



Oberstar Forum on October 8 to focus on nation's transportation infrastructure

The earth shook on August 1 when the I-35W bridge collapsed into the Mississippi River. Since the tragedy, people across the country are questioning whether their own roads and bridges will get them home at night—and public officials are looking for answers. In the wake of the collapse, the sixth **James L. Oberstar Forum on Transportation Policy and Technology** will look for solutions to the challenges posed by the nation's aging infrastructure. The forum—titled “The Condition of Our Nation's Transportation Infrastructure: Heading Toward a Crisis?”—will be held **October 8** in Minneapolis.

Oberstar, who is calling for a five-cent increase in the federal gas tax to support a national bridge inspection and reconstruction program, is holding hearings when Congress reconvenes in September. At the state level, Governor **Tim Pawlenty** may call a special legislative session to raise additional transportation funding.



James Oberstar

The public portion of the forum will begin at 1:30 p.m. with a keynote presentation by Congressman Oberstar. Panel discussions will then follow with state and national leaders.

The forum is free and open to the public. Space is limited, however, so attendees are encouraged to register.

A brochure will be mailed with further details, and updates will be posted on the Oberstar Forum Web page at www.cts.umn.edu/oberstarforum. **CTS**



I-35W bridge shortly after the collapse

CTS to celebrate 20 years of contributions to transportation

Pause a minute to think how the transportation landscape of Minnesota has changed since 1987. Back then there were no electronic toll lanes, no light-rail transit stations, and no cell phones to report crashes. And CTS was just getting started as a one-man show in the University's civil engineering department.

As CTS grew during these two decades, so too did its role in shaping the transportation landscape. Please join us October 23 in Minneapolis for a look back at how University of Minnesota research influenced many of the technologies, policies, and practices that have transformed transportation—and a look ahead



to what the next 20 years might hold.

The afternoon program will begin with opening remarks at 1:30 p.m. from **Robert Johns**, director of CTS. In the keynote presentation, Professor **Genevieve Giuliano** will explore the role of research in shaping

the future of transportation. Giuliano is a professor in the School of Policy, Planning, and Development and a senior associate dean of research and technology at the University of Southern California. She is also the former chair of the Transportation Research Board Executive Committee.

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CTS creating transportation alumni group

Professionals in the field of transportation hold degrees from many disciplines. You, for example, might be an engineer, a planner, an economist, a landscape architect, or a plant biologist. The University of Minnesota Alumni Association collects data for all graduates, but there has been no way to identify or communicate with those connected to transportation. Until now.

CTS is creating a database of University of Minnesota transportation alumni who want to stay in touch with their alma mater and with each other. By joining the group, members will receive electronic updates about student activities, special events, and other transportation-related news at the University. Graduates of other institutions are also welcome to join.

A number of uses are expected for the database, such as for creating an alumni directory and a job network. Joining also gives alumni a way to support current students by becoming a mentor or speaking to student groups.

In addition, the Interdisciplinary Transportation Student Organization (ITSO) at the University may use

Conflict management initiative gets early results

Conflict is all too common in transportation projects, yet many local agencies lack the skills and strategies to handle it effectively. A pilot initiative was launched last year to provide needed training and facilitation skills for local agencies—and it has seen some early results in Minnesota.

The initiative—“Developing a Collaborative Leadership Approach to Managing Conflict and Consensus Building During Local Agency Transportation Project Development”—is sponsored by the National Local Technical Assistance Program Association (NLTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Mn/DOT State Aid for Local Transportation, in cooperation with the FHWA and CTS, is overseeing and guiding the project.

The initiative is designed to strengthen local transportation practitioners’ knowledge and skills in collaborative leadership. This includes the processes, strategies, and tools used to constructively manage conflict and build consensus to strengthen the project development process.

The pilot involves four main tasks: developing and conducting pilot training for local agency staff; applying the skills

in a local transportation project using a skilled facilitator/mediator; creating a recommended framework for national application; and assessing pilot effectiveness and sharing lessons learned.

