

IT'S MAGIC MONDAY: MAY 3, 2021!

This month we honor a Woman of Mercy who is committed to spiritual growth, service to others, and justice in the world. Meet Carol Tan '83, Team Leader for Safety Data & Analysis in the Office of Safety & Operations Research & Development at the Federal Highway Administration, and recipient of the Arthur S. Flemming Award in the category of applied science. The Flemming Award, established in 1948, "recognizes outstanding

service; attracts and recruits outstanding talent to the public service; and retains the 'best of the best' in government service, for the benefit of the Nation at large."

Name: Carol Tan '83

Post Mercy Education:

- B.S., Civil Engineering, Texas A&M University, 1988
- M.S., Civil Engineering, Texas A&M University, 1991
- Ph.D., Civil Engineering, The Pennsylvania State University, 2005

Personal and Professional Achievements:

I felt it was important to choose a profession where I could serve others, and I feel I am able to accomplish that with Civil Engineering. Civil Engineers design, build, and maintain facilities that provide services and improve all people's lives. For the first ten years of my career, I worked for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) at the Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center in McLean, VA beginning in 1991 as a research engineer, managing Federal Highway's Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Research Program. Currently, I am the Team Leader for Safety Data & Analysis in the Office of Safety & Operations Research & Development. Our team analyzes highway safety data regarding roadway improvements to determine effectiveness so state and local departments of transportation can determine whether they should implement a roadway improvement. One of FHWA's goals is to save lives on our nation's highways; my team and I contribute to this goal with the research that we conduct and manage.

I now have the honor of mentoring Valery C. '22 through Mercy's Mentor Program. I enjoy having my colleagues join me in sharing with Valery about the different paths we took to become Civil Engineers, and about the various disciplines within the field of Civil Engineering. Most of my "guest speakers" have been women, even though our field is mostly men; I hope this exposure helps Valery and other girls envision a future in Civil Engineering for themselves. I am excited to work on a current project regarding bicycle parking with Valery and hope this opportunity helps her make informed decisions about her future profession.

My husband and I live in Reston, Virginia with our son, a rising college sophomore, and my two stepdaughters, who were recently married. My husband also works for FHWA and we have interesting conversations now that we recently started working in the same office. My hobbies include knitting, tae kwon do, and drumming, which is coming along! I began tae kwon do and drumming in my 40's and am currently working on my 4th degree blackbelt. I have numerous unfinished knitting projects around the house that I hope to complete one day.

Were there any Mercy faculty members who especially impacted your life? Why?



Alumnae
MERCY
HIGH SCHOOL

I truly appreciated having **Ms. Jeanne Blakeslee**, **Ms. Joanne Simmons**, and **Sr. Mary Anne Smith** as my teachers. **Ms. Blakeslee** was my advisor and Psychology teacher, and I enjoyed her different approach to teaching and life; she taught me about stepping outside of the box. I particularly enjoyed **Ms. Simmons'** wit during Geometry class – not only was the subject interesting and fun, but **Ms. Simmons** herself was entertaining. The way **Sr. Mary Anne** taught Spanish made me appreciate that there is more to learning a language than vocabulary and conjugation – food, art, literature, music, etc. all make learning a language much more interesting. I still practice my Spanish with my family, friends, and colleagues and they are impressed at my knowledge of El Greco – thank you, **Sr. Mary Anne!**

Were there any classes you took at Mercy that stand-out to you? Why?

Introduction to Physical Science (IPS), Psychology, and Future Studies stood out for me. I loved all the laboratory experiments we conducted in IPS and having taken IPS, Chemistry, and Physics in high school prepared me well for all the college lab classes I took as I studied Civil Engineering. I still use some of the fundamental lessons about how the brain works and statistics from Ms. Blakeslee's Psychology in my projects at work. English was never my favorite subject, but that changed when I took Future Studies and we read material that I truly enjoyed!