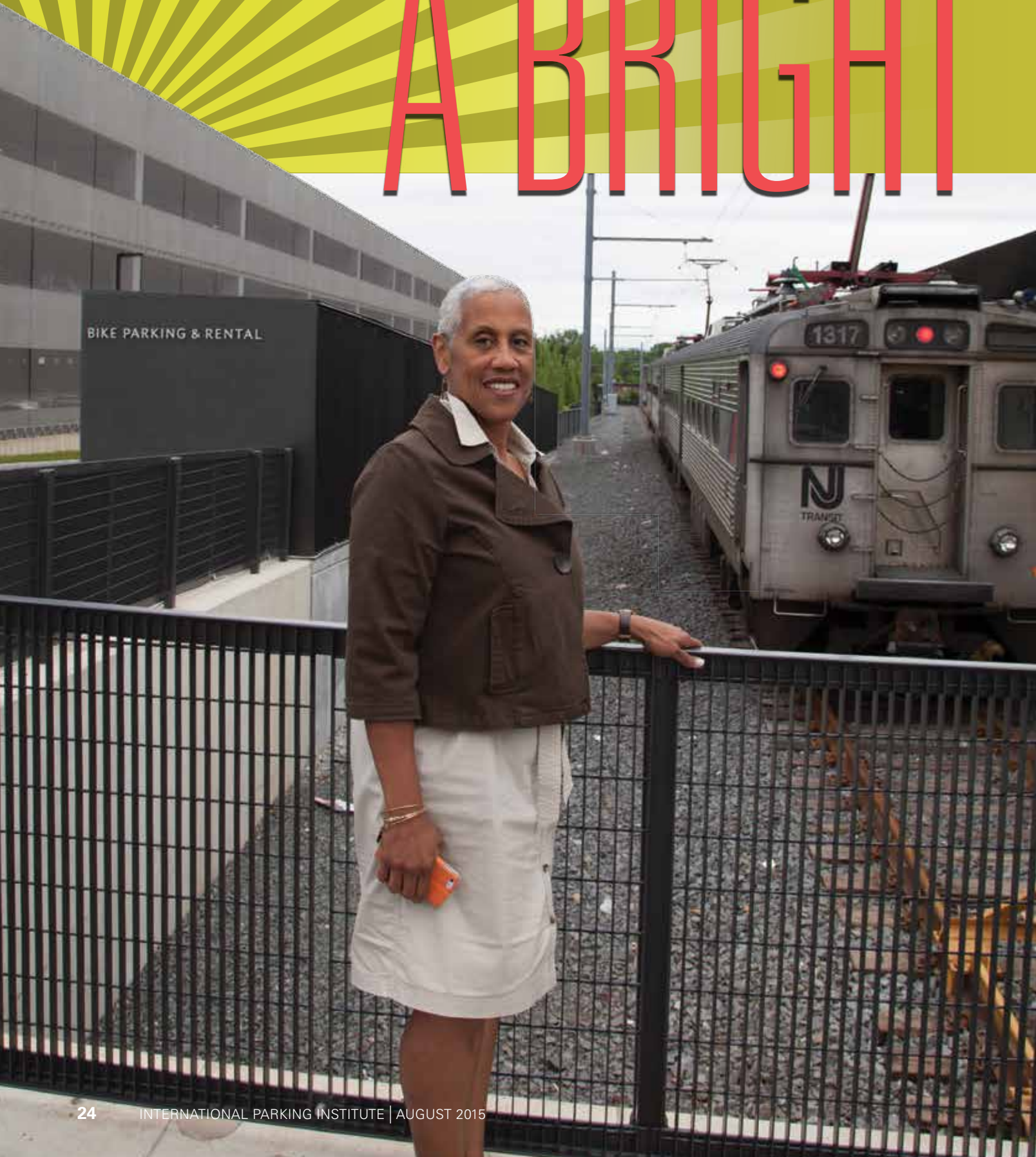


A BRIGHT



HORIZON

IPI Chair Kim Jackson, CAPP, talks industry changes, pride, and what's ahead for IPI.

By Kim Fernandez

Ask Kim Jackson, CAPP, what it is about her career that's kept her there so long, and the answer is almost too simple.

"A lot of people say I have the toughest job on campus," says Princeton University's director of transportation and parking services. "But I think I have the best job on campus because I get to interact with everybody."

