

## Cara Odonnell

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**From:** Colorado-Wyoming Section of ITE <greg@cowyite.ccsend.com> on behalf of Colorado-Wyoming Section of ITE <news@cowyite.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 12, 2020 12:34 PM  
**To:** Cara Odonnell  
**Subject:** May Newsletter

### May Newsletter!



Hello Everyone,

Welcome May! It is the month of celebrations.

We celebrate Mother's Day this month. I feel we should honor our parents every day, regardless what they do or did. What does your Mom mean to you? To me, my mom teaches me to always be grateful, to be kind to one another and the importance of education. People could say she is just a typical mother who did not graduate from elementary school. However, two of her children graduated from doctoral programs and the rest have completed their

bachelor's degrees. Thank you to my mother. Happy Mother's Day!

The CO/WY ITE Section strives to make a difference and support education. Despite the difficult time we are going through, we are able to continue giving scholarships. The Scholarship Committee selected seven students for this year's scholarship recipients. Well done Alvin Stamp and the Scholarship Team, thank you for taking the time and effort in this process. Congratulations to the Scholarship Recipients, keep working hard and achieve more success!

Congratulations to Lisa Nguyen as the first Mountain District Rising Star. Lisa has been chosen as this year's ITE Mountain District winner and her nomination has been

advanced for consideration at the ITE international level. Please join me in congratulating Lisa on her well-deserved accomplishment.

May is the month of graduation on college campuses across the country. I am proud to share the news that the University of Colorado Denver (UCD) won the Mountain District Student Chapter Award and that Nicholas Coppola, UCD, won the Mountain District Student Paper Award. Many Congratulations...

In closing, please always be grateful and be kind to one another, as simple as thanks to a nice meal on the table, a friendly conversation, the fact that you can walk and much more.

Susi Marlina  
President  
Colorado-Wyoming Section ITE

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## *Online Learning*

Are you missing the luncheon content that our chapter has always provided? Fear not, the ITE online learning community is here for you! The **webinars** offer great content and vary in price, with some being offered for free!

[Check out ITE's website to see more about the webinars](#)

And if you're a **podcast** fan (or even if you're not), the ITE Talks Transportation Podcast offers stimulating ideas from some of our industry's top leaders. The most recent episode explores the Impacts of COVID-19 on Public Transportation.

[Check out the ITE Talks Transportation podcast here](#)

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## *ITE Golf Tournament*

Regretfully, the ITE Golf Committee and ITE Leadership Committee have decided to postpone the 2020 Golf Tournament until June 2021. This decision has been made with the health and safety of our members as the highest priority. We look forward to hitting the links with you all next year.

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## *Legislative Update:*

### **What are the implications of COVID-19 on the State Budget and Transportation funding?**

The Joint Budget Committee met this week to review the impacts of COVID-19 on the State's \$30+ billion budget. The budget office is projecting \$3 billion in lost revenue and the JBC is faced with identifying spending cuts to meet the State's requirements for passing a balanced budget. The following provides an overview of what the State Budget is, how transportation funding is provided, an overview of TABOR and what can and cannot be done in response to COVID-19.

### **What is the state Budget?**

- In Colorado, the Governor, elected officials and state agencies submit budget requests to the legislature who is charged with passing and maintaining a balanced budget (spending cannot exceed the amount of tax and fee revenue collected by the state)
- The State can take on a limited amount of debt with voter approval (the last time this occurred was in 1999)
- For FY 2019-2020, the state budget totals approximately \$32.5 billion of the \$371.7 billion Colorado economy
- General Funds are the most flexible source of funding - revenue is generated from income and sales tax
- Cash Funds are those that are required by law to be spend on specific programs (e.g., vehicle registration fees and the gas tax must be spent on transportation) - revenue is generated from fees for government services
- Federal Funds are generally designated for programs such as K-12 education, transportation, and assistance programs (e.g., Medicaid)
- The Long Bill is typically introduced in March and includes funding for most state expenditures and the legislature amends and votes on the Long Bill before the end of the session

### **What portion of the state budget provides transportation funding?**

- Transportation infrastructure is funded through a combination of federal, state and local government revenue:
  - The State Highway System: Federal gas tax, State gas tax, vehicle registration fees and general fund transfers
  - Local Roads: State distributions of state and federal funding, local sales taxes, property taxes and fees and specific ownership tax

- Transit: State distributions of state and federal funding, local sales taxes, property taxes and fees
- Airports: Federal funding and grants, specific ownership tax, bus and transit fares
- Transportation funds are approximately 6.5% of the total operating budget
- Most of the transportation funds go towards the construction, maintenance and operations of the transportation system

## **What is TABOR?**

- The Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR) Amendment is a Colorado constitutional amendment that was approved in 1992
- TABOR requires voter approval for tax increases and for increases to the TABOR limit, which constrains state revenue from taxes and fees - this applies not only to state taxes but also any local taxing district
- Prior to 2005, state revenue was limited to the prior fiscal year's revenue adjusted according to Colorado inflation and population growth
- In 2005, voters approved Referendum C, which grew the state revenue cap by allowing the state to retain revenue above the TABOR limit for five-years (through FY 2009-2010) and created the Ref C cap allowing revenue to grow from the prior year's cap, rather than prior year spending to eliminate the "ratchet-down" effect when spending decreases and revenue falls below the TABOR limit

