



2019 FUTURE LEADERS
DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE BIO BOOK



Pedro Adorno

University of Florida

Charles William Koch Award

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DEGREE

Ph.D. Transportation Engineering

BIOGRAPHY

Pedro Adorno is a third year Ph.D. student in the Transportation Engineering program at the University of Florida. He holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez. He studies the effects of emerging transportation technologies (apps in particular) on driver behavior and safety.

Pedro has interned with transportation safety agencies such as NHTSA and AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety where he gained expertise on in-vehicle technologies, in particular, Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) and their effect on drivers' behaviors.

Outside of research and work, Pedro enjoys painting, drawing, and helping the community.



Lorena Bernal-Vidal

SJSU Mineta Transportation
Institute

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DEGREE

MS Transportation Management

BIOGRAPHY

Lorena is an experienced Transportation Planner. She attended San Jose State University in northern California where she studied Political Science to learn how to empower low income communities to have a voice in their government. She also studied at the University of Bath in England and was a student researcher in the Houses of Parliament in London. Upon her return to the U.S., she secured a job at Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) while finishing her Bachelor's degree. She has since gained practical work experience in Transit Operations, Congestion Management, Government Affairs, Marketing, Planning and Grants Management. She chaired VTA's Employee Advisory Committee representing over 2200 employees. As a Transportation Planner, she worked in major projects such as VTA's BART to Silicon Valley and Alum Rock Bus Rapid Transit, currently managing over \$250M dollars in operating and capital funds.

Lorena is expected to complete her Master of Science in Transportation Management Degree at SJSU Mineta Transportation Institute this spring. In her spare time, she enjoys taking long hikes with her husband and two young kids.



Alexandra Boggs

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Lillian Borrone Alumni Award

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DEGREE

PhD Civil Engineering (Transportation Engineering)

BIOGRAPHY

Alexandra "Ali" Boggs joined the University of Tennessee in 2015 to pursue a doctoral degree in Transportation Engineering and a master's degree in Statistics after receiving her bachelors and masters from Florida Institute of Technology in 2013 and 2015, respectively. While at UT, Ali is focusing on two critical transportation safety topics: automated vehicle crashes and commercial motor vehicles. Her research includes examining self-driving vehicle crashes and disengagements and commercial vehicle parking shortage.

Ali was recently recognized as the 2018 Student of the Year for the Collaborative Sciences Center for Road Safety (CSCRS), a National US Department of Transportation University Transportation Center for promoting safety. She is passionate about transportation safety community outreach where she has participated in many events and even developed an accident reconstruction camp for rising 8th and 9th graders. Upon graduation, she hopes to work in the field of accident reconstruction in hopes that from tragedy, knowledge gained can assist in preventing similar incidents from reoccurring.

Outside of school, Ali enjoys spending her time outdoors with family, friends, and her dog, Riley.



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Beau Burdett

University of Wisconsin Madison

DEGREE

PhD Civil and Environmental Engineering

BIOGRAPHY

Beau Burdett is a PhD student at UW Madison with research focusing on traffic safety with an emphasis on roundabouts, traffic control devices, and autonomous vehicles. He received his Masters degree at UW in 2014 with a thesis based on law enforcement officers estimation of injury severity. He has also been a Teaching assistant for transportation courses for 5 semesters.

Outside of school he enjoy running and playing trivia.



Shannon Engstrom

University of Minnesota

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DEGREE

MURP Urban & Regional Planning

BIOGRAPHY

Shannon Engstrom is an urban & regional planning graduate student at the University of Minnesota. Her focus areas are in transportation and land use. She is particularly interested in equity issues and solutions within transportation, such as using measures of accessibility in transportation performance measures. She also has interests in freight, connected and automated vehicles, and bike/ped planning.

Shannon is a graduate research assistant with the Accessibility Observatory where she calculates and maps accessibility to destinations (typically jobs) by different transportation modes. Prior to graduate school she worked at the Center for Transportation Studies and the Humphrey School of Public Affairs for four years doing project management and program coordination for external university projects and programs. She also spent last summer learning how to code so she could use these skills in her research and work.

Outside of school and work, she enjoys running, lifting, roller derby, reading, walking my dog, traveling and spending time with my partner, friends and family.



