

ITE Chapter at Texas Southern University Annual Report 2013

As the 2012-2013 year begins, Texas Southern University's (TSU) student chapter of Institute of Transportation (ITE) has kept our previous elected officers, including: Peggy Adolph, President; Jianing Wu, Vice President; and Yan Lu, Treasurer. We also have a great number of new members. We welcomed this year with continued anticipation of great things to occur.

The 2012-2013 ITE meetings began with a guest speaker. The first visit was from Keith Hall who has over twenty years experience in land use and transportation planning, project management and business development throughout North America and overseas. Mr. Hall is proficient in developing strategic planning initiatives in partnership with stakeholders, including elected officials, citizens, and industry representatives. He is a certified planner in the United States and New Zealand and also holds a real estate broker license.

At CH2M HILL, Keith is responsible for transit planning on the Metrolinx transit program with a focus on transit planning and station design issues for the Toronto LRT Program. Prior to joining CH2M HILL, Keith served as land use planning Committee Member for Standards New Zealand, where he developed a street design approach that integrated land use context into a new national road design standard that also incorporated contemporary urban development and sustainability challenges. The new infrastructure approaches in New Zealand Standard NZS 4404:2010 won a national 2010 Best Practice Award from the New Zealand Planning Institute and the 2011 Gold Award from the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors.

TSU's student chapter of ITE partnered with the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) at Texas A&M University to participate in "U in the Driver Seat Peer-to-Peer Program", a program on distracted drivers. The purpose of the program is to gather information to help in the development of strategies to reduce driving fatalities among college students, increase understanding of safety messaging and design elements effective with this age group. ITE members hosted awareness events, distributed and collected surveys, and offered safety messages, along with promotional items including t-shirts, sling bags, and lip balm. The TSU ITE chapter paired with the campus Counseling Center for one week and their drinking/driving awareness event. This event turned out to be a great experience, that attracted and collected a record number of students who completed surveys. These surveys will be used to complete a report.

In the spring of 2012-2013 ITE's officers scheduled various events that are listed below. They each included guest speakers. Educational and career information greatly enriched our students and members in a positive way.

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- 2nd Annual Spring Conference for Transportation Studies, March 7, 2013 (focused on the freight transportation requirements due to the widening of the Panama Canal.
- Town Hall Meeting, April 9, 2013 with Transportation faculty and administrators

This semester's final event will take place on April 24, 2013. At that time, we will select new members for the 2013 – 2014 year. The program will host a guest speaker, John Sedlak, the former executive Vice President of METRO. His primary responsibility was to assist the President and Chief Executive Officer with comprehensive planning and management of authority functions. John's area of responsibility also included oversight of Government Affairs, Real Estate Services, and System Safety. Since joining METRO in 1983, John served as Assistant General Manager of Planning & Development, and as Vice President of Planning, Engineering & Construction, responsible for the development of METRO's Capital Program, including METRO's first rail line. Prior to joining Houston METRO, John worked with the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority for nine years on the planning, design, construction, and operational start-up of the Atlanta Rapid Rail System. More recently, John worked with TTI on the Houston/Dallas high speed rail corridor. He will discuss the Houston history of rail transportation.