The project team—led by **Tom Sorel**, FHWA Minnesota division administrator; **Julie Skallman**, Mn/DOT State Aid director; and **Cheri Marti**, former CTS associate director of education and outreach—selected Blue Earth County for the test case. For four years highway planners and wetland regulators had been unable to agree on the realignment of County Road 26. The sides recently reached a compromise thanks in part to the pilot initiative. **Al Forsberg**, Blue Earth County engi-



Participants of the Blue Earth County test case

neer, credited the program for making the difference.

The model developed within Minnesota will serve as a framework for addressing transportation-related conflict management and consensus building on a national level. In addition, the lessons learned will be shared for use in other federal and state-level initiatives.

The initiative is one outcome of a May 2005 forum hosted by the University of Minnesota’s Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. The forum, attended by transportation practitioners in both the public and private sectors, addressed collaborative leadership and conflict management as applied to transportation megaprojects. During the forum, local transportation engineers expressed interest in pursuing new collaborative leadership and conflict management strategies, but due to the lack of sufficient resources, they felt they did not have the means to do so.

For more information, please contact **Jan Lucke** of CTS, 612-625-8401, jlucke@cts.umn.edu. **CTS**

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the database for its communications efforts. ITSO’s mission is to bridge the gap between students and professionals (www.tc.umn.edu/~itso/). Founded with support from CTS, ITSO serves as the student chapter of the Institute of Transportation Engineers, the Intelligent Transportation Society, and WTS Minnesota. Assistant Professor **Henry Liu** of the Department of Civil Engineering currently serves as ITSO’s faculty advisor.

To join the alumni group, please visit our easy-to-use Web page: www.cts.umn.edu/education/alumni. The page allows you to enter your educational background and contact information, including organization and occupational area. It also lets you volunteer as a possible resource for students.

For more information, please contact **Stephanie Jackson** at 612-624-8398, sjackson@cts.umn.edu. **CTS**

Media cite U of M experts

John Hourdos, director of the Minnesota Traffic Observatory (MTO), shared his insights into commuter behavior in a May 1 article in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*. The article described how some drivers were surprised by the smooth flow of traffic on the first day of the Trunk Highway 36 detour through North St. Paul. The reconstruction closes the key metro roadway for five months. Hourdos, who is evaluating the full closure in a newly funded research project, explained that it takes several weeks for people to experiment with new routes and schedules before they settle into a new pattern. The MTO is a laboratory of the ITS Institute at CTS (www.its.umn.edu/ProgramsLabs/MNTrafficObservatory).

Lee Munnich, director of the State



John Hourdos

and Local Policy Program (SLPP) at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, was the guest speaker on the “University of Minnesota Moment” radio feature for the week of July 23rd. Despite rising gas prices, Munnich said, drivers are too attached to their vehicles to significantly change their commuting means. He recommends public car sharing, a system that is used at the University and across

the country. The Minnesota Moment is available to Minnesota radio stations for free (<http://blog.lib.umn.edu/urelate/radio>). For more information about the University’s car-sharing program, visit <http://www.zipcar.com/umn>. **CTS**

Oberstar raises transportation concerns at Humphrey Institute lecture series

Funding, foreign competition, and lower water levels were some of the concerns that U.S. Congressman **James Oberstar** raised in a June 25 presentation in Minneapolis. The speech, "Transportation Policy and America's Future," was part of the "Connecting with Government" series sponsored by the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs (www.hhh.umn.edu/centers/cspg).

Oberstar, who chairs the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, discussed the future of transportation funding both nationally and in Minnesota. He believes Minnesota's recent transportation policies, including the inability of the governor and legislature

to pass a transportation bill this spring, have caused Minnesota to lag nationally in investment. This lack of financing is negatively perceived in Washington, he said, which means funds that could come to Minnesota are directed to other states.

Another challenge, Oberstar said, is keeping transportation costs from harming the economy. American manufacturers and farmers must compete internationally even as their transportation costs keep rising. For example, one of the nation's main grain competitors, Brazil, has cheaper access to U.S. coasts than Midwest farmers because of its location on the Atlantic Ocean. To overcome this disadvantage, Oberstar said, the U.S. must invest in new locks at the Mississippi River to decrease

shipping costs.

