



MID-AMERICA  
TRANSPORTATION CENTER



UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Lincoln



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
EASTERN SHORE



LINCOLN  
UNIVERSITY  
MISSOURI



**2021**  
MARCH 26 - APRIL 9

# 2021 MATC Scholars Program

# CONTENTS

## WEEK 1..... 2

### Friday, March 26

2021 Scholars Program  
Welcome Reception  
Reception Wrap Up

### Saturday, March 27

Pre-Conference Assessment  
UNL Welcome and MATC  
Introduction  
Office of the President Welcome  
UNL Office of the Chancellor  
Welcome  
Overview of MATC Scholars  
Program

## WEEK 1..... 3

Session Topics  
UNL College of Engineering  
Welcome  
GEM Overview and  
Opportunities  
Session Topics  
Conversation with Former MATC  
Scholars From PVAMU & UMES  
Wrap Up

## WEEK 2..... 4

### Friday, April 2

Agenda Review  
Careers in Transportation  
Session Topics  
Graduate Admissions  
Examinations

NSF Graduate Research  
Fellowship and Internship  
Programs  
Dr. Elizabeth Spiller  
Session Exercise Debrief  
Wrap Up

## WEEK 2..... 5

### Saturday, April 3

UNL Department of Civil  
Engineering Welcome  
Session Topics  
Faculty and MATC Scholar  
Networking Session  
Session Topics  
Building Solidarity during  
Disaster Reconnaissance:  
Student Immersion and  
Field Studies  
Efficiency in Transportation  
Focus Group Dialogue and  
Assessment  
Wrap Up

## WEEK 3..... 6

### Friday, April 9

Agenda Review  
Session Exercise Debrief  
Career Expo  
Graduate Expo  
Post Conference Assessment  
Closing Remarks  
Virtual Conference Adjourn

## PROGRAM PRESENTERS ..... 7 - 19

Dr. Laurence Rilett, P.E.  
Dr. Judy A. Perkins, P.E.  
President Ted Carter  
Dr. Ronnie Green  
Dr. Bob Wilhelm  
Dr. Erick Jones, P.E., CLSSMBB  
Mr. Juhann C. Waller, P.E.  
Dr. Deo Chimba, P.E., PTOE  
Dr. Lance C. Pérez  
Dr. Robert Hampshire  
Dr. Marcus A. Huggans  
Mr. Devan Addison-Turner  
Ms. Tochi Chukwu  
Mr. Joshua Orebiyi  
Mr. Rasul Diop  
Dr. Ibibia Dabipi  
Dr. Edgar Blevins  
Ms. Coleen Read  
Mr. Paul C. Ajegba, P.E.  
Dr. Elizabeth Spiller  
Dr. Shannon Bartelt-Hunt  
Dr. Luis Vázquez  
Ms. Amy Maki  
Ms. Tamiko Burnell  
Dr. Terri R. Norton  
Dr. David Bouras  
Mr. Mike Malone  
Mr. Andy Damkroger  
Dr. Brian G. Easley  
Dr. Genda Chen, P.E., F.ASCE  
Dr. Paul Hanley

## MORE INFO ..... 20



# WEEK 1

All times are in Central Time

## THE WHY AND HOW OF GRADUATE SCHOOL

SATURDAY, MARCH 27 *Continued from page 2*

**10:30 - 11:30 AM SESSION TOPICS**

Why Graduate School? -  
**Mr. Waller, P.E.**

Graduate School Student  
Experiences - **Dr. Chimba, P.E.,  
PTOE**

**11:30 - 11:50 AM UNL COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
WELCOME**

**Dr. Lance C. Pérez** — Dean,  
College of Engineering,  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**11:50AM - 12:00 PM BREAK**

**12:00 - 1:00 PM LUNCH**

**Dr. Robert Hampshire** — Acting  
Assistant Secretary for Research  
and Technology, Office of the  
Assistant Secretary for Research  
and Technology, U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**1:05 - 2:05 PM GEM OVERVIEW AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**Dr. Marcus A. Huggans** — Senior  
Director, External Relations, The  
National GEM Consortium

**2:05 - 3:05 PM SESSION TOPICS**

Why Graduate School? -  
**Mr. Waller, P.E.**

Graduate School Student  
Experiences - **Dr. Chimba, P.E.,  
PTOE**

**3:05 - 3:10 PM BREAK**

**3:10 - 4:00 PM CONVERSATION WITH FORMER MATC  
SCHOLARS FROM PVAMU & UMES**

**Mr. Devan Addison-Turner** —  
Undergraduate Senior Student,  
Prairie View A&M University

**Ms. Tochi Chukwu** — Field Test  
Validation Engineer, Cummins Inc.

**Mr. Rasul Diop** — Graduate  
Research Assistant, Purdue  
University

**Mr. Joshua Orebiyi** — Graduate  
Research Assistant, Villanova  
University

**WRAP UP**



# WEEK 2

All times are in Central Time

## STRATEGIES FOR SUCCEEDING IN GRADUATE SCHOOL

FRIDAY, APRIL 2

9:00 - 9:10 AM **AGENDA REVIEW**

9:10 - 9:45 AM **CAREERS IN TRANSPORTATION**

**Dr. Larry Rilett, P.E.** — Director,  
Mid-America Transportation  
Center

9:45 - 10:45 AM **SESSION TOPICS**

Choosing a Graduate Program:  
Making a Short List - **Dr. Dabipi**  
Choosing Faculty Mentors and  
Finding “Mentoring Communities”  
for Academic Success - **Dr. Blevins**

10:45 - 11:45 AM **SESSION TOPICS**

Choosing a Graduate Program:  
Making a Short List - **Dr. Dabipi**  
Choosing Faculty Mentors and  
Finding “Mentoring Communities”  
for Academic Success - **Dr. Blevins**

11:45 AM - 12:00 PM **BREAK**

12:00 - 1:00 PM **LUNCH**

**Paul C. Ajegba, P.E.** — Director,  
Michigan Department of  
Transportation

1:05 - 2:05 PM **GRADUATE ADMISSIONS  
EXAMINATIONS**

**Ms. Coleen Read** — Outreach  
Specialist - Southwest Region,  
The Princeton Review

2:05 - 2:50 PM **NSF GRADUATE RESEARCH  
FELLOWSHIP AND INTERNSHIP  
PROGRAMS**

**Dr. Erick Jones, P.E., CLSSMBB,  
MSIED** — George and Elizabeth  
Pickett Endowed Professor,  
Associate Dean for Graduate  
Studies, University of Texas-  
Arlington

