

The INSIDE

LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

JANUARY 2022

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1

*Traveling Together
Toward Tomorrow* | **PAGE 2**



◀ **Emergency response
across ADOT**
PAGE 3-4



◀ **Blended technical
training saves money,
time**
PAGE 5



◀ **Celebrating two decades
of safety with the 2022
ADOT Safety Calendar**
PAGE 6

ADOT

In November, almost 900 ADOT leaders participated in two days of learning and discussion at our ninth annual Leaders Connection Conference. The conference theme — Traveling Together Toward Tomorrow — represents my belief that each of us are a part of One ADOT, working toward a common goal and solidly fixed on our True North.

Much of the conference was focused on getting conversations started around diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), along with leadership development. Because it is important for everyone to feel like they're a valued member of the team, we need to ensure ADOT is a diverse, equitable and inclusive place to work.

Those who attended the conference were given time to take online learning courses focused on a variety of topics, including coaching, leading remotely and becoming a more inclusive leader. We also hosted several "discussion dens" where attendees could talk about what they learned.

These yearly conferences are valuable because they give managers and supervisors a chance to gain new skills that will help us to innovate and solve problems across the agency.

Even more importantly, the conferences are when I can speak directly to this group, and share with them my vision for the year ahead. My expectation is that they will cascade the conference messages to every employee in this agency.

Look forward to your managers and supervisors sharing what they learned at the conference with you. To help get a dialogue started, be sure to read an upcoming article in the ADOT Connection bulletin that will feature the "Top 5 things to ask your manager about the 2021 Leaders Connection Conference."

You'll also continue to hear more about DEI and other themes discussed at the conference in the coming months. I look forward to continuing the conversation.

Safely Home!

John Halikowski
ADOT Director



John Halikowski
ADOT Director

The INSIDE LANE

ADOT DIRECTOR
JOHN S. HALIKOWSKI

DEPUTY DIRECTOR/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
SCOTT OMER

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT DIRECTOR
JON BRODSKY

DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT DIRECTOR
CAROLINE CARPENTER

NEWSLETTER STAFF
KATHY BOYLE, ASSISTANT COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
LORI BAKER, SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST
ANGELA DE WELLES, SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST
KIM LARSON, SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST
MICHELLE FINK, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
RANDY SASAKI, GRAPHICS PROJECT MANAGER
JOHN WALRADT, GRAPHIC DESIGNER

ELENA DIAZ, GRAPHIC DESIGNER
FRANK RODRIGUEZ, GRAPHIC DESIGNER

EDITORIAL BOARD
EDDIE EDISON, HR
VINCENT LABELLA, OCI
SONYA HERRERA, ASD
GREGORY BYRES, MPD
JAMES WINDSOR, TSMO
JENNIFER BOWSER RICHARDS, MVD
LARRY CLARK, MVD
STEVE BOSCHEN, IDO
LT. BRIAN ECKENBOY, OIG/ECD

THE INSIDE LANE IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BY ADOT COMMUNICATIONS.

ADDRESS ALL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS TO InsideLane@azdot.gov.

A WEB VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER CAN BE FOUND ON ADOTNET OR AT AZDOT.GOV/INSIDELANE.

© 2021 Arizona Department of Transportation

Share your best cover shot

Do you have photos showing off the scenic side of transportation in Arizona? Share them with us and we might put your photograph on the next cover of The Inside Lane. It can be a great picture of an MVD office, a beautiful highway shot or even an artsy photo of construction materials. Whatever the subject, the photo should highlight some aspect of the work happening here at ADOT. Submit your original, digital photographs to InsideLane@azdot.gov in JPEG format (no larger than 10MB). Along with the photo, please provide a brief description and your name/title.



On the cover

This Grand Prize winning cover photo was shot by **Lee Forrest**, a welder in the Flagstaff Equipment Services Shop, as part of The Inside Lane's Fall and Winter Cover Photo Contest. His photo shows a lenticular (lens-shaped) cloud formation near his Fort Valley home in northern Arizona. See the honorable mention winners' photos and read more about the photo contest, **Page 5**.

ADOT VOICES

EMERGENCY
RESPONSE

Whether it's a HAZMAT incident, rockslide, wildfire or severe weather event, ADOT employees from around the state respond whenever an emergency impacts the state highway system. Their jobs might be different, but they're all working toward the same goal. To get a better view of this agency's response efforts, we asked a few ADOT team members to share what they do when an emergency call comes in. ■■

~ Compiled by Angela DeWelles, Senior Communications Specialist

I get the word out to the public about road closures and detours on ADOT's social media accounts, and let them know about other routes they can take. I also send alerts on the ADOT Alerts app, and post alerts on the AZ 511 website and phone line. Keeping up with situations — when a road reopens, or if there's a change in detour routes — is also a big part of my job.



