



2022 Employee Title VI Training

by Cynthia Howard



The annual employee Title VI training was a success. Collectively, we trained 99.9 % of TDOT's employees. This would not have been possible without all of you. The division and region directors, Title VI Liaisons, IT, HR, and CRD's staff made this year a success.

Let's recognize our superlatives:

- Strategic Transportation Investment was the first division to complete the training this year, and in the previous six years.
- Job well done to TDOT's regional offices for doing a tremendous job (given the number of staff the regions are responsible for getting trained).
- Avery Poor and Jeffery Davidson worked diligently in ensuring the Learning Network was functioning properly and providing training participation updates.

Thank you all for your continued support of the Civil Rights Division.

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Welcome Aboard Halmat Tayip



WELCOME TO OUR TEAM

by Wes White



The Civil Rights Division Title VI program is pleased to introduce its newest staff member, Halmat “Hal” Tayip. Tayip joins the program as a Title VI Specialist where he will monitor Region 3 subrecipients for compliance with Title VI and other nondiscrimination mandates. He is a Tennessee State University graduate with a degree in Political Science. Prior to joining the TDOT Title VI team, Tayip worked with the Tennessee Department of Safety where he administered compliance with the Ignition Interlock Program. He recently began studies at Nashville Law School with the goal of completing his law degree. He currently resides in Nashville, TN where he was born as a first-generation Kurd to a family who refugeeed here in 1991.

Tayip brings his past administration and compliance experience to TDOT’s Civil Rights Division Title VI program. In addition to his compliance responsibilities to Region 3, he is responsible for compliance review tracking statewide. Please join us in welcoming him to the TDOT family.

Future Title VI Subrecipient Virtual Training Dates

by Cynthia Howard



The Civil Rights Division is continuing to offer virtual Title VI training to TDOT’s subrecipients. The training covers several learning objectives: an introduction and overview of the Title VI law and other nondiscrimination legislation that followed its enactment, Environmental Justice (EJ), public involvement, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), complaint processing, compliance responsibilities, and strategies for preventing discrimination. It’s recommended that newly appointed Title VI Coordinators participate in the virtual training. The participants benefit greatly from this interactive training, allowing them to ask question and share experiences.

Virtual Title VI training dates: March 22, 2023, June 21, 2023, August 23, 2023, and November 15, 2023. TDOT subrecipients can register for 2023 upcoming training on the CRD Title VI program website.

<https://www.tn.gov/tdot/civil-rights/title-vi-program/title-vi---training.html>

What the Justice 40 Initiative Means to Civil Rights in Transportation

by Wes White

Within days of taking office, President Biden signed Executive Order (EO) 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad. This EO includes the unprecedented move of making a goal of 40 percent of overall benefits of certain federal investments go to Environmental Justice communities that are currently marginalized, underserved and overburdened with pollution. This goal, known as the Justice 40 Initiative, considers these investment categories to be climate change, clean energy and energy efficiency, clean transit, affordable and sustainable housing, training and workforce development, remediation and reduction of legacy pollution, and the development of critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure.

The Justice 40 Initiative is not a one-time investment but rather it is a series of changes designed to improve equitable government distribution of the benefits of many programs. Existing and new programs together that meet eligibility requirements are covered. To meet Justice 40 Initiative goals, agencies are making changes to their programs to ensure disadvantaged communities receive these benefits.

The initiative will greatly enhance the ability to achieve environmental justice for minority and low-income communities in federally financed programs and activities. A series of conference calls with the USDOT has discussed in detail the necessity of Title VI implementation plans to be increasingly relevant most especially for subrecipients desiring to receive federal funding directly with emphasis on equity being of foremost importance. The Title VI Program is working diligently to prepare TN to succeed in the Justice 40 Initiative.

FHWA has held numerous webinars this year on the Justice 40 Initiative to ensure that State Departments of Transportations' (SDOT) civil rights disciplinaries are aware of the new grant opportunities and the changes that will arise from this momentous initiative. One noted change is the SDOT's subrecipients who apply directly to FHWA will become direct recipients of federal funds. This is an important change as it effects reporting requirements. As recipients, nonprofits, transit providers, etc. will be required to report annually to FHWA its Title VI implementation plan. The CRD's subrecipients who choose to take advantage of the grant opportunities will not incur any issues as it relates to the change in reporting as TDOT's reporting requirements are in accordance with 49 CFR Part 21.