A prevalent concern throughout the country is the lower water level of many waterways. Locally, lower levels in Lake Superior have caused shippers to send smaller loads—on more ships—each year. Part of the problem is that the Great Lakes region hasn't seen any dredging for 15 years, Oberstar said. The Army Corps of Engineers has received funding to perform dredging operations in the Great Lakes region to help resolve this issue, he noted.

Oberstar has been a long-time supporter of University research, providing key support for the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Institute and the Center for Excellence in Rural Safety. **CTS**

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Following Giuliano, two University of Minnesota faculty panels—one focusing on engineering and technology research and education, the other on policy and planning research and education—will review how University contributions addressed state and national transportation issues since 1987, as well as suggest future possibilities.

A reception with a short program will run from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. Refreshments will be provided.

The anniversary celebration will be held at the McNamara Alumni Center on the east bank campus. The event is free of charge and will be held in lieu of the CTS Fall Luncheon.

A CTS 20th anniversary brochure will be mailed with further details. Updates will be available on the CTS Web site at www.cts.umn.edu/events. **CTS**

New research reports available

The enclosed insert lists research reports written by University researchers and published by CTS, Mn/DOT, the Minnesota Local Road Research Board, and other sponsors since November 2006. **CTS**

Ballarini appointed head of Civil Engineering

Dean **Steven L. Crouch** of the University's Institute of Technology has appointed Professor **Roberto Ballarini** as head of the Department of Civil Engineering effective July 1, 2007. He succeeds Professor **John Gulliver**, who served as department head for 10 years.



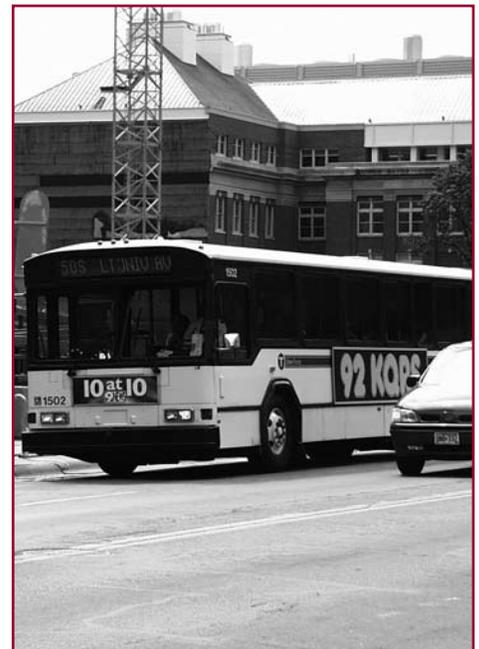
Roberto Ballarini

Ballarini has written more than 60 journal papers on structural engineering and mechanics and given an equal number of invited lectures around the world. He also has served as a visiting professor at universities in Italy and Taiwan.

In addition to his research,

Ballarini has taught undergraduate and graduate courses on fracture mechanics and the mechanics of materials. He received the **John S. Diekhoff** Award for Distinguished Graduate Teaching at Case Western Reserve University. At the University of Minnesota, he has been named the **James L. Record** Professor of Civil Engineering.

Ballarini received his master of science and Ph.D. degrees in civil engineering from Northwestern. **CTS**



One of the reports listed in the enclosed insert discusses the potential market for Metro Transit's services. It gives particular attention to how technology could be used to attract additional riders to the Twin Cities transit system.

AirTAP Fall Forum program online

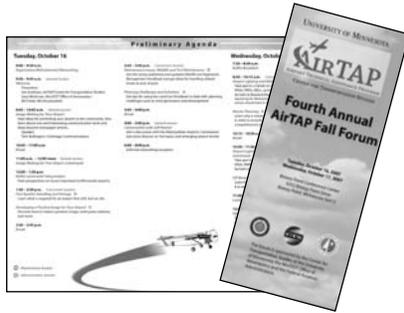
The preliminary program is now online for the Fourth Annual AirTAP Fall Forum. The event will take place October 16 and 17 in Breezy Point, Minnesota.

Topics include fuel handling and storage, image-making for your airport, and wildlife and turf maintenance.