Kathleen Cline

Public Information Officer, Traffic Operations Center

The Traffic Operations Center is ADOT's 24-7 point of contact when law enforcement requests ADOT assistance. It's also where we process reports of emergency issues or concerns pertaining to ADOT infrastructure. TOC staff processes these reports and assigns resources along with managing the timely communication of critical information.



Mark DeLugt

Dispatch Manager, Traffic Operations Center

My first priority is making sure that there is someone to respond to the incident to perform traffic control and assist other emergency responders. I make sure reports and updates are sent to the TOC throughout the incident so that (TOC teams) can update the public. I do my best to protect everyone on scene with whatever traffic control



measures we have, including shutting the road down completely. After major incidents, we have after-action meetings and invite all those who were involved to help us look at what worked and what we can do better.

Paul Brayton

Williams Maintenance Supervisor

My main job responsibility in an emergency situation is to provide support for the maintenance supervisors. This could include coordinating with neighboring units for personnel, equipment or material support as well as providing timely information and updates to district management and TOC.



Sheri Chesser

Maintenance Superintendent, Northcentral District

As a maintenance tech, we respond to many different types of emergency incidents, including wildfires, minor and major accidents, HAZMAT situations and weather-related incidents. Some duties include closing a highway or just closing a lane to keep everyone safe. We can be plowing snow, cleaning up a mudslide and helping out a stranded motorist all in a typical week. Our main goal is to keep the traveling public moving along Arizona highways.



Casey Bramlet

Highway Operations Technician III, Payson Maintenance

When it comes to ADOT's emergency response to a wildland fire, I play just one role among the many other important roles that others perform. During an active fire, I collect all the documentation related to ADOT's response — that can include labor hours, equipment and mileage reports. Once the documentation is gathered, I do an internal audit to verify for accuracy and completeness. Then I generate the reimbursement request and submit a completed invoice for reimbursement to the Department of Forestry and Fire Management. Once the reimbursement package is approved by State Forestry, I submit a request to transfer funds to the general ledger for reimbursement.



Kristy Seifert

Northcentral District Management Analyst 4

I work with and manage a team of environmental staff to ensure the federal, state and local environmental compliance regulations are being met for emergency projects. I coordinate with ADOT Districts and other technical staff to ensure appropriate environmental commitments are incorporated into project engineering and design plans.



Dena Whitaker

Senior Environmental Planner



When we are on call, we respond accordingly to incidents and set up traffic control, whether it's a lane closure or flagging operation to protect first responders and the traveling public. When the scene is cleared, we remove traffic control and make sure the scene is safe for the traveling public. After that, we clear the scene with TOC and go home and wait for the next call out.

Bobby Millard

Highway Operations Technician III, Payson Maintenance

The INSIDE

LANE

JANUARY 2022

3

This view of the Interstate 10 Gila River Bridge shows the low clearance under the structure.

Steven Olmsted, Environmental Planning

ADOT IS A NATIONAL LEADER FOR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM RESILIENCE

United States Geological Survey

ADOT'S INNOVATIVE resilience methods to make Arizona's roads and bridges less vulnerable to flooding, extreme heat, wildfires, freezing and other natural hazards have captured national recognition.

Three Arizona bridges were spotlighted in a [General Accounting Office report](#) recently issued to Congress about using resilience tools on federally funded roads.

ADOT hosted a visit during which GAO representatives toured Arizona's St. David Bridge on State Route 80, the Gila River Bridge on Interstate 10 and the Gila River Bridge on State Route 79 in early 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic. A combined total of about \$111 million in federal and state money will be spent to replace these three bridges and construct other improvements so they can address engineering design storm requirements, prevent erosion and mitigate extreme weather flood events.

At a national level, there are significant efforts underway to incorporate resilience in state DOTs standard work.

"Understanding resiliency, baking into our processes, planning and preparing for major disruptive events — as they will continue to become more frequent and severe — are important to quickly recover to reduce significant negative safety, mobility, and economic impacts to the state of Arizona

▲ This is a drone-captured, geometrically corrected image of the State Route 80 San Pedro River Bridge replacement project in St. David.

and the rest of the country," said Transportation Systems Management and Operations Director **Brent Cain**.

ADOT's [Resilience Program](#), which is part of the State Engineer Office's Environmental Planning unit, was noted for these innovations in the GAO report:

- A new standard process — Resilience Program Natural Hazard Risk Assessment — uses project-location science and engineering analysis to better understand natural hazard risks in the infrastructure system being designed and built.
- A new natural hazard event dashboard tool, developed by Environmental Planner **Taylor Gustafson**, brings together internal and external groups prior to emergency repair project development, enables risk management analysis, and creates live feed weather monitoring. It is part of a larger Resilience GIS Database built through joint Federal Highway Administration and ADOT funding.