Collin's Final Thoughts

by Collin Peabody

My name is Collin Peabody and this summer I was one of two interns in the Civil Rights Division. I am originally from Dallas, Texas and came to Tennessee to attend Vanderbilt University. There, I am a rising senior anticipating to graduate in Spring 2023 with a B.S. in Human & Organizational Development and a B.A. in Environmental Sociology along with a minor in German. I was interested in an internship with TDOT for two reasons. First, I wanted to see what working in the public sector encompasses, and second, I knew I wanted to participate in an established internship program where I would have opportunities to see an entire organization. With a background in the nonprofit realm, I sought to use an internship with TDOT to compare the public and nonprofit sectors in order to see where I should begin my career upon graduation from Vanderbilt. The Civil Rights Division was of particular interest to me because I seek to have the work I do be impactful to the people and world beyond myself. The Civil Rights Division was the place to do just that.

The most valuable experience I had this summer was getting an in-depth view of the programs administered by the division. I found it fascinating to see in real time how federal civil rights law translated into the important everyday work of the division. Through both formal and informal conversations with coworkers about what they do and moments I had to shadow them, I learned a great deal about what administering a government program entails. These experiences brought to light ideas of what I might want to do in the future and, just as importantly, some ideas of what I may not want to do. Altogether, the Civil Rights Division was a place I gained an immeasurable amount knowledge.

The focus of my internship was on environmental justice (EJ). Coming into this summer, I was familiar with



environmental justice as a social movement through my Environmental Sociology coursework but had not been exposed to how environmental justice principles apply to a state department of transportation. To rectify this, I began my summer by reading many reports or other forms of literature put out by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, other state DOTs and transportation industry groups on the state of environmental justice in transportation today. From this research, I gained a solid foundation of environmental justice knowledge as well as saw the vision for where many agencies want environmental justice to go in the future. This foundation was integral to the main project I developed and worked on over the remainder of my time with TDOT.

For my main project, I chose to hone in on environmental justice within the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process transportation projects must go through. The US DOT Order 5610.2(a) requires environmental justice analyses to be conducted on large transportation projects to ensure the negative externalities of these projects are not

disproportionately and/or adversely affecting low-income and/or minority communities. My goal was to investigate if TDOT's NEPA program was in compliance with environmental justice and, if not, provide recommendations for how the program's procedures could be improved to better achieve environmental justice. To go about this, I reviewed past Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) and Environmental Assessments (EAs) and had select conversations with NEPA program staff to gain an understanding of how environmental justice analyses are conducted. From the insights I gained performing those reviews, I identified trends in TDOT roadway projects where environmental justice analyses could be improved upon. Following an analysis of the trends, I developed recommendations for possible adoption to eliminate the current problematic trends in the environmental justice problems analysis process.

Performing this review required me to think critically and expand my knowledge on what causes environmental justice problems in transportation in the first place. In this way, I was not solely reviewing the EJ analyses, but rather reviewing how air quality studies, noise studies, etc. should be better adapted as part EJ analyses.

Hopefully, the recommendations I provided, are taken into consideration and will enhance TDOT's current EJ analysis process. This will help to ensure low-income and/or minority communities are not adversely affected by future transportation projects.

My summer in the Civil Rights Division was meaningful and I will take the knowledge I gained with me as I finish at Vanderbilt and move on to what lies ahead.

Sophie's Parting Words

by Sophie Stanley



My name is Sophie Stanley and this summer I had the privilege of interning at the Civil Rights Division's Title VI program. I am currently a senior at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville where I study Geospatial Intelligence Systems (GIS) and applied at TDOT to gain practical experience using GIS in the workplace. In addition to learning more about GIS skills through my internship with the Title VI program I was also fortunate to be able to learn more about politics, civil rights, government, and transportation. After arriving at this internship two months ago with limited knowledge of the legal aspects of Civil Rights I will now be leaving with a much greater comprehension of this important subject.

TDOT conducts this internship program every summer and puts a significant amount of thought and care towards both elucidating the interns as well as ensuring the experience was fun for all.