2:50 - 3:00 PM **BREAK**

3:00 - 3:15 PM **DR. ELIZABETH SPILLER**

Vice Chancellor for Academic  
Affairs, University of Nebraska-  
Lincoln

3:15 - 3:45 PM **SESSION EXERCISE DEBRIEF**

Why Graduate School? -  
**Mr. Waller, P.E.**  
Graduate School Student  
Experiences - **Dr. Chimba, P.E.,  
PTOE**

3:45 - 4:00 PM **WRAP UP**

# WEEK 2

All times are in Central Time

## STRATEGIES FOR SUCCEEDING IN GRADUATE SCHOOL

SATURDAY, APRIL 3

**9:00 - 9:15 AM** **UNL DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL ENGINEERING WELCOME**  
**Dr. Shannon Bartelt-Hunt** – Chair, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Nebraska- Lincoln

**9:15 - 10:15 AM** **SESSION TOPICS**  
Communication Skills - **Ms. Maki**  
Understanding Funding and Budgeting Finances - **Dr. Vázquez**

**10:15 - 10:25 AM** **BREAK**

**10:25 - 10:50 AM** **FACULTY AND MATC SCHOLAR NETWORKING SESSION**

**10:50 - 11:50 AM** **SESSION TOPICS**  
Communication Skills - **Ms. Maki**  
Understanding Funding and Budgeting Finances - **Dr. Vázquez**

**11:50 AM - 12:00 PM** **BREAK**

**12:00 - 1:00 PM** **LUNCH**  
**Ms. Tamiko Burnell** – Program and Project Delivery Team Leader, Office of Freight Management & Operations, Federal Highway Administration

**1:05 - 2:05 PM** **BUILDING SOLIDARITY DURING DISASTER RECONNAISSANCE: STUDENT IMMERSION AND FIELD STUDIES**  
**Dr. Terri R. Norton** – Professor and Associate Dean for Student Success & Strategic Initiatives, Bucknell University

**2:05 - 3:05 PM** **EFFICIENCY IN TRANSPORTATION**  
**Dr. David Bouras** – Professor, School of Business, Lincoln University

**3:05 - 3:10 PM** **BREAK**

**3:10 - 4:00 PM** **FOCUS GROUP DIALOGUE AND ASSESSMENT**  
Bureau of Sociological Research, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**WRAP UP**



# WEEK 3

All times are in Central Time

## INDUSTRY AND GRADUATE EXPO: RECRUITMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

FRIDAY, APRIL 9

**9:00 - 9:05 AM AGENDA REVIEW**

**9:05 - 9:35 AM SESSION EXERCISE DEBRIEF**

Choosing a Graduate Program:  
Making a Short List - **Dr. Dabipi**

Choosing Faculty Mentors and  
Finding “Mentoring Communities”  
for Academic Success - **Dr. Blevins**

**9:35 - 9:45 AM BREAK**

**9:45 - 10:30 AM SESSION EXERCISE DEBRIEF**

Communication Skills - **Ms. Maki**

Efficiency in Transportation -  
**Dr. Bouras**

Understanding Funding and  
Budgeting Finances - **Dr. Vázquez**

**10:30 - 11:00 AM CAREER EXPO**

**Mr. Mike Malone** — Transportation  
Department Manager, JEO  
Consulting Group Inc.

**Mr. Andy Damkroger** — Vice  
President of IT Strategy and  
Operations, Werner Enterprises

**Dr. Brian G. Easley** — Associate  
Director, Human Capital Planning  
and Solutions Division, Chief  
Learning, Diversity and Inclusion  
Officer, Office of the Secretary,  
U.S. Department of Transportation

**11:00 - 11:30 AM GRADUATE EXPO**

**Dr. Genda Chen P.E., F.ASCE,  
F.SEI, F.ISHMII** — Robert W.  
Abbett Distinguished Professor  
of Civil Engineering, Structural  
Engineering, Missouri University of  
Science and Technology

**Dr. Paul Hanley** — Associate  
Professor, Civil and Environmental  
Engineering, University of Iowa

**Dr. Larry Rilett, P.E.** — Director,  
Mid-America Transportation  
Center

**11:30 - 11:40 AM BREAK**

**11:40 AM-12:10 PM POST CONFERENCE ASSESSMENT**

Bureau of Sociological Research,  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**12:10 - 12:30 PM CLOSING REMARKS**

**Dr. Larry Rilett, P.E.** — Director,  
Mid-America Transportation  
Center

**Dr. Erick Jones, P.E., CLSSMBB,  
MSIED** — George and Elizabeth  
Pickett Endowed Professor,  
Associate Dean for Graduate  
Studies, University of Texas-  
Arlington

**Dr. Judy Perkins, P.E.** — Professor  
& Interim Department Head,  
TAMUS Regents Professor, Prairie  
View A&M University

**VIRTUAL CONFERENCE ADJOURN**

# PROGRAM PRESENTERS



**Dr. Laurence Rilett, P.E.**  
*Keith W. Klaasmeyer Chair in  
Engineering and Technology  
Distinguished Professor  
Director, Mid-America Transportation  
Center*

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Mid-America Transportation Center (MATC) and the Nebraska Transportation Center (NTC).

Under Rilett's directorship, MATC was designated as the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Region VII University Transportation Center in 2006, 2011, and 2016. To date, MATC has received over \$28 million in funding with an equal amount of matching funds. Rilett has led the development of important outreach activities including an after-school program for middle-school students, a week-long STEM summer academy for Native American high school students, and a scholars that provides mentorship to help undergraduate students from underrepresented groups navigate graduate school recruitment, admissions, and completion processes with success.

Rilett's research is in the field of transportation system analysis area; his specific research focus may be divided into two main areas: Intelligent Transportation Systems applications and large-scale transportation system modeling. Rilett has been a principal investigator or co-principal investigator on more than 40 research projects with total funding in excess of \$48 million.

Rilett has more than 250 publications, including 90 peer-reviewed articles, 90 conference proceedings papers, and many other published reports, editorials, and reviews. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) awarded Rilett the 2019 Arthur M. Wellington Prize for Best Transportation-Related Paper in an ASCE Journal and the 2021 Frank M. Masters Transportation Engineering Award for "contributions to innovative research on transportation systems and collaborative leadership to develop a diverse workforce in transportation engineering." He is currently the Managing Editor of the ASCE Journal of Transportation-Part A and was elected Vice-President of the Council of University Transportation Centers for 2020-2021.



**Dr. Judy A. Perkins, P.E.**  
*Professor & Interim Department Head  
Texas A&M University Regents Professor  
Prairie View A&M University*

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**Dr. Judy A. Perkins** is a Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU) and holds the title of Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) Regents Professor. Dr. Perkins is the former Department Head of PVAMU's Civil & Environmental Engineering Department and was the first African American and first female to serve in this administrative capacity.

