

# Meet ITE's Newest Diversity Scholars

The purpose of the ITE Diversity Scholars Program is to increase underrepresented populations' participation in the transportation profession by supporting increased diversity at the undergraduate level. This program is supported by generous donations from industry leaders Transoft, Econolite, the Patrick A. Gibson Scholarship, the Industry and Consultants Councils, Past Presidents of ITE, and many other individual donors. By the end of 2024, ITE is supporting nine diversity scholars in pursuit of their undergraduate education.



## Kennedy Jones

Washington University

A life goal I have for myself is to assess, manage, and design sustainable systems for the protection of human and ecological health. I have always wanted to increase the quality of life for humanity. Growing up, I realized that I could make an impact by developing better water and municipal sewer systems, or designing buildings to protect us from natural hazards. We deserve a community that is well-maintained and environmentally sustainable. These issues motivated me to pursue a degree in Environmental Engineering and a Masters in Engineering Management. My timeline to achieve this is after college, so I can take my education at Washington University in St. Louis and apply new knowledge to my career. A college education can guide me in pursuing my goal of developing solutions to global challenges while welcoming new areas of inquiry. As a future environmental engineering project manager, it is imperative to see people I identify with represented in leadership within this industry. Seeing African-American female leaders in this industry helps to validate my ambitions and ensure that I will feel seen in my pursuit of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). DEI is significant to me because I still have hope and aspirations for a better world. I embrace my environment, as I am determined to support equality and champion the biases of those around me.



## Aleksander Johnson

University of Missouri-Columbia

*Paniati Family Diversity Scholar*

I am going to be a junior transferring from Fontbonne University and going to the University of Missouri-Columbia. I wrestled during all four years of high school and a little bit during my freshman year of college before I was injured. Now I participate in eSports and plan on being a commentator for the Mizzou eSports team. I have been interested in engineering for as long as I can remember. The idea of designing and modeling various types of ideas that pop into my head always intrigued me. Before I switched to Civil Engineering—more specifically, transportation—I was originally interested in Aerospace Engineering. I had this love for planes that would just constantly keep me excited thinking of the possibilities with them. I then joined Millstone Weber's "Project PAVE" program where I met many different civil engineers and eventually was given the opportunity to intern at CBB Transportation. Working there and being able to experience the environment and the culture made me have a change in heart. It ignited my love for transportation. After my first summer interning there, I was committed and sure that this is what I wanted to do. As I enter a university that can do more than assist me in achieving my goal, I hope I am able to pick up vast amounts of knowledge to spread to my peers, then help others by ensuring that transportation is in the best place possible. In the future, I want to be more than happy with the decisions I've made to get to this point and hopefully drive on a road I helped create. [itej](#)