Field trips such as construction site visits, excursions below surface into private mines, and being able to ride along in a TDOT HELP Truck made my internship experience very enjoyable and unique from other internship experiences. In addition to the intern group activities, I was also able to participate in many Civil Rights Division activities such as an excursion with the National Summer Transportation Institute (NSTI) students, a NSTI Commissioner's Luncheon, and a conference for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs). Due to the excellent camaraderie with my coworkers and these events, this summer was very enjoyable.

In addition to learning about transportation and civil rights I devoted a large portion of time with Civil Rights towards making an overarching GIS mapping and analytics project. This project was designed to be an exploratory lens into how successful TDOT has been thus far in considering Environmental Justice (EJ) communities as they analyze, approve, and construct roadway projects. An EJ community is an area which has a notable amount of minority and/or low-income people. There are many facets of Tennessee which have been improving, such as the lowering of asthma rates, but there are still some areas of concern which TDOT may be able to improve through updated policy and new considerations.

This project aimed to define these

areas which could be impacted by transportation or could be improved by a transportation solution. The project also aimed to conduct an analysis into how well Tennessee was accounting for the EJ communities as well as define EJ communities which were consistently facing worse outcomes than other areas. Metrics such as asthma, distance from hospital, presence of food deserts, distances from schools to highways, air quality, sidewalks, and noise pollution were used to study Tennessee statewide and understand some of the potential transportation related problems which can arise. To conduct this analysis, I used the software ArcGIS Pro as well as ArcGIS Online to input information and create maps which symbolized the data. TDOT has done very well in developing the state of Tennessee, also the analysis revealed, in short, areas for improvement in considering for EJ communities statewide as well as a need for more data monitoring and potential benefits from environmental policy changes. The final outputs for the project were in the form of an ArcGIS storymap, which is an interactive collection of maps containing descriptive and analytical text, as well as a PDF document containing the same information. This project revealed many valuable recommendations and potential areas of improvement for TDOT. I feel very grateful to have had the chance to work on this project and learn so much from the Civil Rights Division this summer!

The Title VI Program Staff is Set to Reach Record Compliance Review Numbers for FY 2021 - 2022

by Cynthia Howard



The Title VI program staff adopted and implemented the Staggered Monitoring Review Process (SCRP) in 2009. The process provides for scheduled annual reviews of TDOT's subrecipients. The SCRCP was designed to assist the Title VI program staff in managing its monitoring and training workload; specifically, it staggers the desk and onsite compliance reviews over a three-year period for subrecipients who have demonstrated a strong commitment to Title VI and its requirements; more importantly, it allows additional time for staff to provide technical assistance and training to the subrecipients who have marginal Title VI programs.

Subrecipients with strong programs are required to submit an annual "No change Affidavit" and a signed assurance statement. If changes occur in the existing Title VI program, the subrecipient is required to notify the Civil Rights Division (CRD) within seven calendar days and provide supporting documentation of changes that have occurred in their Title VI programs, e.g., a new Title VI coordinator, updated Title VI training, changes in public participation plans, etc. Subrecipients with marginal programs are reviewed annually. Staff is available to assist them with the implementation of program requirements, as needed.

Annually, since implementing the SCRCP the Title VI program staff has realized an increase in the number of compliance reviews conducted. Staff completed 319 compliance reviews during the 2020 - 2021 federal fiscal year, with an overall 335 completed reviews. This year staff projected and are on pace to complete 338 reviews for the federal fiscal year. The team's goal is to exceed 450 compliance reviews for the combined overall state and federal reporting periods, which will be a record high for the program.

The SCRCP helps to set subrecipients' expectations, many of which will reach out in advance of a scheduled compliance review to "self-report". This process has been beneficial for every agency involved. Proudly, the CRD reports that over 30 State Departments of Transportation have adopted and/or modeled their compliance review process after TDOT's Staggered Monitoring Review Process.



Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) Annual Meeting

by Vince Malone

In July 2022, TDOT leadership attended the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) annual meeting in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. COMTO is the leading national advocate for employment diversity, inclusion and contracting opportunities in the multimodal, multi-billion-dollar transportation industry. Their mission is to eliminate barriers to maximum participation for minority individuals, veterans, people with disabilities and certified MWDBE businesses through leadership training, professional development, scholarship and internship funding, political advocacy, partnership building and networking opportunities.