Bonnie Fan

Carnegie Mellon University

Council of University Transportation
Centers (CUTC) Award

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DEGREE

MS Public Policy and Data Analytics

BIOGRAPHY

Bonnie joined the Chicago Transit Authority's Performance Management team in 2014 after getting her degree in Economics from the University of Chicago. At CTA, she had the opportunity to work with the implementation of new technology systems, implementing new data science and technical field management tools. In 2017 she helped established a new data-focused team as the department's first data scientist.

She is now pursuing a Master's in Public Policy and Data Analytics at the Heinz College at Carnegie Mellon University as Traffic21's newest Women in Transportation Fellow, to investigate equity, technology and mobility. She also has a particular love for the comics and zine community and is recovering from a torn ACL.



April Gadsby

Georgia Institute of Technology

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DEGREE

PhD Civil Engineering

BIOGRAPHY

April Gadsby is a PhD Student and NSF Graduate Research Fellow in Civil Engineering at Georgia Tech. Her research uses an instrumented bike and eye tracking glasses to understand the causes of cyclist stress to improve bike infrastructure design. She will be taking her instrumented bike to The Netherlands to spend the fall semester doing research at TU Delft.

In her free time she enjoys swing dancing, biking, and powerlifting. She competed at the USA Powerlifting Collegiate Nationals in April.



Gabriela Giron-Valderrama

University of Washington

Dr. Thomas D. Larson Fellowship

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DEGREE

PhD Civil and Environmental Engineering

BIOGRAPHY

Gabriela Giron Valderrama is a Ph.D. student of the Transportation Engineering program at the University of Washington (UW). She obtained a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering from the Technological University of Panama in 2013 and an M.Sc. degree in Transportation Engineering from the University of Washington in 2018. She is a Fulbright Scholar recipient and a member of the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Urban Freight Transportation Committee. She is also the recipient of the 2019 WTS Puget Sound Chapter Senator Scott White Memorial Scholarship.

As a research assistant at the SCTL Center, Gabriela has directly collaborated with the lab's public and private sector partners such as the Seattle Department Transportation (SDOT) and United Parcel Service (UPS) to work on solving problems relevant to urban freight transportation. For the Final 50 feet project, she has contributed to develop and implement research methodologies to facilitate the data collection and analysis of the urban freight infrastructure network. This body of work has resulted in new City protocols for infrastructure management and databasing. Her goal is to become a leader in the proposal and implementation of data-driven policies and strategies to improve the efficiency and sustainability of the transportation and logistics sector.



Krishna Murthy Gurumurthy

The University of Texas at Austin

Conference of Minority Transportation
Officials (COMTO) Award

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DEGREE

Ph.D. Engineering

BIOGRAPHY

Krishna Murthy Gurumurthy is a doctoral student in transportation engineering at The University of Texas at Austin, pursuing his research under Dr Kara Kockelman. He received his master's in civil engineering from UT Austin in December 2017, and a bachelor's from the National Institute of Technology Karnataka, India in May 2016.

His research focuses on travel demand modeling & forecasting, especially through the utilization of large-scale agent-based simulation tools. He is particularly interested in capturing the impacts of shared and automated vehicles (S/AVs) on travel patterns and congestion and measuring the resulting effects of various policies.

Murthy often enjoys playing basketball and racquetball and is interested in photography.



Jeremy Halpern

University of California, Berkeley

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DEGREE

MCP / MS City Planning / Transportation Engineering

BIOGRAPHY

Jeremy is a student in the transportation dual masters program in city planning and transportation engineering at UC Berkeley. His primary research is on TNC (Uber/Lyft) partnerships for paratransit services and cost/ridership forecast performance of bus rapid transit (BRT) projects. His pre-grad school research explored travel behavior in the perception of BRT and light rail quality and millennial transit preferences. Prior to graduate school he worked in design and project management of a light rail line. He holds a BS in Civil Engineering from Northwestern University where he also majored in urban studies.

Jeremy plays ultimate frisbee and can get a bit competitive at board games. He likes backpacking in places where he can't get WiFi or speak the language. Consequently, he is accomplished at communicating with his hands and has difficulty talking without them.