Dr. Perkins' current research activities involve working on projects funded by an array of state and federal agencies. She has worked with several Department of Defense research laboratories and centers. Specifically, her research has focused on statewide intermodal transportation planning, asset management, emergency operations, transportation logistics, hurricane evacuation analysis, military logistics, engineering education, minority outreach, optimization of transportation infrastructure investments, and radio-frequency identification (RFID) technologies used by motor carriers and for locating underground utilities. Dr. Perkins has accumulated extensive experience in the development of survey design, data collection, state-level transportation planning, and the refinement of economic development methodologies used to evaluate transportation-related activities. Her extensive record of publication extends into both the national and international transportation and engineering education arenas.

Moreover, Dr. Perkins is the President of JPID Consulting LLC. Her company has designation status as a small business (SB), veteran-owned small business (VOSB), and woman-owned small business (WOSB) company. She is a retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel. During her 32+ years of military service, Dr. Perkins served as a petroleum officer, transportation officer, and logistician.

Lastly, Dr. Perkins holds a BS, MS, and PhD in Civil Engineering from Southern University, University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign), and Georgia Institute of Technology, respectively. She is also a licensed professional engineer in the state of Texas.





**Pres. Ted Carter**  
*President*  
*University of Nebraska*

**President Ted Carter** became the eighth president of the University of Nebraska on Jan. 1, 2020, following a national search by the Board of Regents.



As president, Carter leads a four-campus university system that enrolls nearly 52,000 students and employs

16,000 faculty and staff on campuses in Lincoln, Omaha and Kearney, plus academic divisions and research and extension centers across the state. He serves as chief spokesman and chief executive officer for the system, which operates on a \$2.8 billion annual budget and includes a flagship Big Ten institution, a world-renowned academic health sciences center, Division I athletics programs, and preeminent institutes focused on water and agriculture, national security and defense, infectious disease and early childhood education.

Carter brought with him a distinguished record in education, partnerships and military service, having come to Nebraska from the U.S. Naval Academy, his alma mater, where he served as superintendent. Under his leadership, the Naval Academy achieved a No. 1 national ranking and new records in student success and diversity. Carter previously was president of the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, R.I. A retired Vice Admiral with 38 years of service, Carter has logged more than 6,300 flying hours and holds the American record for carrier-arrested landings.

Carter earned his bachelor's degree in physics and oceanography from the U.S. Naval Academy, where he played hockey and served as team captain. He is a graduate of the Navy Fighter Weapons School (Top Gun) and holds educational credentials from the Navy Nuclear Power School, the U.S. Air Force Air War College, the Naval War College and the Armed Forces Staff College. Carter's military career includes service for the Carrier Strike Group Twelve, in which he commanded 20 ships, two nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, and two carrier wings that were deployed to Afghanistan and the Arabian Gulf.

The son of an English teacher, Carter was raised in the rural, one-high school town of Burrillville, R.I. He and his wife, Lynda, live in Lincoln and have two adult children, Brittany and Christopher.



**Dr. Ronnie Green**  
*Chancellor*  
*University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

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 Email: [chancellorgreen@unl.edu](mailto:chancellorgreen@unl.edu)

**Dr. Ronnie D. Green** became the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's 20th chancellor on May 8, 2016.



Green previously served as the UNL Harlan Vice Chancellor of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources and

NU system Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources, and as UNL's interim Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Green received bachelor's and master's degrees in animal science from Virginia Tech and Colorado State University, respectively. His doctoral program was completed jointly at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the USDA-ARS U.S. Meat Animal Research Center in animal breeding and genetics.

Green has served on the animal science faculties of Texas Tech University and Colorado State University, and as the national program leader for animal production research for the USDA's Agricultural Research Service and executive secretary of the White House's interagency working group on animal genomics within the National Science and Technology Council. Prior to returning to NU, Green served as a global executive for Pfizer Animal Health's animal genomics business.

Green has published 130 refereed publications and abstracts, nine book chapters and 56 invited symposia papers; and has delivered invited presentations in 43 U.S. states and 21 countries around the world. He is a past-president of both the American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) and the National Block and Bridle Club and has served in a number of leadership positions for the U.S. Beef Improvement Federation, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Pork Board, the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, and Alpha Gamma Rho national fraternity. He currently is a member of a number of boards including the Big Ten Conference, Neogen Corporation, and Supporters of Agricultural Research, and was recently named to the Presidential Forum of the NCAA representing the Big Ten Conference. He was named a fellow of ASAS in 2014 and a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2015, and was honored with the American Society of Animal Science's Morrison Award, the highest international academic recognition for an animal scientist, in 2017.

Ronnie and his wife Jane, a double UNL alumna, are the proud parents of four children – Justin, Nate, Kelli and Regan Green – all UNL graduates – and one granddaughter, Charlotte.

# PROGRAM PRESENTERS



**Dr. Bob Wilhelm**  
*Vice Chancellor for Research and  
Economic Development*  
*University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

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**Dr. Robert G. (Bob) Wilhelm** is the Vice Chancellor for research and economic development at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He works at advancing the quality, diversity, and growth of

research at UNL by establishing and enabling research directions, cultivating partnerships, strengthening national and international relationships, and articulating a vision for partnership-based research and economic development.

Dr. Wilhelm has served in university executive roles since 2005 and as a faculty member since 1993. At UNL he is the Kate Foster Professor of Mechanical and Materials Engineering. Previously he was a professor and Vice Chancellor at the University of North Carolina Charlotte.

A recognized expert in precision engineering and advanced manufacturing, he began his career at Cincinnati Milacron, the Rockwell Science Center and his own advanced manufacturing company. He holds three U.S. patents.

He is a Fellow of the International Academy for Production Engineering and has served on many boards, including the North Carolina Board of Science, Technology, and Innovation; the North Carolina Biotechnology Center; Ventureprise; Nebraska Innovation Campus; the National Strategic Research Institute; and NUtech Ventures.

He holds a BSIE from Wichita State University, an MSIE from Purdue University, and a doctorate in mechanical engineering from the University of Illinois. As a Rotary Foundation Fellow in the U.K., he studied the history of science and technology at the University of Leicester and the Ironbridge Gorge Museum.



**Dr. Erick Jones, P.E.,  
CLSSMBB, MSIED**  
*George and Elizabeth Pickett Endowed  
Professor*  
*Associate Dean for Graduate Studies*  
*University of Texas-Arlington*

Email: ecjones@uta.edu



**Dr. Erick C. Jones** is Professor and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the College of Engineering at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). Jones joined UTA in 2010 after eight years at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, where he was Associate Professor. He is the George and Elizabeth Pickett Endowed Professor of Industrial, Manufacturing and Systems Engineering and served as the Deputy Director of the UT Arlington Homeland Security focused University Center SAVANT and Director of the RFID & Auto-ID RAID labs at UTA.