During the conference TDOT Deputy Commissioners Joe Galbato and Paul Degges were invited by COMTO President & CEO, April Rai to participate in the CEO forum and be part of the exchange between minority officials regarding the barriers that they face within the transportation and transit industries. The conference focused on navigating the future of transportation after COVID-19 and the disruptions that occurred within the industry, as well as diversity, equity and inclusion factors. The conference was attended by over 700 officials from across the United States and its territories. Additionally, Vince Malone, Director of Civil Rights Division and Kimery Grant, Manager of TDOT Local Programs, also attended as members of COMTO.



(l - r) Deputy Commissioner Paul Degges, Kimery Grant, Manager of TDOT Local Programs, Deputy Commissioner Joe Galbato, Civil Rights Division Director Vince Malone



(l - r) Deputy Commissioner Paul Degges, Civil Rights Division Director Vince Malone, Deputy Commissioner Joe Galbato



(l - r) Deputy Commissioner Paul Degges, Deputy Commissioner Joe Galbato, Civil Rights Division Director Vince Malone

Civil Rights and Multimodal Division Collaborate

by Wes White



The TDOT Civil Rights Division's Title VI program recently worked in collaboration with TDOT's Multimodal Division. The two divisions worked collaboratively to enhance Multimodal's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program and develop initiatives encouraging subrecipients to increase procurement of services from certified DBEs. The DBE Program is a US Department of Transportation program that requires recipients of federal transportation funds from the FHWA, FTA, and FAA to provide a fair opportunity for DBEs to compete with larger non-DBE firms for federally funded transportation contracts. The TDOT Civil Rights Division is responsible for monitoring FTA recipients' DBE usage and ensuring their compliance with the Department of Transportation's DBE regulations found at 49 CFR Part 26.

The Title VI program recently conducted a DBE training with many Multimodal grantees. The training discussed key objectives of the DBE program including who must have a DBE program and goal setting methodology. The training session also discussed opportunities for DBE utilization in micro-purchases, purchases of supplies and services, the aggregate amount of which does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold, which is typically under \$3,500, and how to use the Tennessee Uniform Certification Program (TNUCP) DBE Business Directory to find DBEs. The divisions established a goal of 1.6% for the first reporting period, ultimately achieving and reporting a 6.47% DBE usage to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

National Summer Transportation Institute Program Highlights 2022



Class of 2022

National Summer Transportation Institute Program Highlights 2022 (con't)

by Pamela Sharp

Annually, the Civil Rights Division (CRD) administers the National Summer Transportation Institute (NSTI), which program gives the Title VI Program and various TDOT staff the opportunity to focus on inspiring and shaping future transportation leaders. NSTI is a four-week federally funded summer program developed to increase the awareness of high school students to the engineering field and other transportation related career paths, enhance students' understanding of transportation related problems and solutions, and sharpen their interpersonal and leadership skills. Tennessee State University (TSU), Department of Civil and Architectural Engineering, was selected as the 2022 host.

TSU in cooperation with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), TDOT, United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority sponsored this year's program. The 2022 NSTI was held on the campus of TSU from July 05 to July 29, 2022, with 16 high school students from across the United States that participated in this year's program. The students' schedule consisted of classroom activities, field trips, guest speakers, and the TDOT Commissioner's Luncheon hosted by Vince Malone, Director of the Civil Rights Division.

TDOT Week was observed the first week of the program which included several volunteer speakers. The guest speakers delivered an engaging presentation about their roles and responsibilities at TDOT and career opportunities available in the field of transportation. This year's speakers included the following: Dan Pallme, Asst. Bureau Chief, Freight, & Logistics, & Interim Multimodal Director; Veda Nguyen, Civil Engineering Manager II – Multimodal Division; Jennifer Marshall, Transportation Planning Specialist- Long Range Transportation Planning Division; Renas Barzanji, Work Zone Coordinator/ ADA Transportation Monitor- Design Division; Chris Schneider, Transportation Project Specialist- Design Division; Gregory Dyer, Civil Engineering Manager I- Traffic Operations Division/Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Office; and, Jimmy Scales, Transportation Project Specialist, Sr. Structures Division.

The NSTI Closing Ceremony was held on July 29th with closing remarks provided by Myles Minnis, Transportation Program Monitor – TDOT CRD. Vince Malone, CRD Director and Pamela Sharp, Title VI Specialist- CRD presented certificates of participation to students.