Dylan Horne

Oregon State University

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DEGREE

Ph.D. Civil Engineering

BIOGRAPHY

Dylan Horne was born in rural North Carolina to a blue collar, car-dominated family. Now he is a bicycling Ph.D. student studying civil engineering with a transportation focus. His research is about calibrating and validating a bicycling simulator to better understand the human factors involved in urban cycling. He applies his academic knowledge through his local advocacy for safe and accessible transportation, primarily through the Corvallis Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board. Currently, he is organizing citizens and stakeholders to get Corvallis to adopt a Vision Zero policy. He also serves his biking community through the Corvallis Bicycle Collective, a community bike shop, where he empowers folks to fix their own bikes.

Dylan is a musician who sings and plays the dulcimer, guitar, piano and drums. He sketch landscapes and sunsets with oil pastels, and finds his deepest peace in nature. He has been on some epic bicycle adventures across the United States, to Burning Man, and across Guinea in West Africa on a visit with his brother in the Peace Corps. Read more about his adventures at freewheelingdylan.wordpress.com



De'Von Jennings

University of California, Irvine

Rodney Slater Award

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DEGREE

PhD Civil Engineering (Transportation Systems Engineering)

BIOGRAPHY

De'von Jennings is currently in his second year of his PhD degree. He has had a lot of years' worth of experience in the construction engineering field from working under the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Federal Highway Administration, AECOM, Turner Construction, U.S. Navy, ADOT, and, City of Phoenix. He currently holds his EIT certificate in California and am working on obtaining his P.E license.

De'von is the type of person that loves to learn about different engineering fields, even though his expertise lay in Civil Engineering. He has worked on numerous research projects and has a recent (2018) publishing on rolling stocks from his time at the University of Birmingham (UK). He is a current Gates Millennial Scholar, Eisenhower Fellow, GEM Fellow, and PSR UCT Fellow.

He loves travelling to different countries and learning about different cultures and languages. He has travelled so far to 5 different continents.

Jessica Lazarus

University of California, Berkeley

GAR Foundation Award

DEGREE

PhD Transportation Engineering

BIOGRAPHY

Jessica is a second year Ph.D. student at the University of California, Berkeley studying the optimization of sustainable transportation policy with a focus on pricing policies to incentivize travelers to pool their rides. In her previous research as a member of the Transportation Sustainability Research Center (TSRC) at UC Berkeley, Jessica studied the environmental and behavioral impacts of shared mobility services, including carsharing, bikesharing, microtransit (e.g., Bridj, Chariot), and ridesourcing/TNCs (e.g., Lyft, Uber). She is a native Californian and has been a proud Golden Bear since her undergraduate studies at UC Berkeley in which she majored in Industrial Engineering and Operations Research and minored in Computer Science.

In her free time, Jessica enjoys spending time outdoors hiking, bicycling, or just going for a walk. She is known to be an exhausting travel companion, as she insists on walking whenever possible. Jessica is also an aspiring chef - she takes classes at the Kitchen on Fire in Berkeley, but is happy to report that her kitchen is not and has never been on fire as a result of her culinary endeavors.



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Emma Lucken

University of California, Berkeley

Maggie Walsh, WTS International Board
Chair Scholarship

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DEGREE

PhD Transportation Engineering

BIOGRAPHY

Emma earned her BA in Environmental Science and Public Policy at Harvard University, winning Best Thesis in her major for her research on the strategies planners and advocates use to implement bicycle infrastructure in Boston, Rotterdam, and Copenhagen. After college, she worked as a transportation analyst for the Volpe Transportation Center and then in construction management for the Minnesota Department of Transportation. As a PhD student in Transportation Engineering at UC Berkeley, she currently researches the potential impacts of mobility-on-demand technology and shared automated vehicles on public transportation and on low-income and rural populations.

Emma has road-tripped through every U.S. state except Hawaii, as well as 10 out of 13 Canadian provinces and territories. She lives at Stanford with her husband and one-year-old daughter.

Nicole McGrath

University of Texas at Austin

DEGREE

MS Community and Regional Planning

BIOGRAPHY

Nicole McGrath is a graduate student in the Community and Regional Planning (CRP) program at UT Austin and a Graduate Research Assistant for Administration with the USDOT Tier 1 UTC: Cooperative Mobility for Competitive Megaregions (CM2).