AirTAP—the Airport Technical Assistance Program—is a statewide

assistance program for aviation personnel. The forum is sponsored by CTS, the Mn/DOT Office of Aeronautics, and the Federal Aviation

Administration. To register, please contact Mindy Carlson at 612-625-1813, e-mail carlson@cts.umn.edu, or visit www.airtap.umn.edu. **CTS.**



Donath receives University honor

Max Donath, director of the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Institute at CTS, received the **George W. Taylor Award** for Distinguished Service from the University's Institute of Technology on May 4. Established in 1982, the award recognizes outstanding service to the University and voluntary public service to governmental or other public groups. Donath's award is in honor of his leadership of the ITS Institute. **CTS**

Upcoming events

To publicize your event, call CTS at 612-626-1077, fax 612-625-6381, or e-mail snopl001@cts.umn.edu. Visit the CTS Web site—www.cts.umn.edu—for more comprehensive event information.

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| Aug. 23–24 | Second Access to Destinations Conference, Minneapolis. Contact Shirley Mueffelman , 612-624-4754, cceconf2@umn.edu . | Oct. 23 | CTS 20th Anniversary, Minneapolis. Contact Paula Fenstad , 612-624-3708, cceconf5@umn.edu . | Dec. 5 | Minnesota Association of Asphalt Paving Technologists (MAAPT) 54 th Annual Asphalt Conference, Brooklyn Park, Minn. See www.asphaltisbest.com or e-mail jthomas@mnapa.org . |
| Sept. 12–14 | Minnesota Surveyors and Engineers Society (MSES) 85th Fall Outing, Madden's Resort near Brainerd. See www.mses.org/events.htm , e-mail ann@mSES.org , or call Ann at 651-457-2347. | Oct. 23–24 | Annual Water Resources Conference, Brooklyn Center. Contact Paula Fenstad , 612-624-3708, cceconf5@umn.edu . | Dec. 6 | 57th Annual Concrete Conference, St. Paul. Contact Kristi Fischer , 612-625-4265, cceconf4@umn.edu . |
| Sept. 17–18 | Toward Zero Deaths Conference, Duluth. Contact Shirley Mueffelman , 612-624-4754, cceconf2@umn.edu . | Oct. 29–31 | Minnesota Public Transit Conference, St. Cloud. Contact Tony Kellen , 320-251-1499 (x103), kellen@stcloudmtc.com , or see www.mpta-transit.org . | Jan. 13–17 | Transportation Research Board 87th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C. See www.trb.org/meeting . |
| Oct. 3–4 | Minnesota Fall Maintenance Expo, St. Cloud. Contact Kathy Warren , 651-351-7432, kwarren@usinternet.com . | Nov. 1–2 | 3rd Annual Asphalt Shingle Recycling Forum, Chicago. Call 630-585-7530 or visit www.shinglerecycling.org . | Jan. 22–25 | Minnesota County Engineers Association Annual Conference, Brainerd. Contact Carrie Alkins , 612-624-3492, cceconf3@umn.edu , or visit www.mncountyengineers.org . |
| Oct. 8 | Sixth James L. Oberstar Forum on Transportation Policy and Technology, Minneapolis. Contact Paula Fenstad , 612-624-3708, cceconf5@umn.edu . | Nov. 14–16 | Minnesota Public Works Association Fall Conference, Brooklyn Center. Contact Carrie Alkins , 612-624-3492, cceconf3@umn.edu , or visit minnesota.apwa.net . | Jan. 30–Feb. 1 | City Engineers of Minnesota Annual Conference, Brooklyn Center. Contact Carrie Alkins , 612-624-3492, cceconf3@umn.edu , or visit www.ceam.org . |
| Oct. 16 | Intelligent Transportation Society of Minnesota Fall Industry Forum, St. Paul. Contact Paula Fenstad , 612-624-3708, cceconf5@umn.edu . | Nov. 30 | 11th Annual CTS Freight and Logistics Symposium, Minneapolis. Contact Paula Fenstad , 612-624-3708, cceconf5@umn.edu . | Apr. 15–16 | Minnesota Spring Maintenance Training Expo, St. Cloud. Contact Shirley Mueffelman , 612-624-4754, cceconf2@umn.edu . CTS |
| Oct. 16–17 | AirTAP Fall Forum, Breezy Point. Contact Mindy Carlson at 612-625-1813, carlson@cts.umn.edu . | | | | |