

Award of Merit Scholars



Natalie Laconsay of Vallejo, CA, is a junior at California Maritime Academy, CSU. She is pursuing a degree in Business Administration (International Business and Logistics). She plans to pursue an MBA. Ms. Laconsay hopes to have a career in transportation and logistics with a focus on operations and supply management. Her interest in transportation stems from her fascination with the history of waterways that for thousands of years have provided the means for humans to migrate, which lead to the creation of different civilizations. After completing her college education, Ms. Laconsay plans to work with ports. She wants to contribute to the continuance of the importance of the U.S. in the global economy through efficient and effective ports.



Jasmine Chahal of Sacramento, CA, is a junior at California State University, Sacramento where she is pursuing a degree in Civil Engineering. After graduating, she wants to work as a civil engineer within a public transportation agency. Ms. Chahal is currently working at the California Energy Commission. She has also worked as a student assistant for Caltrans. This experience gave her exposure to the civil engineering work performed by the agency, which further influenced her to pursue a career in civil engineering.

The Northern California COMTO Chapter wishes to thank all of our Scholarship Award sponsors for their generosity towards the pursuit of higher education by minority students from Northern California.

*Please visit our web site at comtonorcal.org.
Email us at comto.norcal@gmail.com.*



2014 Scholarship Winner Biographies



COMTO Honorary Scholarships

Rosa Parks was a seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama, when, in 1955, she refused to give up her seat on a city bus to a white passenger.

Rosa's act sparked a citywide ethnic boycott of the bus system that resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to outlaw segregation on city buses.

Curtis Green was a bus driver who rose to become the first African-American to head a major U.S. transit system, holding the top job at San Francisco's Municipal Railway (Muni) from 1974 to 1982.

His leadership helped Muni grow its ridership and make the transition from a bus-oriented operation into a system centered on the Muni Metro.

Sharon Banks, former chief executive officer of AC Transit in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, ran the agency through most of the 1990s. She was nationally known for her personal integrity, for nurturing and mentoring young transportation professionals, and for bringing together people of diverse backgrounds in the pursuit of organizational excellence.





Rosa Parks Scholar



Vanessa Hernandez of Los Angeles, CA, is a junior at UC Berkeley. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Environmental Design and Urban Studies. Ms. Hernandez plans to study the accessibility of public transportation to low income communities. She is also interested in the expansion of bicycle routes within urban areas.

After graduating, Ms. Hernandez aspires to be a city planner. She is most interested in Transportation Oriented Developments. She wants to learn how they are planned, about the involvement of local governments, and the effect on local communities.

Ms. Hernandez is the first member of her family to attend college. She is working two jobs to pay her tuition and to support herself while maintaining a full academic schedule. The financial support provided by the scholarship will afford Ms. Hernandez more time to conduct research and to engage with professionals in her field of study.



Curtis Green Scholar



Morgan Wilson of Oakland, CA, is a sophomore at UC Davis where he is pursuing a degree in Civil Engineering. Mr. Wilson chose this area of study because he is interested in how transportation infrastructures, such as freeway interchanges and massive bridges, are constructed. He will apply his education to improving such infrastructures. His short term goals include learning the art of bridge design and developing strong leadership skills. In the future, Mr. Wilson aspires to create innovative designs that will improve the functionality and reliability of transportation networks. Ultimately, he wants to become a "trailblazer" in the public transportation industry.

Sharon Banks Scholar



Jovan Robinson of Berkeley, CA, is completing his senior year at UC Berkeley where he is pursuing a degree in Urban Studies and Film Studies. Mr. Robinson served our country as soldier in the US Marine Corps and earned an associate degree in Korean language before entering Cal. He is the eldest of three brothers and was raised by a single mother. He had to take on a leadership role as a child by having to help his mother raise his younger siblings. He continues to support his family while attending college full-time. Mr. Wilson aspires to apply his education to the creation of "environmentally friendly" access to cities and suburbs by maximizing the use of public transportation and minimizing auto dependency. He plans to use his education in Film Studies to create short films and documentaries on urban planning and transportation issues.