

MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE'S

28TH ANNUAL CONVOCAION CELEBRATION



A Virtual Ceremony Commemorating the 2020 MSTM Graduates

SJSU SAN JOSÉ STATE
UNIVERSITY



CELEBRATION PROGRAM

Welcome

Karen E. Philbrick, PhD, Executive Director, MTI

Graduation Wishes

Norman Y. Mineta, Secretary (Ret.) U.S. Department of Transportation
Abbas Mohaddes, Chair, MTI Board of Trustees

Student of the Year 2020

Honoree Michelle Louie, Transit Planner, San Mateo County Transit District (MSTM 2020)

Celebratory Toast

Dan Moshavi, PhD, Dean, Lucas College and Graduate School of Business,
San José State University

Presentation of the Class of 2020 and Certificate Recipients

Asha Weinstein Agrawal, PhD, Education Director, MTI

Alumna of the Year 2020

Honoree Rachel Donovan, Area Bridge Maintenance Engineer, Bay Area Toll Bridges (MSTM 2011)

Closing Remarks



“Success is rarely defined by moments of ease, but rather by the moments that challenge us to push beyond our preconceived limits.”

Honorable Norman Y. Mineta

Secretary (Ret.) U.S. Department of Transportation
Founder, Mineta Transportation Institute

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Master of Science in Transportation Management Candidates for Graduation

Lorraina Alvarez
Brandon Barnett
Patty Boonlue
Manuel Salvador Borrayo
Hayley Deane
Robert Fitzgerald
Iesha Gatewood
Anthony Griffin
Jonathan Huff
Rippal Kanda
William Kang
Lemar Karimi
Michelle Louie
Juan Matta
Abhipsa Mohanty
Joshua Perez
Michelle Ruan
Latasha Sheridan
Kimberly Wever
Courtney Williams Jr.

Student of the Year

Michelle Louie

Alumna of the Year

Rachel Donovan (MSTM 2011)

Certificate in High-Speed Rail and Intercity Management

Patty Boonlue
Jonathan Huff
Juan Matta
David E. McFeely

Certificate in Transportation Management

Ruben Cervantes
Abhipsa Mohanty

Certificate in Transportation Security Management

Lorraina Alvarez
Brandon Barnett
Manuel Salvador Borrayo
Robert Fitzgerald
Iesha Gatewood
Jonathan Huff
Ripal Kanda
Abhipsa Mohanty
Courtney Williams Jr.



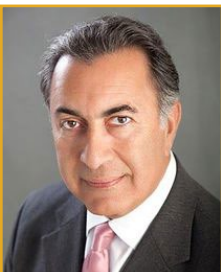
HONORED GUESTS



Honorable Norman Y. Mineta **Secretary (Ret.) U.S. Department of Transportation**

Secretary Norman Y. Mineta (ret.) is well known for his work in transportation – including aviation, surface transportation, and infrastructure – and national security. He is recognized for his accomplishments in economic development, science and technology policy, foreign and domestic trade, budgetary issues and civil rights, as well as his perspective from having served in Congress for over 20 years and in the Cabinets of both Republican and Democratic presidents. In 2000 he was appointed by President Bill Clinton as the United States Secretary of Commerce and in 2001 he was appointed Secretary of Transportation by President George W. Bush.

Recognized for his leadership, Mineta has received numerous awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom—the highest civilian honor in the United States—and the Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy, which is awarded for significant public service of enduring value to aviation in the United States.



Abbas Mohaddes **President & COO, Econolite Group, Inc.**

Abbas Mohaddes is the President and COO of Econolite Group, Inc., a leader in Traffic Management Systems and Sensors technology based in the United States. He has over 30 years of experience in policy and the application of technology in transportation systems, including systems architecture, traffic management, connected vehicles, traveler information, and multi-modal systems development. He is an internationally recognized expert in ITS, and has published and presented over 70 articles at industry organizations around the world.

Mr. Mohaddes is a founding member and past chairman of the board of ITS America and its Leadership Circle. He is a former member of the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Executive Committee, and he currently serves on numerous committees and boards.