"Through our Resilience Program, ADOT staff anticipate, prepare for and adapt to changing conditions, and



Environmental Planning

▲ Resilience GIS Event Dashboard ADOT's new natural hazard event dashboard tool was used for the 195,000-acre Bush Fire's emergency repair project development, risk management analysis, and live feed weather monitoring.

withstand, respond to and recover rapidly from disruptions," said Environmental Planning Program Delivery manager **Steven Olmsted**.

Since formally launching in 2015, the Resilience Program has advanced scientific, evidence-driven decision-making using best available risk, science, technology, and engineering. It garners support from across ADOT including administration, planning, programming, project development, design engineering, construction, maintenance, districts and operations.

"Besides FHWA, ADOT also has benefitted from tremendous support from the Transportation Research Board, AASHTO, and national and international partnerships," Olmsted added. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

KAIZEN KORNER

KAIZEN FY 2022 CHALLENGE

We are all being challenged to embrace [AKA-The ADOT Way](#) and practice our skills of problem solving and process improvement. To do this, everyone needs to:

- Focus on improvement of core processes
- Reduce waste using (Plan-Do-Check-Act)
- Document and submit a kaizen via the [kaizen tracker](#) while in the ADOT network

To reach our goal of 7,200, everyone is expected to complete a kaizen on their own and do one additional kaizen.

KAIZEN COUNT

The number of kaizens submitted by ADOT employees so far this fiscal year is

2,520

For more information on the Kaizen Challenge, visit the [Kaizen Challenge page on ADOTNet](#).

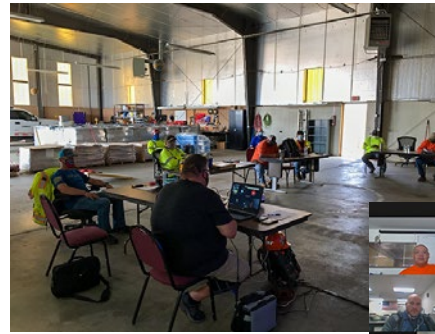
Blended technical training sessions save money, time

A NEW TECHNICAL training method blending virtual and in-person instruction is saving ADOT money and time.

Prior to the pandemic, the only option was in-person New Employee Maintenance Orientation (NEMO) training in Phoenix for two weeks with employees traveling from around the state.

To continue NEMO training during the pandemic, the Technical Learning and Development Training Delivery team learned Google Classroom and launched their first virtual-only NEMO class in April 2020 with instructors presenting from their Phoenix office to employees statewide.

Now, NEMO training has moved to the next level with a blended approach — offering remote learning both virtually and in-person. In September 2021, six employees in the Page Maintenance Unit participated using laptops with cameras. Another 17 employees participated virtually from across Arizona, including Chambers, St. Johns, Quartzsite,



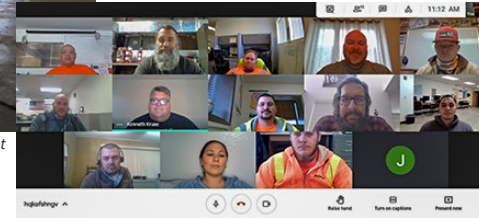
Jose Galvan, Technical Learning and Development

Wikieup, Little Antelope, Indian Pine, Tucson and Tonopah.

“Using Google Classroom and Google Meets allows us to provide training anywhere,” said Training Delivery Manager **Mario Ortega**. “I am extremely proud of the Technical Learning and Development team’s effort to remain open-minded and dedicated to learning a new way to provide our customers with a quality training experience.”

◀ *Page Maintenance Unit employees participate in remote technical training with other workers from around the state.*

With the blended approach, the training now is only one week instead of two weeks. Besides saving employees time, it saves the state money on hotels that would be needed for travel and wear and tear on vehicles.



▲ *Technical training participants from around the state participated virtually in the New Employee Maintenance Orientation instruction.*

“I like that our employees can fulfill their training requirements without travel and still be able to participate in other maintenance functions prior to or upon completion of training, but more importantly, they can return home safely to their families at the end of the work day,” said Kingman Maintenance Supervisor **Chris Riggins**.

NEMO primarily focuses on required training for highway operations workers, such as chainsaw operations, fall prevention/ladder, work zone traffic control, transportation math, flagger training, two-way radio communication and heavy equipment. 🇺🇸

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

EMPLOYEES SHARE PHOTOS OF FALL AND WINTER IN ARIZONA

ADOT EMPLOYEES showcased their photographic talents while capturing Arizona’s fall and winter seasons for The Inside Lane Cover Photo Contest.