Until recently, Jones has served as a rotating program director at the National Science Foundation (NSF). His programs included the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) the Graduate Research Internship Program, and the Workforce Strand of the Education Core Research Program in the Education and Human Resources Directorate. His last NSF detail was as a Program Director for the Engineering Research Centers or ERCs, in the Engineering Directorate.

Dr. Jones graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in Industrial Engineering and attained a Masters and PhD in Industrial Engineering from the University of Houston. Dr. Jones has held positions in industry which include Industrial Engineering Specialist, Director of Engineering, Consultant and Project Manager, and Executive Manager of a “Big 5” Accounting firm.

Dr. Jones’ unique background positioned him to develop one of the first and largest academic RFID labs in the country in 2003. Recently, Dr. Jones’ interdisciplinary research with chemists and physicists, neuroscientists and surgeons, and bio- and biomedical engineers is leading to translational and commercial research for important national programs including the BRAIN initiative, Homeland Security and Safety, and Smart Planet initiatives. His research partnerships include a wide range of organizations.

Academically, Dr. Jones has received over \$9 Million dollars in funding for academic research projects. Dr. Jones’ research includes the areas of automated data capture using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technologies, Quality Control at the Six Sigma level, and Manufacturing Technologies that support the development of “Auto Sensing” technologies. He has published over 165 manuscripts including 3 textbooks. As part of his research efforts, he has advised over 34 Masters Student and 16 Ph.D. students along with 32 undergraduate research students on sponsored research projects.



**Mr. Juhann C. Waller, P.E.**

*Instructor  
North Carolina Agricultural and  
Technical State University*

*CEO/Principal  
JC Waller & Associates, PC*

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Email: jwaller@jcwaller.com



**Mr. Juhann Waller** is a registered Professional Engineer in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia with 15 years of experience in the private consulting practice of civil engineering. Mr. Waller

has experience in the design, management and construction administration of civil engineering projects in the areas of site development, water and sewer utilities, stormwater design/management and roadway improvements for higher education, K-12, municipal, public safety, residential and commercial development projects ranging from \$30 thousand to \$100 million dollars (total construction value).

Mr. Waller is the Founder of JC Waller & Associates, PC. As Principal, he provides senior leadership to the company's administrative matters and engineering project management. He teams with the Director of Land Surveying to establish the firm's approach to growth and expansion of services and how to best support that growth through defining staffing types and needs, as well as strategic investment efforts and company pursuits. Mr. Waller serves to develop the firm's business by leading the day-to-day operation of the company in accordance with the company's mission and values. He provides an experienced approach to managing the company by having lead other organizations as well as owning other profitable businesses.

Mr. Waller is also an Adjunct faculty member in the Civil Engineering Department at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University where he teaches the civil engineering capstone courses and the AutoCAD Civil 3D classes.



**Dr. Deo Chimba, P.E.,  
PTOE**

*Associate Professor  
Civil and Architectural Engineering  
Tennessee State University*

Phone: (615) 963-5430  
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**Dr. Deo Chimba** is an Associate Professor of Civil Engineering at the Tennessee State University (TSU). He received his undergraduate degree in Civil Engineering from University of Dar es Salaam in 2002, Master's of Science in Civil Engineering from Florida State University in 2004 and Ph.D. in Transportation Engineering from University of Miami in 2008. Dr. Chimba has approximately seventeen years of combined teaching, research and industrial experience in transportation engineering and planning fields.

Prior to joining Tennessee State University, Dr. Chimba worked for four years as a Transportation Engineer with Stanley Consultants, Inc. located in West Palm Beach, Florida. His research interest include transportation engineering and planning including highway safety, traffic impact analysis and mitigation, traffic simulation, public /transit transportation, bicycle and pedestrian studies and application of statistics in transportation and civil engineering. He has published quality papers in peer-review Journals or conference proceeding using advanced statistical modeling techniques for highway safety, traffic analysis, transportation planning and traffic flow studies.

# PROGRAM PRESENTERS



**Dr. Lance C. Pérez**  
*Omar H. Heins Professor of Electrical  
and Computer Engineering  
Dean, College of Engineering  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

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**Dr. Lance C. Pérez** was named dean of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Engineering in May 2018, following two years as interim dean. An experienced academic and campus leader, Pérez previously was associate vice chancellor for academic affairs and dean of graduate studies at the university. He has been a faculty member in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering since 1996 and is currently the Heins Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

In his previous administrative positions, Pérez was responsible for faculty and leadership development, promotion and tenure, instruction technology and classroom facilities' improvements, and graduate education. He led the implementation of \$30 million in improvements to the academic facilities and played a pivotal role in the university's entrance into the Big Ten Committee on Institutional Cooperation.

As a faculty member, he has won numerous teaching awards and has been principal investigator or co-principal investigator on more than \$15 million in federally funded research. His research interests include signal and information processing, engineering education, and faculty leadership development. From 2008-10, Pérez was a program director in the Division of Undergraduate Education at the National Science Foundation.

He has a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Virginia, and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Notre Dame.



**Dr. Robert Hampshire**  
*Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for  
Research and Technology Policy  
U.S. Department of Transportation*



**Dr. Robert Hampshire** serves as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology Policy. Hampshire was previously an associate professor at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan. He was also a research associate professor in both the U-M Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) and Michigan Institute for Data Science (MIDAS), and an affiliated faculty member in the Department of Industrial and Operations Engineering (IOE).

His unique blend of engineering systems research with public policy has made him a leader in not only transportation research, but also on the disparate impact of policy decisions in transportation systems. This has led to important strides in our understanding of transportation equity. His research applies operations research, data science, and systems approaches to analyze novel transportation systems such as smart parking, connected vehicles, autonomous vehicles, ride-hailing, bike sharing, car sharing, as well as, pedestrian and bicyclist safety. His research focuses on environmental impacts, equity, and access to opportunities. His work has been cited widely, and covered by major press outlets. He has worked extensively with both public and private sector partners worldwide. He has also been a faculty member at Carnegie Mellon University and a visiting professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Hampshire received a PhD in operations research and financial engineering from Princeton University.





**Dr. Marcus A. Huggans**  
*Executive Director of Client Relations*  
*The National GEM Consortium*

Email: mhuggans@gemfellowship.org>

**Dr. Marcus A. Huggans** is a native of St. Louis, Missouri and was educated in the University City and Lutheran Parochial school systems. Dr. Huggans completed his engineering studies at the University of Missouri-Rolla now known as the Missouri University of Science and Technology. He



received a B.S.E.E. and M.S. & Ph.D. Engineering Management. Dr. Huggans is an alumnus of the GEM Fellowship Program.