ALUMNA OF THE YEAR 2020



Rachel Donovan

Area Bridge Maintenance Engineer, Bay Area Toll Bridges

Rachel Donovan earned her BS and MS in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M University. Beginning in 1999, Rachel worked as a civil engineer at Caltrans in Oakland, California. Rachel's career has focused on bridge inspection, planning and design work for High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, and traffic analysis for widening projects and intersection improvements. Since 2012, Rachel has been working as the only woman Area Bridge Maintenance Engineer for the Bay Area Toll Bridges, a group of only a dozen civil engineers at the State of California who are certified to do rope access inspection. Her volunteer work has included roles as President of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of the Institute of Transportation Engineers and leader of Caltrans District 4 top-rated teams in the Team Bike Challenge. In recognition of her bicycle advocacy, Rachel received the Alameda County Bicycle Commuter of the Year (BCOY) Award in 2014. Rachel also served as President of the MSTM Alumni Association from 2015 to 2019. Rachel is a licensed Professional Engineer (P.E.) in two disciplines, Civil Engineering and Traffic.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES

Welcome to the 28th Annual Mineta Transportation Institute Board of Trustees Awards Banquet and Convocation Celebration. Tonight we celebrate our candidates for the Master of Science in Transportation Management (MSTM) program.

To earn this degree, each candidate has balanced career, family, and personal life to complete this challenging program. And this year our students have faced new challenges and unprecedented times. Our nation has been upheaved by a global health pandemic, major financial recession, and the painful crisis of systemic racism. Yet through these challenges, the distinct and invaluable role of transportation in American society has been emphasized.

Schools and businesses locked their doors and people hunkered down inside their homes. Sports and cultural events were cancelled, and much of the nation has come to a halt. Yet one vital infrastructure kept moving: transportation. Our Class of 2020 graduates have distinguished themselves, persevering in uncertain times and tonight we honor them, our mobility leaders of the future!

On behalf of the Mineta Transportation Institute Trustees and Staff, we welcome you.

Karen E. Philbrick, Executive Director



MSTM GRADUATES



Lorraina Alvarez

Utilities Customer Service, City of Palo Alto

Capstone Title: *An Evaluation of the City of Palo Alto Provided Commuter Benefits*

The amazing teachers at the Mineta have helped me advanced my skills and knowledge, and I want to continue to work with people that are creating change. Together, we can enhance people's lives around us by finding ways that improve safety through new security measures. We can learn from past and current experiences as the world we are currently living is evolving every day. I am looking forward to transitioning into working with an Emergency Operations Center.



Brandon Barnett

Lead Transportation Security Officer, DHS

Transportation Security Administration

Capstone Title: *Evaluating Customer Relations at Transportation Security Administration Checkpoints in United States Airports*

I will continue to focus my education and research into understanding more about about how a Transportation Agency Functions at different levels. I plan to work at a California Transportation Agency as a Transportation Planner or within the Security or Police field for a California Transportation Agency within the next year. My background is in Transportation Security, and before that I served in the Army. The Certificate in Transportation Security Management, along with the Master of Science in Transportation Management, will help me to reach those goals in the next few years, and to continue into leadership and management roles. I am passionate about the public transportation systems, especially creating more efficient ones, and I believe that completing the MSTM program has enhanced my understanding in a lot of areas within this field.



Patty Boonlue

Environmental Planner I, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)

Capstone Title: *Assessing the Effectiveness of MTC's Community-Based Transportation Planning (CBTP) Program at Closing Transportation Gaps for Disadvantaged Communities in the Bay Area*

Completing the MSTM program at MTI has deepened my understanding of the transportation sector, given me the opportunity to meet amazing faculty, and connected me with outstanding peers from all over California. Through this program, I gained well-rounded knowledge of the industry that I can directly apply to my daily work as I advance in my career. The program confirms my passion for wanting to make a difference in the community. Additionally, it inspires me to work even harder to move the transportation industry towards a more sustainable future by reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions and preparing for the potential impacts of climate change. I am so thankful for the MSTM program and can't wait to see where it takes me!