The Grand Prize winner is **Lee Forrest**, a welder in the Flagstaff Equipment Services Shop, whose photo is displayed on this issue’s cover of The Inside



Greer, Arizona



Tonto Basin, Arizona

Lane. He received an Inside Lane goodie bag, including an “Arizona Highways Scenic Drives” book.

Honorable mention winners are **Kohinoor Kar**, transportation engineer manager for grant coordination, (photo on left) and **Leah Almond**, Transportation Systems Management and Operations Division executive assistant. (photo on right)

Check out our [Flickr album](#) featuring employee-submitted photos of Arizona’s fall and winter. 🇺🇸

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

Celebrating two decades of safety with 2022 ADOT Safety Calendar

IT'S BEEN 20 YEARS since ADOT's Administrative Services Division debuted its first Safety Calendar featuring artwork created by ADOT employees' relatives.

Year after year, the calendar committee members build on the foundation of safety awareness and education that lies at the heart of the project.

Workers Compensation Manager **Susan Stumfoll**, the calendar's project manager this year, explained the process for the 2022 calendar began in May.

"After the submission deadline in July, I started working with the committee and graphic designer to come up with a theme and layout," she said. "This process, the proof reading, and adding items to the calendar, takes us through the middle of October."

Besides Stumfoll, other 2022 calendar committee members are **Leah Almond**, **Christine Baptisto**, **Marcella Gonzalez-Reyes**, **Candee Samora** and **Anthea Quinn-Hough**.

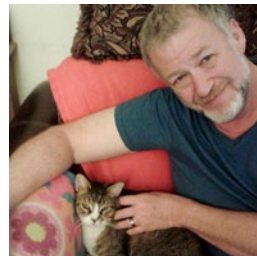
The graphic designer for the 2022 calendar was **John Walradt**. He notes that this project is unique compared to others he works on.

"This is a specialized calendar, designed from scratch. The artwork and images of the kids have to be scanned and edited to be sure the images are clear and color corrected," he said. "Then most important: proofing, proofing, and more proofing!"

Everyone agrees that the highlight of working on this project is the creativity of the kids.

"One of the most enjoyable aspects is seeing what is in the imaginations of the kids. Some of them

have a sense of humor that is hilarious, some are very meticulous, others draw with abandon," Walradt added.



John Walradt

One of those young artists, 11-year-old Justin Allen, incorporated some pop culture into his artwork.

"He loves Marvel and Star Wars movies, so he came up with a safety element to

focus on — all the characters wear helmets," said his grandfather, Right-of-Way Project Manager **Richard Erickson**.

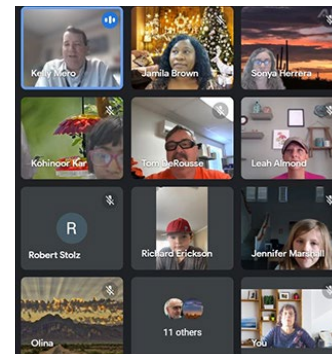
Over the years, several of Erickson's grandchildren have participated, including Justin's brother, 8-year-old Wyatt, who is also featured this year.

"I think it is wonderful that ADOT gives them the opportunity to have their talents and efforts recognized and to incorporate their artistic contributions into the ADOT culture and our way of life," the proud grandfather said.

Olina Fong, daughter of Transportation Engineering Specialist **Tao Fong**, has been involved in previous years. As a 12-year-old, this is the last year she can participate and her final contribution landed on the calendar cover.

"Olina thought her artwork should not only advocate for conventional traffic safety, but also address the safety concerns associated with the

Don't be lazy, wear these for safety!



Top photo: The 2022 Safety Calendar cover drawing was created by Olina Fong, daughter of ADOT employee **Tao Fong**. **Bottom left:** 2022 ADOT Safety Calendar award winners were honored during a virtual ceremony. **Bottom right:** Justin Allen, grandson of ADOT employee **Richard Erickson**, drew the April 2022 image.

COVID-19 pandemic," said Fong. "She really cherishes her last year to be part of the calendar."

Fourteen young artists whose artwork is featured in the 2022 calendar were honored during a virtual Safety Calendar Ceremony on Dec. 2 emceed by Arizona Highways Publisher **Kelly Mero**.

Look for your 2022 calendar coming soon. If you have a child or relative who may want to participate next year, keep an eye out for information next May. ■

~ Kim Larson, Senior Communications Specialist

The INSIDE

LANE

JANUARY 2022

6