Dr. Huggans has extensive experience in the STEM field with over twenty-five years of working in the industry, academia, and non-profits. He has worked for 3M Company, AT&T Bell Laboratories, FBI, and Texas Instruments Inc., Missouri S&T, and the National GEM Consortium. At GEM, Dr. Huggans recruits and conducts graduate programming to encourage under-represented minority students to pursue their graduate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and applied mathematics (STEM) fields as Senior Director of External Relations. Dr. Huggans has been the Finance Chair for IEEE-ITSC, and appointed to the IEEE-HKN Editorial Committee and Board of Governors.

Finally, Dr. Huggans has been an invited speaker to many diversity conferences, National Science Foundation, and multiple universities as well as corporations/national laboratories.



**Mr. Devan Addison-Turner**  
*Undergraduate Senior Student*  
*Prairie View A&M University*

Email: devancantrell44@yahoo.com



**Mr. Devan C. Addison-Turner** is an African-American male, first-generation, undergraduate Texan student at Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU), graduating in May 2021 (Bachelor of Science degree in Civil & Environmental Engineering). He plans to pursue a Ph.D. at Stanford University in Civil & Environmental Engineering, focusing on clean energy

solutions. As an undergraduate, he served in various leadership positions within the National Society of Black Engineers, The National Society of Collegiate Scholars, and is a member of Tau Beta Pi and The American Society of Civil Engineers for PVAMU's Chapters. As a mentor and recruiter for STEM programs (pre-K through college), he sought to inspire and share information regarding professional and academic opportunities. This included facilitating professional workshops, managing organizations, hosting volunteering for non-profit events, and much more. Mr. Addison-Turner is a recipient of The National GEM Consortium Full Fellowship. In 2017, he was selected as a Mid-America Transportation Center (MATC) Scholar.



**Ms. Tochi Chukwu**  
*Field Test Validation Engineer*  
*Cummins Inc.*

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**Ms. Tochi Chukwu** was born and raised in Cross River, Nigeria. She moved to the United States to pursue higher education and graduated from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) in December 2018 with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. During her time at UMES Ms. Chukwu was involved with various organizations—American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME),

National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), Society of Women Engineers (SWE) and Advancing Minorities in Engineering (AMIE). She was a Mid-American Transportation Center (MATC) scholar in 2015. Ms. Chukwu is currently a Field Test Engineer at Cummins Inc. where she supports On-Highway customer vehicles. In her free time, Ms. Chukwu works out, plays volleyball and travels. She is also a self-taught artist and spends most of her weekend learning new drawing techniques to develop her skills.

# PROGRAM PRESENTERS



**Mr. Joshua Orebiyi**  
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*Villanova University*

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**Mr. Joshua Orebiyi** is currently a graduate research assistant in the College of Engineering at Villanova University. He received his Bachelor of Science in General Engineering with a specialization in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) in December 2018. While in his undergraduate career at UMES, Mr. Orebiyi participated in the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) research program, Summer 2016, which led to multiple publications of his research on photovoltaics. Continuing his undergraduate career Mr. Orebiyi interned as a systems engineer and an operations engineer, respectively, with Northrop Grumman before pursuing his second degree. Mr. Orebiyi is currently a student at the Villanova University pursuing a Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering. He is partnered with the Air Force to conduct research, focused in material science, on the material properties of selected particulate composite. A former MATC scholar, Mr. Orebiyi has presented his undergraduate research at over 10 conferences including a conference in Peru.



**Mr. Rasul Diop**  
*Graduate Research Assistant*  
*Purdue University*

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**Mr. Rasul Diop** was born and raised in Dallas, Texas. He is pursuing his Ph.D after having completed his M.S. in Environmental and Ecological Engineering (EEE) at Purdue University in 2020. Mr. Diop is a researcher on various projects including, low-cost water treatment methods in developing countries, use of agricultural wastes to remove contaminants from natural waters, and analysis of environmental effects of using industrial wastes as aggregates in construction. Outside of academics, Mr. Diop is Chair of the Diversity Ad-Hoc committee, is Vice-Diversity Chair, and EEE senator in the Purdue Graduate Student Government. He is also a Chair for the Black Graduate Student Organization at Purdue. Mr. Diop received his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Prairie View A&M University in 2018. During his time at Prairie View he was actively involved in the American Society of Civil Engineers, National Society of Black Engineers, Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society, Roy G. Perry College of Engineering, and Outreach through Faith and Fellowship Ministry. He was a Mid-American Transportation Center (MATC) scholar in 2017.

Mr. Diop is also dedicated to his childhood community, doing outreach events at the middle and high schools he attended. In 2020, he started a nonprofit with a group of friends to help support current and future entrepreneurs that attend Prairie View A&M University. His hobbies include playing basketball, soccer, golf, video games, guitar, and working on his family farm in Central Texas.





**Dr. Ibibia Dabipi**  
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**Dr. Ibibia K. Dabipi's** research interests include Computer Security and Network Management, Parallel Computing and Algorithms Development, Performance Evaluation of Computer Networks,

Optimization of Transportation Networks and Economic Analysis of Transportation Facilities.

Dr. I. K. Dabipi holds the following degrees Ph.D., in Electrical Engineering, 1987, and a Master of Science, in Electrical Engineering, 1981, from Louisiana State University, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He obtained a Bachelor of Science, in Electrical Engineering, and Bachelor of Science in Physics/Mathematics, 1979 from Texas A&I University, in Kingsville, Texas. Dr. Dabipi was the Chairman, Department of Engineering and Aviation Sciences University of Maryland Eastern Shore from 2001 - 2006. Prior to coming to University of Maryland Eastern Shore, he was the Interim Chairman, and Chairman, Electrical Engineering Department, Southern University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana from 1997 - 2001. His experiences include working at Bell Communications Research and AT&T Bell Labs as member of technical staff during the summers of 1984 through 1987.

His professional activities include: Reviewer, International Association of Journals and Conference (IAJC)-International Journal of Modern Engineering (IJME); Area Editor, International Journal of Communication Networks and Information Security (IJCNIS); and Member of Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) AFRICAN DIASPORA TASK FORCE. He has authored and co-authored several papers in referred journals and conference publications. He is currently a Senior Member of the IEEE society.



**Dr. Edgar Blevins**  
*Professor of Mechanical Engineering*  
*Southern University*

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**Dr. Edgar Blevins** has a Bachelors and Masters degree from Southern University and Georgia Tech respectively, both in mechanical engineering. Dr. Blevins also has a Ph.D. degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering with a concentration in Engineering Management from the

University of Alabama in Huntsville. Dr. Blevins is a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

His primary interest is in engineering design and engineering education. He currently teaches introduction to engineering, technical writing, computer aid drafting & design, and engineering management courses in the mechanical engineering department. Dr. Blevins is also the Outreach Coordinator for the College of Sciences and Engineering. These duties includes assisting the college with recruitment of high school students and providing engineering support for the college's summer STEM programs. He also serves as the advisor for the Southern University Formula SAE design team.