## **State Revenues are down with COVID-19 - What does this mean for the State budget?**

- On March 11, 2020 Governor Polis issued EO D 2020 003 declaring a disaster emergency due to the presence of COVID-19; the declaration triggers certain provisions in the Colorado Constitution and state law:
  - TABOR Emergency Reserve: all state and local governments are required to maintain a 3 percent emergency reserve - for FY 2019-2020, the emergency reserve in the 2019 Long Bill is \$449.6 million (\$271 million is liquid assets and \$178.6 million is capital assets)
    - An "epidemic" is specifically included in the relevant definition for disaster for the purposes of using the emergency reserve
    - There is no specific repayment schedule for the reserve however the requirement to maintain an emergency reserve every fiscal years remains a constitutional requirement

- Colorado is expected to receive \$2.5 billion in Federal aid from the CARES Act, but those funds are limited to covering unexpected expenses related to COVID-19, not revenue losses from economic disruption
- Fiscal Emergency: The General Assembly has the authority to declare a fiscal emergency if the decline in revenue "threatens the orderly operation of state government and the health, safety, or welfare of the citizens of the state." - a fiscal emergency was most recently declared in the Great Recession and provides lawmakers with three options:
  - To divert cigarette and tobacco taxes (Amendment 35) to broader health-related expenses
  - Requires the governor to take action to reduce personnel costs through layoffs, furloughs, suspension of salary increases and merit pay, hiring freezes and reallocating vacant positions
  - Allow for the approval of emergency taxes
- Emergency Taxes: TABOR allows for the imposition of emergency taxes without prior voter approval under certain circumstances - the emergency reserve must be depleted (including liquidation of capital assets) and requires a two-thirds vote in both the State Senate and House of Representatives
  - Emergency taxes are limited to emergency expenses, are exempt from the spending limit, any funds collected and not spent on the emergency must be refunded to the taxpayers and the emergency tax must be submitted to voters for approval within 60 days of imposition, and ends thereafter if not approved.

The Colorado Legislative Council Staff maintains the following COVID-19 website with links related to local, state, national and international responses: <https://leg.colorado.gov/coronavirus>

## *Scholarship Award Winners:*

Our CO/WY Section is honored to give out multiple **scholarships** throughout the year. We are pleased to announce the following students, who will receive scholarships this year:

<u>Name</u>	<u>University</u>	<u>Scholarship</u>	<u>Award</u>
Irfan Ahmed	UWY	Leadership award	\$1,000.00
Peyton Gibson	UCD	Leadership award	\$1,000.00
Zorica Cvijovic	UWY	Graduate award	\$1,500.00

Christopher DeRosia	Regis	Graduate award	\$1,500.00
Nicholas A Coppola	UCD	Graduate award	\$1,500.00
Kayvonne Brewer	MSU	Undergraduate award	\$1,500.00
Seth Schripsema	CSU	Undergraduate award	\$1,500.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$9,500.00</b>

We are also proud to announce that Anik Das of the University of Wyoming and our **Student of the Year**, has received his plaque AND that he took the time to get dressed up and send us this wonderful photo. Anik had the following to say: "I would like to thank ITE CO/WY Section for choosing me for this prestigious award and my advisor Dr. Ahmed for nominating me."




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## *Spring Transportation Symposium*





**New Date:** Aug 21, 2020

**Location:** Sheraton Downtown Denver

**Our agenda is posted and registration is open.**

[Click here to register!](#)

Join over 600 of the region's transportation planners, engineers, and decision makers from both the public and private sectors to share information and lessons learned from innovative and successful transportation projects throughout the Rocky Mountain region.

Space is running out for sponsorship opportunities, if you are **interested in sponsoring** the symposium or participating as a vendor, please contact John Hansen at [jhansen@2itshelp.com](mailto:jhansen@2itshelp.com).

[Visit our website for more information on this exciting event!](#)

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## *Traffic Bowl Tuesdays!!!*

Every Tuesday, we will post a category and a series of ITE Traffic Bowl-style "answers" on our Facebook and LinkedIn pages. Comment with what you think the "answer" is and

compete for prizes! We will post the correct "questions" on Sunday after people have had a chance to respond. The first step is to follow us on both [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Don't cheat! Use your noggin!



Institute of Transportation Engineers -  
Colorado/Wyoming Section

May 5 at 7:15 AM · 🌐

The Traffic Bowl takes a detour to Karaoke Night this week! All of the song title 'questions' are transportation-related. See if you recognize these lyrics, or just take a guess!

#cowyite #trafficbowltuesday #socialdistancing



**KARAOKE  
NIGHT**

**\$200**

DON'T KNOW  
WHEN I'LL  
BE BACK AGAIN

**\$400**

IN THE TOWN  
WHERE I WAS BORN  
LIVED A MAN  
WHO SAILED TO SEA

**\$600**

ONE FOOT  
ON THE BRAKE  
AND ONE  
ON THE GAS



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## *Employment Opportunities*

**Please check out our website for the most recent job postings!**

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Thank you to our Section sponsors! To find out more about Section Sponsorship, please contact [Lisa Truong Nguyen](#).

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