San Jose, CA – June 24, 2014 – Rod Diridon, Sr., executive director of the Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) since its 1993 founding at San Jose State University (SJSU), announced his retirement at the Institute’s June 21, 2014 annual awards banquet. The Institute’s Board of Trustees promoted deputy executive director Karen Philbrick, PhD, into the executive director’s position.

Several national transportation leaders complimented Mr. Diridon for his excellent service. “Rod Diridon has led MTI since its inception,” said retired US Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta, founder of MTI. “During that time, the Institute has become a leading provider of peer-reviewed research on critical surface transportation policy issues. Rod and MTI are known at the highest international, national, and state policy levels for that research.”

Secretary Mineta also noted, “The Institute’s fully accredited, video-conferenced Master of Science in Transportation Management program is received at 28 sites statewide and is creating the next generation of transportation leaders. Rod chaired over 100 mobility organizations in the US and internationally and prepared the Mineta Institute for the next evolution of excellence.”

Former Deputy US Secretary of Transportation Mortimer Downey said, “Rod’s dynamic pursuit of the nation’s toughest research issues has helped public agencies successfully craft programs for safety and security, financing to replace the dwindling gas tax, preparation for high-speed rail connectivity in local communities, and much more.”

American Public Transportation Association (APTA) president Michael Melaniphy called Mr. Diridon “a true visionary as a past chair of APTA and vice chair for the Americas in the International Transit Association in Brussels.”

Mr. Melaniphy announced that APTA had selected Mr. Diridon to the APTA Hall of Fame to which only a handful of top transit leaders have been invited during the organization’s 130-year history.

Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission executive director and MTI board chair Steve Heminger complimented Mr. Diridon on his vision and tenacity when pursuing objectives, noting that, “Rod is like a locomotive when he’s focused on an objective... best to be on board rather than in his way!”

President of History San Jose (HSJ) Alida Bray applauded Mr. Diridon’s lifetime commitment to historic preservation dating to his time on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors when he created the Historical Heritage Commission. She announced that the HSJ and the California Trolley and Railroad Corporations have just renamed the trolley barn at HSJ as the Rod Diridon, Sr. Trolley Barn.

In addition, Mr. Diridon recently received the lifetime achievement award from the national Council of University Transportation Centers. He has long been regarded as the “father of modern transit in Silicon Valley.” Upon his retirement from the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in 1995, the San Jose Diridon Station was dedicated in his honor.

Mr. Diridon will continue to work part time supporting the new executive director. Dr. Philbrick

joined MTI as research director five years ago and has served as deputy executive director for the past two years. She was recently elected to the CUTC executive committee. She also advises the US Secretary of Transportation as a member of the US Department of Transportation's Transit Rail Advisory Committee for Safety, and she serves on the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation Commission.

Dr. Philbrick earned a BA from California State University, Fresno, a Columbia University MA and EdM, and a PhD from the University of Denver. Her years as a clinical and then research psychologist and her more recent research administration success prepared her transition into leadership at MTI. Dr. Philbrick will also be executive director of the nine-university Mineta National Transportation Research Consortium (MNTRC) with more than 50 research projects in process, and more than 200 PhD research associates and 150 student research assistants under contract.

Dr. Philbrick works closely with the 25 world class members of the MNTRC/MTI Board of Trustees. Board chair Steve Heminger declared, "Karen Philbrick represents all that is good in our rapidly emerging younger generation and will do a fine job leading MTI and MNTRC. Her penchant for excellence is recognized by all with whom she is associated."

Since arriving at MTI, she has directed the three sub-centers and more than 100 principal investigators. She has overseen the competitive selection of 122 new research projects and the publication and dissemination of more than 150 peer-reviewed research reports. Retiring executive director Rod Diridon remarked that, "Karen is a mixture of intellect, competence, and tenacity that is as irresistible as a collegial tornado. She'll carry MTI to new heights of excellence!"

ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE

The Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) conducts research, education, and information transfer programs regarding surface transportation policy and management issues, especially related to transit. Congress established MTI in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. MTI won national re-designation competitions in 2002, 2006 and 2012. The Institute is funded through the US Secretary of Transportation's Research and Technology Office, US Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Safety Administration, the California Department of Transportation's Division of Research, Innovation and Systems Development, 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 the lead institute for the nine-university Mineta National Transit Research Consortium. MTI is affiliated with San Jose (CA) State University's College of Business. Visit transweb.sjsu.edu

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