**Ms. Coleen Read**  
*Outreach Specialist - Southwest Region*  
*The Princeton Review*

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**Ms. Coleen Read** was born and raised in Reno, Nevada, but has also spent time in Colorado and Florida. Coleen graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno with her degree in Education and a minor in Business. She is currently serving as a Regional Outreach Specialist with the Princeton Review. When she is not

working, Coleen enjoys watching Disney movies and spending time with her family.

In her role with the Princeton Review she helps students across the Southwest Region with the test preparation and admissions process. Throughout her four years with the Princeton Review, she has helped students get into top level colleges and graduate level programs across the country. Coleen has a passion for helping others, which is what led her to the position she is in today. She is dedicated to helping students reach their educational and career goals. Coleen genuinely wants to help you achieve your goal of attending graduate school and looks forward to interacting with you.

# PROGRAM PRESENTERS



**Mr. Paul C. Ajegba, P.E.**  
*Director*  
*Michigan Department of Transportation*

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**Mr. Paul C. Ajegba** has over 30 years of experience with the Michigan Department of Transportation, and was after 28 years with the department, he was appointed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer as Director on Jan. 1, 2019. He previously served



MDOT for three months as Metro Region Engineer, and before that as University Region Engineer. During his seven years in the University Region, Ajegba oversaw his team's involvement in the planning, design and construction of several major projects, including the US-23 Flex Route - a project nominated for the America's Transportation Award, landing among the top 12 national finalists. Other notable projects include the I-94 rehabilitation project in Ann Arbor/Jackson, the I-96/US-23 interchange, and the I-75 freeway project.

Ajegba holds a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering from Prairie View A&M University and a Master's Degree in construction engineering from the University of Michigan. He is a licensed professional engineer in the State of Michigan.

Paul is a member of COMTO (Conference of Minority Transportation Officials), and serves on the following boards: AASHTO, ITS America, M-City, University of Michigan College of Engineering, the Engineering Society of Detroit, and the Mackinac Bridge Authority.



**Dr. Elizabeth Spiller**  
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*University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

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**Dr. Elizabeth Spiller** has served as executive vice chancellor for academic affairs with a faculty appointment as a professor of English since March 2020.



Dr. Spiller came to Nebraska from the University of California, Davis, where she served as dean of the College of Letters and Science. At UC Davis, Dr. Spiller led the integration of three historic academic divisions into a single college. She also coordinated a push to eliminate the college's existing deficit and directed expanded resources to advance academic programs and support faculty excellence. Dr. Spiller also served as dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences at Virginia Tech. Under her guidance, an expansion of academic offerings led to a 60% increase in undergraduate applications and a more than 40% increase in incoming first-year students. She led initiatives related to faculty excellence, curricular innovation, and diversity and inclusion. Dr. Spiller holds a doctorate and Master of Arts in English and American language and literature from Harvard University; and a Bachelor of Arts in English literature from Amherst College.



**Dr. Shannon Bartelt-Hunt**  
*Department Chair*  
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**Dr. Shannon Bartelt-Hunt** joined the faculty at UNL in January 2006. She received her Ph.D. in Civil Engineering from the University of Virginia in August 2004 and completed her post-doctoral training at North Carolina State University under the direction of Dr. Morton Barlaz. Dr. Bartelt-Hunt's research interests are focused on physicochemical fate of contaminants including pharmaceuticals, hormones and prions in soil and water systems and contaminant fate and transport in landfills.





**Dr. Luis Vázquez**  
*Regents Professor*  
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**Dr. Luis A. Vázquez** is Associate Vice President for Research at New Mexico State University. A native Chicagoan, Dr. Vázquez earned a B.A. degree from Illinois State University and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Counseling Psychology from the University of Iowa. During his tenure

at New Mexico State University, he has served as the Associate Vice President for Research since 2011 and a Regents Professor. He has also served as the Associate Dean of the Graduate School and Department Head for Counseling and Educational Psychology, as well as on several leadership positions at New Mexico State University.

Before coming to New Mexico in 1995, Dr. Vázquez was a senior staff psychologist for the University Counseling Center and Assistant Professor in Rehabilitation Psychology and Substance Abuse at the University of Iowa. Dr. Vázquez has also been a visiting professor at the Universidad Autonoma de Mexico in Mexico City, Mexico.

A researcher in his own right, Dr. Vázquez was recently awarded a National Science Foundation grant to work with underrepresented engineering students in enhancing academic success. He is also a panel reviewer for the National Science Foundation. Dr. Vázquez's greatest interest is the "empowering" focus of research on underrepresented student populations in education. He has published in the areas of acculturation, ethnic identity and educational development, along with developing multicultural training videos used across the country in counseling and psychology programs. Dr. Vázquez has presented at numerous national conferences and has been an invited speaker at national conventions to address the issues of academic success in underrepresented students of color. He also facilitated the development of the prescriptive privileges program for psychologists, which led to New Mexico being the first state to pass the law to allow psychologists to prescribe. Dr. Vázquez was also appointed by Governor Richardson to serve on the Joint Committee on Prescription Privileges for Psychologists, Rules and Regulations to develop the standards of competency collaborations with the medical field.

Dr. Vázquez is a member of the American Psychological Association and has served on the Council of Representatives, the Commission on Accreditation, along with being the past president of The Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race, as well as past-chair of the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest for the American Psychological Association. Dr. Vázquez has received several awards such as a Presidential Citation from the American Psychological Association for visionary leadership in Psychology, American Psychological Association-Division 45 Distinguished Career Contribution to Service and was a USDA Faculty Fellow, Washington, D.C. He has also received several Excellence in Teaching Awards. In addition, he has been a consultant to higher education, agencies, and Fortune 500 Companies in their diversity development and policies.



**Ms. Amy Maki**  
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**Ms. Amy O. Maki** is the Founder and President of A. O. Maki & Associates, L.L.C., a consulting company that focuses on developing human capital. Ms. Maki is a requested speaker, writer, consultant, and personal coach with over 40 years of experience. She was the Director of Admissions, Student Services, and Community Relations at the University of Washington Bothell with responsibility for developing and implementing policies



and procedures that set the tone of services provided to students, staff, and faculty.

At the University of Washington Seattle, as Assistant to the Dean (College of Engineering), she focused on issues of student success and expanded the recruitment and retention of a diverse student population and taught a multicultural education course (College of Education). At San Jose University (MentorNet) she served as a Program Manager and Minority-serving Institutions Specialist

She authored; "The Journey from Graduate School to the Professorate," "Everyone Needs One: Everyone Should Be One, A Mentor," "Faculty Role in Undergraduate Student Persistence to Graduation"; coauthor Networking: The Art of Meeting and Greeting people, and Mentoring; Participants' Guide (NASA's MUST Mentorship Program).

