

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of Communications

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**White House, U.S. Department of Transportation
Recognize “Transportation Champions of Change”**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On Tuesday, October 13, the White House, in conjunction with the United States Department of Transportation, will recognize 11 individuals from across the country as “White House Transportation Champions of Change.” These individuals, who were selected by U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx and the White House for their achievements, will be honored for exemplary leadership and innovation in transportation.

Earlier this year, the Department of Transportation issued a draft report, [Beyond Traffic](#), which examines the trends and choices facing America’s transportation infrastructure over the next three decades. These include 70 million more people by 2045, a 45 percent increase in freight volume, demographic shifts in rural and urban areas, and a transportation system facing more frequent extreme weather events. The report predicts increased gridlock nationwide unless changes are made in the near-term. This Champions of Change event will honor people who recognize these challenges in transportation, and have endeavored to solve them.

“This year’s nominees are a truly gifted group of individuals who have exceptional vision and foresight when it comes to the issues we are dealing with in transportation,” said Secretary Foxx. “Their exemplary leadership is charting the course for our 21st century needs. I applaud them and I hope to see others follow their lead.”

This year’s theme, *Beyond Traffic: Innovators in Transportation for the Future*, honors a select group of individuals for exceptional service and leadership for our country’s future transportation needs. Innovators were considered in one of four categories: How We Move, How We Move Things, How We Move Better, or How We Adapt. The event will include remarks by U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, Director of the White House National Economic Council Jeffrey Zients, Deputy Transportation Secretary Victor Mendez, Under Secretary for Transportation Policy Peter Rogoff, Federal Highway Administrator Gregory Nadeau, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administrator Marie Therese Dominguez, National Highway Traffic Safety Administrator Mark Rosekind, and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Acting Administrator Scott Darling.

The Champions of Change program was created as an opportunity for the White House to feature individuals doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire members of their communities. The event will be live streamed on the White House website. To watch this event live, visit www.whitehouse.gov/live on Tuesday, October 13 at 1:30PM ET. To learn more about the White House Champions of Change program, visit www.whitehouse.gov/champions. Follow the conversation at [#WHChamps](https://twitter.com/WHChamps).

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Atorod Azizinamini, Chair, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Florida International University – Miramar, Florida

Dr. Atorod Azizinamini invented the Folder Steel Plate Girder bridge system, which provides a cost-effective alternative for rapidly replacing or retrofitting short span bridges without impacting traffic or mobility. His rapid bridge replacement technology gives states a cost-effective solution to bridge upgrades that is faster to complete.

Marilyn Bull, Morris Green Professor of Pediatrics, James Whitcomb Riley Hospital for Children at Indiana University – Indianapolis, Indiana

Dr. Marilyn Bull is committed to child safety, and has worked with entrepreneurs and manufacturers to develop products to help children with special health care needs travel safely. She and her team created the curriculum on “Safe Travel for All Children,” which is used nationally and internationally for training.

Habib Dagher, Director, Advanced Structures & Composites Center, University of Maine – Veazie, Maine

Dr. Habib Dagher, a leading advocate for developing advanced structural systems, and his team at the University of Maine designed the “Bridge in a Backpack” program, which uses innovative and lightweight bridge materials. His concept is helping states build new bridges in an efficient, innovative way, allowing for faster construction and less disruption for travelers.

Nathaniel Ford, CEO, Jacksonville Transit Authority – Jacksonville, Florida

Mr. Nathaniel Ford led efforts to overhaul the Jacksonville Transit Authority (JTA) by implementing the Route Optimization Initiative, which has increased ridership, decreased travel times, and made safety upgrades to buses and stations. His efforts have transformed JTA into a more reliable, more efficient, and safer system for the people of Jacksonville.

Peter Lagerway, Regional Office Director, Toole Design Group – Seattle, Washington

Mr. Peter Lagerway has spent more than 30 years managing pedestrian/bicycle planning and design projects with the City of Seattle and as a consultant to communities throughout the country. Mr. Lagerway developed, refined, and promoted the concept of a “road diet,” which reduces four-lane roadways to three, making room for bike lanes and pedestrians.

Robert Portiss, Director, City of Tulsa-Rogers County Port Authority – Catoosa, Oklahoma

Mr. Robert Portiss, a passionate advocate for inland waterways issues for over 40 years, was instrumental in forging a formal partnership between the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the Arkansas-Oklahoma Port Operators Association. His advocacy efforts led to enhanced partnership between private and public stakeholders.

Olatunji Reed, Co-Founder, Slow Roll Chicago – Chicago, Illinois

Mr. Olatunji Reed has worked to build a diverse, inclusive, and equitable bicycling culture throughout Chicago, which revitalizes underserved communities, improves health, and increases accessibility. He leads a coalition of cycling advocates fighting for a citywide biking infrastructure that is equitable and beneficial for all Chicagoans.

Elaine Roberts, President and CEO, Columbus Regional Airport Authority – Columbus, Ohio

Ms. Elaine Roberts was instrumental in envisioning, designing, developing, and implementing a plan to build an intermodal facility at Rickenbacker International Airport in Columbus, Ohio. Her leadership led to the opening of the intermodal terminal, a 210,000 lift/truck facility that is the heart of the Heartland Corridor.

James Sayer, Research Scientist, University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute – Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dr. Jim Sayer was instrumental in developing the University of Michigan's vision for introducing connected and automated vehicle technologies. To achieve this, Dr. Sayer designed, developed and implemented M City, a facility that will allow the automotive community to test cutting-edge technologies.

Kyle Wagenschutz, Bicycle-Pedestrian Program Manager, City of Memphis – Memphis, Tennessee

Mr. Kyle Wagenschutz helped establish Memphis as a national leader on bicycle and pedestrian programs in an urban environment. His work led to the city's first bicycle master plan, which secured funding to construct more than 100 miles of dedicated bike lanes, which has helped make the city more accessible, livable, and walkable.

Carl Weimer, Executive Director, Pipeline Safety Trust – Ferndale, Washington

Mr. Carl Weimer is Executive Director of the national Pipeline Safety Trust. Under his leadership, the Trust has worked with community and industry groups alike to improve pipeline safety, testified to Congress more than 20 times, and successfully advocated for stronger pipeline safety regulations at the local, state and federal level.

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