

Executive Shadowing Program Participants (In alphabetical order)

Melissa Batula, P.E., Acting Executive Deputy Secretary

Melissa J. Batula, P.E., was appointed PennDOT's Acting Executive Deputy Secretary in March 2021, after serving as the first female Deputy Secretary for Highway Administration since January 2020. Melissa is proud to join over 11,000 dedicated staff members who share her commitment to serving the transportation needs of citizens across the Commonwealth. Her role includes overseeing investments in PennDOT assets, ensuring quality and safety across the department, and advancing innovative strategies to solve Pennsylvania's 21st century transportation challenges. Melissa is adept at building strong relationships with industry and governmental partners and is committed to helping guide the department in successfully carrying out its mission.



Batula began her career in the private sector, where from 1987 to 2006, her role grew and developed from a drafts person to a senior design engineer. She joined PennDOT in 2006 as a senior civil engineer, where she has progressed through the department in various management positions.

Batula is a Professional Engineer, and holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a focus in organizational leadership.

Alexis Campbell, Press Secretary

Alexis Campbell is the Press Secretary for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). Alexis previously served as press officer for PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services, where she spearheaded the communications effort for REAL ID. Prior to her work with the commonwealth, Alexis spent her career in the nonprofit sector, serving as Director of Creative Programming for the Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art in Millersburg, PA, and as Public Relations Director for Gamut Theatre Group in Harrisburg, where she is now president of the Board of Directors. Alexis lives in Harrisburg with her husband and daughter.



Natasha Fackler, Policy Director

Natasha Fackler is the Policy Director for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). As the Policy Director, Natasha manages three staff members while reporting to the Secretary of Transportation and the Secretary of Policy and Planning in the Governor's Office to ensure that the Administration's transportation goals are met. She oversees the implementation of policy through program activities and inter-agency initiatives.

The main work of the Policy Office includes drafting policy; performing legislative, regulatory and policy analysis; participating in inter-agency work groups and representing the Department on numerous boards and commissions. Natasha has over 20-years of experience in the Commonwealth of which over half has been with PennDOT and seven years have been working in PennDOT's Policy Office. Natasha earned both her undergraduate degree and Master's in Public Administration from Shippensburg University.



Yasmin Gramian, P.E., Acting Secretary for Transportation

Yasmin Gramian, PE, serves as the secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. She was confirmed unanimously by the Senate on May 27, 2020. As secretary, she oversees programs and policies affecting highways, urban and rural public transportation, airports, railroads, ports, and waterways. She manages PennDOT's annual budget which is invested in Pennsylvania's approximately 120,000 miles of state and local highways and 32,000 state and local bridges. Under her leadership, the department is directly responsible for nearly 40,000 miles of highway and roughly 25,400 bridges.

She also has oversight of the state's 11.8 million vehicle registrations and 10.3 million driver's licenses and IDs.

Drawing on her years of technical expertise as an engineer in the transportation and infrastructure industry, she is focused on developing these forward-looking strategies that deliver innovative solutions for communities and transportation networks across the Commonwealth.



Jennie Louwerse, Deputy Secretary for Multimodal Transportation

Jennie Louwerse, AICP, became the Deputy Secretary for Multimodal Transportation in July 2018. She provides oversight for Department initiatives and policy related to public transportation, aviation, rail freight, passenger rail, bike/pedestrian and ports. She previously served PennDOT as Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary, Bureau Director of Aviation, and Director of PennPORTS. Jennie brings 24 years of progressive public and private sector experience in all facets of management and technical knowledge of multimodal transportation development to the Department.

Jennie holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from the Pennsylvania State University and a Bachelor's degree in Rural/Urban Studies from Shippensburg University.



Christine Norris, P.E., Highway Administration Bureau Director

A registered professional engineer, Chris joined the Department in 1999 as a Civil Engineer Trainee. During her career at PennDOT, her positions include: Acting Highway Delivery Division Chief, Construction Quality Assurance Engineer, Construction Services Engineer, Special Assistant to the Chief Engineer, and Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary. She also served as the Acting District Executive in Engineering District 6, before taking on the role of Construction and Materials Division Chief in November 2015. In January 2022, she was asked to lead the Department's Major Bridge P3 Project.

Prior to joining the Department, Chris worked as a Transportation Construction Inspector and Supervisor for a consultant engineering firm, and played an integral role in the SR 81 Lackawanna Highway Industrial Project. In her spare time, Chris enjoys working on home improvement projects, hiking, golfing, and spending time at Lake Raystown.



Katherine Peters, Director for the Bureau of Equal Opportunity

Katherine joined PennDOT in 2016 as the Director for the Bureau of Equal Opportunity. She oversees the administration of federal and state Civil Rights programs related to the transportation industry. Programs includes; DBE, OJT, and Contract Compliance. In her time at PennDOT, she has project managed its first disparity study and developed initiatives to enhance workforce diversity and inclusion within PennDOT and with its many partners.

Katherine has worked for the Commonwealth of PA for nineteen years, for the Departments of Corrections, State, Labor & Industry and the PA Human Relations Commission in equal opportunity and human resources positions. Previous to her Commonwealth career, she worked in Human Services as an advocate and treatment specialist for persons with developmental disabilities and provided services for children in the juvenile justice and foster care system. She is a graduate of the Pennsylvania State University and has two children



Kara N. Templeton, Director of the Bureau of Driver Licensing

Kara N. Templeton has been with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) for over 19 years and currently serves as the Director of the Bureau of Driver Licensing for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In her capacity as Director of the Bureau of Driver Licensing, Kara is responsible for all driver license operations in the Commonwealth, which include issuance, sanctioning, driver license and photo license operations at over 100 Driver License and Photo License centers, and special driver programs for about 10 million Pennsylvania driver license and identification card holders. Prior to becoming the Director of Driver Licensing, Kara served as the Director of PennDOT's

Information and Fiscal Services Office, the Manager of the PennDOT Customer Call Center Program, and the Manager of PennDOT's Photo License Program.



Erin Waters-Trasatt, Communications Director

Erin joined the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's communications team in 2008 and worked as a department flagger during the three prior summers. Her role and continued mission is to enhance public perception of and engagement with the department, as well as increase collaboration and responsiveness within the 11,000-person strong agency.

In addition to serving as a liaison among media, government officials, employees, and the public in communicating the department's mission, she serves as a public information officer in emergency operations and has coordinated media events with local, state, and federal officials alike. She also oversees statewide communication strategy implementation in the agency's 11 regional offices. Erin developed the department's initial Facebook and YouTube pages as well as statewide and regional Twitter accounts.

Recognizing that digital communications are integral to the agency's success, she works with the PennDOT digital team to improve the public's understanding of the department's operations and results. This led to partnering with Innovations staff to create the first online, statewide surveys for winter and construction/maintenance performance to which thousands of Pennsylvanians responded. The www.penndot.gov/results page was also created and features statewide and district-based accomplishments on behalf of Pennsylvanians.

Erin lives near Harrisburg with her husband, two daughters, and rescue pup.