Prior to attending UT Austin, Nicole spent 3 years working as an Air Transportation Specialist based in McMurdo Station, Antarctica. Thanks to this job, she knows how to drive a big rig and a forklift. Plus she got to hang out with penguins! She has also worked in various planning jobs in both South Florida and Austin, TX. When she's not working, she enjoys hiking, traveling, and watching Game of Thrones with her husband and 2 cats (Tater Tot and Dolly Parton).



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Christopher Oster

University of Delaware

Thomas J. O'Bryant Fellow

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DEGREE

PhD Energy and Environmental Policy

BIOGRAPHY

Christopher Oster is a Ph.D. candidate in Energy and Environmental Policy at the University of Delaware's Biden Institute for Public Policy. His research focuses on air quality and environmental justice concerns related to transportation technologies. He is a National Science Foundation Fellow through the National Research Traineeship Program. His previous research includes sustainability benchmarking, active transportation policy, water sciences, and environmental and nuclear engineering research at Argonne National Laboratory.

In his spare time, he enjoys a myriad of outdoor activities, often accompanied by his dog Virgil, named after the Sam Elliott character in the movie Tombstone. His other interests include cooking, traveling, and following wrestling (collegiate and Olympic styles).

Corrie Parrish

University of Oregon

DEGREE

Masters Community and Regional Planning

BIOGRAPHY

Before coming back to graduate school, Corrie Parrish worked around the country on a variety of outdoor recreation planning projects. She is in the second year of her Masters program in planning at University of Oregon (UO). Her research interests include equity issues in transportation planning and policy. Her career goal is to work towards a PhD in transportation planning.

Corrie is the President of LiveMove, a student-led transportation advocacy group at UO. She is also the Director of Student Engagement for APA Women in Planning Division. In her free time she loves to bike, enjoy downtime with friends, and explore new cities.



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Erin Robartes

University of Virginia

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DEGREE

PhD Civil Engineering

BIOGRAPHY

Erin Robartes is a current PhD student at the University of Virginia in the Engineering Systems and Environment Department, pursuing a degree in Civil Engineering. She has spent the past few years studying bicycle safety in Virginia, analyzing available crash data sets and collecting statewide data on crashes and bicycle infrastructure development. She is now part of a new lab at UVa, the Omni-Reality and Cognition Lab, where they are developing bicycle and pedestrian simulators to use in behavioral transportation research.

Erin is a bike commuter and in her spare time she enjoys running, hiking, and traveling. In the past two years she has had the chance to explore Finland, Spain, Belgium, Germany, France, and Austria thanks to several international conference opportunities.



Peter Smet

Cornell University

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DEGREE

MPA Science, Technology and Infrastructure

BIOGRAPHY

Peter Smet is originally from Hermosa Beach, California. An avid lover of all things transportation-related, he studied urban planning at Cornell University as an undergraduate with a focus on infrastructure and transportation planning. After graduation, he worked for a boutique investment bank focused on financial advisory for universities and not-for-profits. After his stint in finance, he transitioned into the startup world, working in sales and account management for private jet charter company. After about a year, he realized he wanted to refocus his career on my original interest in transportation and infrastructure, and the best way to do so was to pursue further education. He returned to Cornell University to pursue a Masters in Public Administration with a focus on infrastructure finance and policy.

Peter's specific policy interests include PPP-enabling legislation, congestion pricing, dynamic road pricing and gas tax reform. He is specifically interested in how the PPP framework can be utilized as one of several tools to stimulate infrastructure investment growth in different regions of the U.S.

Aside from his professional interests, he enjoys traveling, University of Wisconsin football, all water sports, and French House music. Fun fact: he has traveled to 59 countries, with Pakistan as the most recent.



Elizabeth Zurek

Embry Riddle World Wide

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DEGREE

MS Aeronautics

BIOGRAPHY

After graduating from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's Daytona Beach Campus with her bachelor's in Aeronautical Science and her multi-commercial flight certificate, Elizabeth started to work for the largest non-government funded aviation safety organization, the Air Line Pilots Association. She works in the Engineering & Air Safety department and focuses on Safety Management Systems along with the safety programs that fall under it.

Elizabeth recently started to work towards her master's degree in Aeronautics through Embry-Riddle Worldwide and plans on specializing in safety systems and human factors.

In her free time she enjoys being outdoors, gardening, and traveling to new places.