The Civil Rights Division would like to extend a special thanks to Adam Perez, Transportation Manager II - TDOT Region III Traffic Management Center (TMC); Garry Western, Transportation Manager I, - TDOT Region III TMC; Todd Stepp, TDOT Region III TMC, Mike Doran P.E., Lab Unit Manager- Material and Tests Division, Joseph Kerstetter, P.E., Assistant Lab Manager- Material and Tests Division; Frank Sadler, P.E., Lab Supervisor- Material and Tests Division; and Kim Filson, Supervisor Physical/Soil/Chem Lab- Material and Tests Division for providing the NSTI participants a tour of the TMC/Help Truck and Material and Tests Laboratory during their field trip. Additionally, thanks to the Beautification and Safety Divisions for providing TDOT swag.

Lastly, thanks to Gabriel C. Burgess, Commuter Services & Special Events Manager with Nashville WeGo Public Transit and Terry Bebout, General Manager with R.J. Corman Railroad Group, LLC. for making a WeGo commuter ride and tour of the train yard possible for the NSTI Program participants.

National Summer Transportation Institute Oh, The Places We've Seen!

NSTI TDOT WEEK - SPEAKERS



Daniel Pallme, Asst. Bureau Chief, Freight, & Logistics, & Interim Multimodal Director, presents



Renas Barzanji, Work Zone Coordinator/ ADA Transportation Monitor & Chris Schneider, Transportation Project Specialist, both with the Design Division, presents.



Jennifer Marshall, Transportation Planning Specialist, Long Range Transportation Planning Division, presents.



Jimmy Scales, Transportation Project Specialist, Sr., Structures Division, presents.



Gregory Dyer, Civil Engineering Manager I-Traffic Operations Division/Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Office, presents.



Veda Nguyen, Civil Engineering Manager II, Multimodal Division, presents.

Fieldtrip Momentos



Rusty wheels on an old track



WeGo Star



Pavement Cores



Aggregate Samples



Materials & Test Lab



Road Sign

NSTI COMMISSIONER'S LUNCHEON



Vince alone, CRD Director and Joi Hamilton-Jones in discussion.



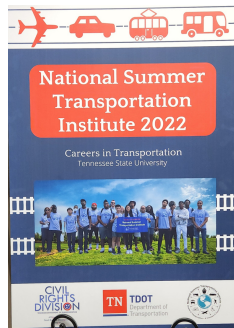
(left- right) Professor Kang Du, TSU, Cynthia Howard, CRD Title VI Program Dir., Vince Malone, Dir. CRD, and Joi Hamilton-Jones, FHWA Civil Rights Specialist



NSTI Students with Vince Malone, CRD Director, Collin Peabody & Sophie Stanley, CRD Interns, Professor Kang DU, and Joi Hamilton-Jones, FHWA, Civil Rights Specialist



CRD Staff serving NSTI Students



BNA TOUR



Davita Taylor, Vice President, Procurement & Business Diversity, talks with the students



Panther, Rosenbauer ARFF Vehicle

TMC TOUR



Joseph Kerstetter, P.E., Assistant Lab Manager, Material and Tests Division



Mike Doran P.E., Lab Unit Manager, Material and Tests Division



(left to right) Todd Stepp, Adam Perez, & Garry Western, Traffic Management Center (TMC) with NSTI students



Kim Filson, Supervisor Physical/Soil/Chem Lab, Material and Tests Division for providing Stepp, TDOT Region III TMC, provided a tour to the NSTI students.



Pamela Sharp, CRD Title VI Specialist, NSTI Coordinator

HELP TRUCK TOUR



Todd Stepp, TDOT Region III TMC & NSTI Students



Todd Stepp, TDOT Region III TMC & NSTI Students



Todd Stepp, TDOT Region III TMC & NSTI Students



Todd Stepp, TDOT Region III TMC & NSTI Students

R.J. CORMAN RAILROAD GROUP TOUR



Terry Bebout, General Manager with R.J. Corman Railroad Group, LLC, has a captive audience.



R.J. Corman Railroad Group, LLC tour

CLOSING CEREMONY



Vince Malone, Director CRD, delivers final thoughts to students



Myles Minnis, CRD Small Business, shares with students