Education: B.A., University of Washington Seattle; M.Ed., University of Washington Bothell; Eastside Leadership Certificate; and Leadership Institute Certificate, Harvard Consortium Program on Negotiation.

# PROGRAM PRESENTERS



**Ms. Tamiko Burnell**  
*Program and Project Delivery  
Team Leader*  
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and Operations*  
*Federal Highway Administration*  
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**Ms. Tamiko Burnell** serves as Freight Program Delivery Team Leader in the Office of Operations, Office of Freight Management and Operations, at the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Ms. Burnell leads a team responsible for overseeing National Highway Freight Program (NHFP), State Freight Plans, Freight Advisor Committees, Better Utilizing Investments for Leveraging Development - Transportation Investments for Generating Economic Recovery (BUILD-TIGER) grant program, Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program, and research activities related to urban freight mobility.

Ms. Burnell has worked at FHWA for over 20 years. Prior to her current position, she was the program manager for the NHFP, Freight Professional Capacity Building Program, and lead for research activities related to urban freight mobility within the Office of Freight Management and Operations. Tamiko is a civil engineer and logistics specialist with 25+ years federal service. Her areas of expertise include transportation engineering, planning, safety, freight, and technology transfer. Prior to working at FHWA, Tamiko worked for the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), where she focused on infrastructure design, local programs, high-speed rail, and traffic and safety.



**Dr. Terri R. Norton**  
*Associate Dean for Students and  
Strategic Initiatives*  
*Professor of Civil & Environmental  
Engineering*  
*Bucknell University*  
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**Dr. Terri Norton** is the Associate Dean for Students and Strategic Initiatives and a Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Bucknell University. She is also the Executive Director of the Engineering Success Alliance. Dean Norton's technical expertise is in the area of structural dynamics and structural vulnerability. Her research interests involve evaluating the effects of hazards on civil structures, debris management, and disaster reconstruction. Previously, she enjoyed a distinguished 11-year tenure at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). She was a Fulbright Research Scholar in Japan for her research on debris management and reconstruction following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (GEJET). Norton has served as the PI on grants funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), the US Geological Survey (USGS), the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR), and the Department of Energy (DOE). She is an elected member of the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute's (EERI) Board of Directors and is an invited member of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine Resilient America Roundtable.



**Dr. David Bouras**  
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**Dr. David Bouras** is a Professor of Economics at Lincoln University. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. His research interests include applied mathematical programming, business forecasting, efficiency analysis, applied econometrics, and New Empirical Industrial Organization. Dr. Bouras has taught many classes both at the undergraduate and graduate level. Currently, he teaches quantitative and qualitative research methods, business statistics, managerial economics, microeconomics, and macroeconomics. Besides teaching, Dr. Bouras published numerous articles in peer reviewed journals and served as a reviewer for different referred journals. In addition, Dr. Bouras collaborated with other universities on various grant proposals.



**Mr. Mike Malone**  
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*JEO Consulting Group Inc.*

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**Mr. Mike Malone** manages the Transportation Practice for JEO Consulting Group. He previously held leadership positions with Iteris, a national traffic management consulting firm, and Olsson, a national engineering design firm, and served as City Traffic Engineer for Olathe, Kansas. Mike is a registered professional

engineer and professional traffic operations engineer. With over 30 years of experience in traffic engineering operations and design, transportation planning, signal systems, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), roadway design, safety analyses, training, and research, Mike brings broad technical knowledge to each project he leads. Mike earned his bachelor's degree in civil engineering and master's degree in civil engineering (transportation focus) from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Prior to relocating home to Nebraska in 1994, Mike worked for consulting firms in Albuquerque, New Mexico and San Francisco, California. Mike is a fellow of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), an active member of ITS Heartland, and has published technical papers and presented to numerous professional organizations. Mike and his wife Elynn have three children, Michaela, Kaitlyn, and Trevor, and two grandchildren.



**Mr. Andy Damkroger**  
*VP of IT Strategy and Operations*  
*Werner Enterprises*

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**Mr. Andy Damkroger** is vice president of IT Strategy and Operations for Werner Enterprises. Damkroger began his Werner career in 2003 and has held various positions in Operations, Intermodal, Logistics, Business Development and Technology.

Damkroger is from Omaha, Nebraska, and graduated from the University of Nebraska at Omaha with a bachelor's and master's degree in Business Administration.



**Dr. Brian G. Easley**  
*Associate Director*  
*Human Capital Planning*  
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*Chief Learning*  
*Diversity and Inclusion Officer*  
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**Dr. Brian Easley** has approximately 30 years of professional/managerial experience in the areas of human resource

development, career development, and organization development. He is currently an Associate Director/Chief Learning Officer/Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer for the Department of Transportation. There he manages agency-wide functions such as learning and development, competency management, diversity and inclusion, workforce planning, corporate recruitment and workforce analysis.

Prior to joining Transportation he served in a variety of capacities with the Department Treasury's Bureau of Fiscal Service (BFS). During his 11 years with BFS he was an Organizational Development Specialist, Training Team Lead, Training Supervisor, and a Branch Manager/Training Officer. He was responsible for the daily operations of the Training Branch which included their learning management system, service-wide training, and a variety of leadership development programs for approximately 3,000 employees. Prior to joining Treasury, Dr. Easley served as a Program Director for Vantage Human Resource Services where he managed multiple projects for federal organizations. Before joining Vantage, Dr. Easley served as a Program Director at the University of Maryland's Career Center and was an Educational Counselor with the Educational Opportunity Center in Washington, DC.

He holds a Ph.D. in Human Development, with a Concentration in Adult Learning and Human Resource Development from Virginia Tech, a M.Ed. in Student Development in Higher Education (Guidance and Counseling) from Howard University, a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Massachusetts at Boston, and an A.A., Medical Assistant from the Community College of the Air Force.

Dr. Easley was born and raised in Harlem, NYC and after his time in the U.S. Air Force lived in Boston, MA. He now resides in Prince George's county with his family. He is passionate about saxophone jazz, mentoring, and community service. He values faith, family, and friends.

# PROGRAM PRESENTERS



**Dr. Genda Chen, P.E.,  
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*Robert W. Abbett Distinguished  
Professor of Civil Engineering  
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**Dr. Genda Chen** received his Ph.D. degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1992 and joined Missouri University of Science and Technology (S&T) in 1996 after over three years of bridge

design, inspection, and construction practices with Steinman Consulting Engineers in New York City. Since 1996,

Dr. Chen has authored or co-authored over 400 technical publications in structural health monitoring (SHM), structural control, structural and robotic dynamics, computational and experimental mechanics, life-cycle assessment and deterioration mitigation of infrastructure, multi-hazards assessment and mitigation, transportation infrastructure preservation and resiliency including over 180 journal papers, 5 book chapters, and 27 keynote and invited presentations at international conferences. He chaired the 9th International Conference on Structural Health Monitoring of Intelligent Infrastructure (SHMII-9), St. Louis, Missouri, August 4-7, 2019.

