



### **Margaret-Avis Akofio-Sowah**

*A global organizational change management lead for WSP in Washington, DC, Margaret-Avis Akofio-Sowah is a panel member of the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Project 08-151, "Risk Management at State DOTs: Building Momentum and Sustaining the Practice," as well as a member of TRB's*

*International Coordinating Council, the Standing Committee on Transportation Asset Management, and the Standing Committee on Strategic Management.*

#### **What is your role as a panel member of NCHRP Project 08-151?**

As an NCHRP project panel member, I have joined other select industry professionals and experts from diverse backgrounds to provide input on the project problem statement and objectives, select a capable team to conduct the research, support the team, and provide feedback throughout the project. When I started studying and conducting research on transportation asset management during graduate school, TRB's research database and publications quickly became a critical resource. After attending my first TRB Annual Meeting in 2011, the importance of the Cooperative Research Programs for advancing the practice became even more clear. Knowing how these

resources have helped me, I find it important to contribute where I can with activities like project panels.

#### **What do you find most helpful about TRB?**

When I was first introduced to TRB, my graduate school colleagues joked that the Annual Meeting was a gathering of 10,000 of our professor's closest friends. More than a decade later, this joke actually hits home because my engagement in TRB circles has greatly enhanced my professional network. Being involved in TRB has led me to find experts who helped shape and refine my work and projects and to make connections who have provided guidance and opportunities for career advancement.

#### **How has your experience on the International Coordinating Council influenced your career or outlook on the profession?**

As someone born and raised outside the United States—in Ghana—it has always been important to me to apply my knowledge and expertise in a global context. The International Coordinating Council has exposed me to a broad network of transportation professionals and provided opportunities for collaboration. This year, TRB and members of the International Coordinating Council are supporting an initiative I am leading to establish the African Transportation Research Alliance, referred to by some as "TRB in Africa." I am excited for the future of this initiative and for my continued International Coordinating Council participation.

Transportation Influencer highlights the journey of young professionals active in TRB. Have someone to nominate? Send an email to [TRNews@nas.edu](mailto:TRNews@nas.edu).

## MEMBERS *ON THE MOVE*

**Moungi G. Bawendi** and **Louis E. Brus**, National Academy of Sciences members, received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, which they share with Alexei I. Ekimov, "for the discovery and synthesis of quantum dots."

**Nathaniel P. Ford, Sr.**, Chief Executive Officer of the Jacksonville Transportation authority in Jacksonville, Florida, and former chair of TRB's Executive Committee, received the 2024 Sharon D. Banks Award for Humanitarian Leadership in Transportation.

**Ann M. Hartell**, a Cooperative Research Programs (CRP) senior program officer and member of the *TR News* Editorial

Board, has left TRB after more than six years of service.

**Micah Himmel**, a senior program officer in the Consensus and Advisory Studies Division and a member of the *TR News* Editorial board, has left TRB after more than eight years. He is now an international transportation analyst at the U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of the Secretary.

**Katalin Karikó** and **Drew Weissman**, National Academy of Medicine members, received the Nobel Prize in Medicine "for their discoveries concerning nucleoside base modifications that enabled the development of effective mRNA vaccines against COVID-19."

**Anne L'Huillier**, an international National Academy of Sciences member, received the Nobel Prize in Physics with Pierre Agostini and Ferenc Krausz for demonstrating a way to create extremely short pulses of light that can be used to measure the rapid processes in which electrons move or change energy.

**Jamaal Schoby**, former senior managing associate at Nspiregreen in Washington, DC, has joined CRP as a senior program officer.

**Alison Shapiro** has joined CRP as an editor. She was formerly an internal communications editor for UnitedHealth Group.