Manuel Salvador Borrayo

Senior Communications Systems Analyst, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)

Capstone Title: *Evaluation of Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's Project Delivery - Alum Rock Bus Rapid Transit Construction Project*

I will continue to perform research in Transportation Security and Technology. Within the next year or two I will become a Communications Systems and Security Manager for a transportation agency in California. With the Security of Transportation Certificate and Master of Science in Transportation Management, I will have a great opportunity to move up within the chain of command or get employed by one of California's transportation agencies at a mid-level position. I am extremely passionate about transportation, technology and security. I plan to utilize my educational accomplishments, professional experience, and passion to serve the public. I will continue to refine my management skills, my knowledge of the public sector, and my knowledge of technology. This will allow me to help organizations become more safe, reliable, and efficient.



Hayley Deane

Scheduling Analyst, San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

Capstone Title: *An Evaluation of Bay Area Rapid Transit's Crisis Intervention Campaign to Prevent Suicides and Suicide Contagion on District Property*

I plan to help mold the future of the transportation industry. I want to create more efficient management and business processes within my agency to improve operations and the customer experience. The MSTM program has taught me important business skills and professional knowledge that I can now bring to the table as I increase my experience in the transit world. Thank you MSTM!



Robert Fitzgerald

Shop Superintendent, San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

Capstone Title: *BART Customer Satisfaction and Ridership*



Ieasha Gatewood

Station Agent EDS, San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

Capstone Title: *Empowering the BART Police Department While Fostering a Thriving Relationship between Its Officers, Their Command Staff and the Communities They Serve*

The MSTM program has provided me with the opportunity to pursue a career in emergency planning. This program has helped me in understanding what is required of me and how to achieve my goals. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn from Dr. Frances L. Edwards and Dan Goodrich. I am thankful to the program for giving me the tools needed to get to the next step of my career goals. It wasn't easy, but with a little bit of determination and a whole lot of support, I am proud to say, I did it!



Jonathan Huff

Project Manager, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

Capstone Title: *Railroad Crossing Safety—Section 130 Program Risk Assessment, Effective Treatments, and Quantified Risk Reduction*



Rippal Kanda

Management Analyst, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)

Capstone Title: *Ridership Evaluation: Is VTA Experiencing a Ridership Crisis on its Core Bus Routes?*

I love transportation and all aspects that play a role in getting people and things to where they need to go. My career goal is to positively impact transportation by helping public transit become faster, convenient, and more accessible. In my effort, I also hope to have a positive influence on the health of the community by designing systems that encourage all modes of transportation. My main interests are centered around transportation planning and innovations for the future.



William Kang

Shop Scheduler, San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

Capstone Title: *Evaluation of Random Drug Testing in the Trucking Industry: Is It Possible to Cheat?*

My professional goals are to learn and apply knowledge continuously to better serve my community. The MSTM program exposed me to cutting edge industry innovations and management concepts that permanently changed how I analyze information. The psychological change in myself that I hold in highest regard as a result of completing the MSTM program is humility. It has helped my professional growth significantly to regularly seek help and surround myself with people that know more than I do. I have already applied my new change in perspective to improve my professional and personal affairs. This has been both the most challenging and enjoyable period in my life. I am forever grateful for the experiences the faculty at MTI has provided.



Lemar Karimi

Analyst, Wilson Sonsini

Capstone Title: *Data Privacy in Transportation: Rights and Protections for Consumers in the Ridesharing Industry*



Michelle Louie

Transit Planner, San Mateo County Transit District

Capstone Title: *Evaluating the Effectiveness of SamTrans' Route FCX: A Commuter Express Route between Foster City and San Francisco*

MTI's MSTM program has been fundamental to my growth in the transportation field. Through this program, I have met a diverse number of transportation professionals and expanded my network tremendously - not only locally, but also throughout the state. After graduating, I plan to continue working in public transit. No matter where my role lies, however, my greatest motivation throughout my career is knowing that I'm providing people with access to a form of mobility that works best for them.