He received the 2019 SHM Person of the Year award, the 1998 National Science Foundation CAREER Award, the 2004 Academy of Civil Engineers Faculty Achievement Award, and the 2009, 2011, and 2013 Missouri S&T Faculty Research Awards. In 2016, he was nominated and inducted into the Academy of Civil Engineers at Missouri S&T and became an honorary member of Chi Epsilon. He is a Fellow of American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), Structural Engineering Institute (SEI), and the International Society for Structural Health Monitoring of Intelligent Infrastructure (ISHMII). He is a Section Editor of the Intelligent Sensors, Associate Editor of the Journal of Civil Structural Health Monitoring, Associate Editor of Advances in Bridge Engineering, Editorial Board Member of Advances in Structural Engineering, and Vice President of the U.S. Panel on Structural Control and Monitoring.



**Dr. Paul Hanley**  
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**Dr. Paul Hanley** is an Associate Professor of Transportation in Civil and Environmental Engineering as well as in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Iowa. His principal research

interests are transportation engineering, planning and economic policy analysis. In general, his work focuses on assessing the impacts of policy changes on transportation behavior and on infrastructure provision as a means of enhancing safety, ensuring economic welfare, and promoting sustainable urban patterns. He serves as a Mid-America Transportation Center Associate Director for the University of Iowa.

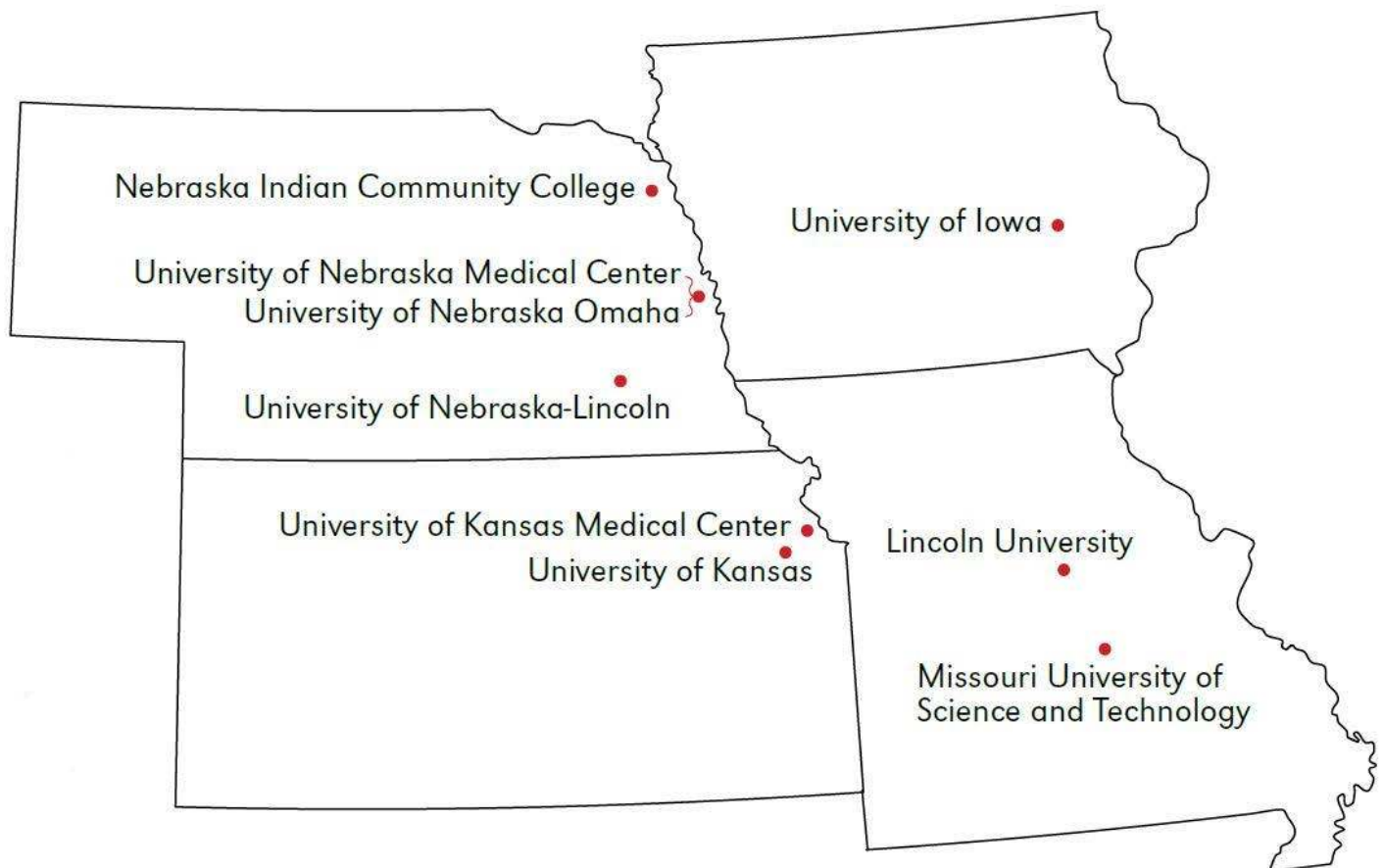
# MORE INFO



## MID-AMERICA TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Since 2006 the Mid-America Transportation Center has been designated as the United States Department of Transportation Region 7 University Transportation Center. Region 7 is composed of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. MATC is a consortium of nine universities within the region: the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Nebraska Medical Center, the University of Nebraska Omaha, the Missouri University of Science and Technology, the University of Iowa, the University of Kansas, the University of Kansas Medical Center, the Nebraska Indian Community College, and Lincoln University. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln serves as the lead institution of the consortium and MATC has its headquarters on the UNL campus.

MATC's research priority area is Promoting Safety with an emphasis on reducing and mitigating the negative effects associated with extreme weather effects and multi-modal hazardous goods movements. MATC strives to engage student interest and involve underrepresented groups in the STEM field to create a more diverse future in transportation. This goal led to the development of MATC's educational programs including the Roads, Rails, and Race Cars After-School Program, the Scholars Program, and the Intern Program.



# 2021 MATC **SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

<https://matc.unl.edu/education/scholars-program-home.php>

The Mid-America Transportation Center and the Nebraska Transportation Center greatly appreciate and acknowledge the generous support of:



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