Juan Matta

Manager of Transit Vehicle Cleaning, San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

Capstone Title: *San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit Train Cleanliness Issues*



Abhipsa Mohanty

Freelancer, Artykraft Private Limited

Capstone Title: *Evaluating the Process of “Sustainability Reporting” at Santa Clara Valley Transit Association (VTA)*

I want to work for Bay Area transit providers. The association with MTI has helped me gain knowledge, skills, and experience to navigate my career and life. Especially, the emphasis on communication and problem solving helped me hone my management skills and boost my confidence. I strongly feel that MSTM will help me connect with the right people and agencies.

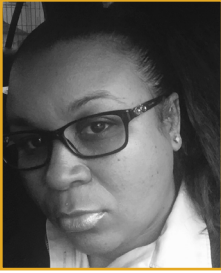


Michelle Ruan

Associate Transportation Planner, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

Capstone Title: *Evaluating whether the City of Oakland’s E-Scooter Share Permitting Program’s Outreach Efforts Addressed Community Concerns*

My interest in transportation planning first started when I was finishing my undergraduate studies in Urban Planning. Having grown up in the car-centric city of Los Angeles, I had always wondered what it would be like to live in a place that didn’t involve hour long commutes. I had seen other cities achieve these goals, like New York City and Tokyo. Inspired by these cities and communities, I plunged into transportation planning and am currently working in the Bay Area for Caltrans where I get to work on multiple transit projects that have the purpose of creating an unified transit network. With the knowledge I have gained from the MSTM program, I want to apply them to my work and continue developing my career in transportation planning. The MSTM program has provided an abundance of resources related to transit management as well as keeping up with the latest transit trends. Additionally, the network that I have gained from the program is priceless. The program provided classes that touched all sectors of transit. It was a delight to be able to learn about other transit sectors, like rail and security. It has been incredibly wonderful to learn from transit leaders and to connect with future transit leaders as well.



Latasha Sheridan

Manager, Rail Operation Control Center, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Capstone Title: Improving LA Metro Expo Line On-Time Performance

MSTM program has allowed me to get more in-depth information on the transportation industry. Being exposed to all aspects of transportation and how it works has prepared me to become a great transportation director. My future goal is to move up the business ladder or explore the opportunities outside of the company. This whole experience of pursuing my master's degree in transportation has been none like no other. MSTM program has allowed me to work with others in the transportation industry in class and form relations. I was able to attend an APTA Convention, where I could ask questions and see what was in the future for other agencies. The field trip allowed me to meet some of my classmates in person. MSTM did not only prepare me for future growth by receiving a degree but future growth by developing relationships with others in the transportation industry. I am so excited to look forward to the future and what awaits me. In closing, I want to thank all the professors because, without them, I wouldn't have the opportunity to have the career goals I have set for myself.



Kimberly Wever

Transportation Program Specialist, City County Association of Governments of San Mateo County

Capstone Title: An Evaluation of Microtransit as Paratransit That Can Decrease Service Cost and Increase Service Quality

During my undergraduate as an urban planning student, my interest was in environmental and transportation planning. Once I got a job at a transportation demand management company and enjoyed it, I knew I wanted to pursue a masters in transportation. The MSTM program allowed me to learn more about the transportation industry and prepared me for my current job as a Transportation Program Specialist at the Congestion Management Agency for San Mateo County.



Courtney Williams Jr.

**Associate Transportation Planner, California
Department of Transportation (Caltrans)**

Capstone Title: *Identifying Opportunities to Improve
Caltrans' Employee Public Participation Procedures*

Pursuing my masters in Transportation Management and Certificate in Transportation Security through the Mineta program at San Jose State University has taken me on an extremely fulfilling and engaging journey over the past 2 1/2 years. From collaborating with classmates to participating in engaging class sessions facilitated by faculty members, I am extremely grateful for my time and experiences from this program. I look forward to applying my knowledge in transportation finance, transportation planning, leadership skills, and transportation security insights towards developing innovative methods within Caltrans that help optimize the travel experience for our public stakeholders in a safe and efficient manner for the 21st century.



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MTI respectfully thanks the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), San José State University, and the Lucas College and Graduate School of Business. Each have provided priceless support to MTI and its graduate program.



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