Parking is definitely a people business as far as Jackson is concerned, and that focus is what will set the tone for her term as chair of IPI's Board of Directors; after all, it's served her well throughout her long career in the industry. "I meet everyone—campus visitors to parents and students to faculty and staff to our invited dignitaries," she explains. "I get to interact with all of those people and work with our planning teams to make things happen. That's what's exciting. That kind of pulse keeps me in this business."

Jackson's parking career started at Rutgers University in 1988, when she began working as assistant director for administration of University Parking Services. From there, she was promoted to director of parking and transportation—becoming the first person in the newly-created position—and worked in that capacity until 1994, when she left to become meetings director for IPI. She eventually became the association's executive director.

After 10 years at IPI, Jackson returned to the parking industry, working at Princeton University, which she says she's loved ever since, but she remained an active, hands-on member of IPI and was shortly elected to the Board of Directors.

Jackson was installed as Board chair at the 2015 IPI Conference & Expo in Las Vegas and says she's looking forward to two years of hard work, steady progress, and more growth for the world's largest parking association, relying on her years of customer service experience to keep IPI on a steady track.

Progress and Goals

"I like to think about what IPI can be doing for its members," Jackson says of her time on the Board. "As a member, I think about what I think my colleagues are looking for and need for their organization. It's been great to see how we have grown and how the international piece of our work has taken off, especially during the last few years.

"It's very exciting," she continues. "As members, there are so many different departments within organizations around the world that do what we do. We should all be learning from each other. It's great that we have so many programs that let us do that, while offering networking opportunities for our members."

The industry, she says, has come a long way since her first days at Rutgers. "When I started in the late 1980s, all parking people did was just think about parking cars," she says. "For women especially, parking wasn't a career path. A lot of women were in second jobs—assistant directors, managers, seconds in operations—but we weren't directors. That's changed."

The perception of the industry has changed, too, and Jackson couldn't be happier about that. "I've watched us go from an industry striving for recognition and information and education, to one that's creating and relaunching the CAPP program, launching onsite training programs, offering online learning, and reaching out to people around the country and the world, making sure everybody knows parking is a profession—a proud profession," she says.

"We have so many resources," she continues. "If you're not aware of something, IPI is here to help you with that. Thanks to the *Parking Matters*® program, people come to us for quotes and information. It wasn't always like that—

It's great that we have so many programs that let us do that, while offering networking opportunities for our members."

we used to have to really scrounge for statistics and facts. We learned from people who'd been in the industry, or we learned from trial and error. We tried something; if it didn't work, we tried something else.

That's how we knew what we knew—we couldn't pick up a book and learn much about parking."

IPI, she says, carved a niche for itself years ago that continues to serve it—and the industry—well. "There was very limited talk about parking in municipalities, hospitals, colleges, and airports," she says. "IMPC/IPI was the organization where people were dealing with parking in a different way. We started providing information for people and coursework and really developing education and a knowledge base, and that's what made industry members feel they had the backing to pull up and claim that seat at the table we talk about."

More recent programs, she says, have solidified that both for parking professionals and people in other industries, who now expect to see parking play a role in all sorts of business and project development decisions.

"IPI helped do that for people who had been in the business for a long time," she says. "We gained respect from our colleagues and felt as though we had a right to a seat at the table and that we should be asking for that seat. And now people are asking us to come sit down instead of the other way around."

Moving Forward

Recently developed education programs, both in-person and online, have continued making huge strides in advancing the industry, says Jackson, and one of her goals is to ensure those efforts keep growing.

"The big one is for frontline people and focuses on customer service," she says. "That's the standard; everyone wants their people to deliver exceptional customer service." She points out that it's not as simple as the old customer-is-always-right philosophy; violating parking rules has significant consequences for other drivers, cities, and institutions.

BOOTHS & BARRIERS

- ▶ *Guard Booths*
- ▶ *Bollards*
- ▶ *Access Controls*
- ▶ *Traffic Spikes*
- ▶ *Security Fencing*

Creating a safer environment begins by securing the perimeter.



BOOTH & BUILDING STRUCTURES

AMERISTARBOOTH.COM | 855.526.6847

ASSA ABLOY, the global leader in door opening solutions

AMERISTAR®

ASSA ABLOY

“We’re helping find the balance between educating the public about what they should and shouldn’t be doing and letting them know the consequences of what they do. We need our employees to feel like they have the information and the tools to give customers the right information.”

That, she says, marks a change from the way parking enforcement officers used to work. “People are listening to us,” she says. “In the past five or six years, we’ve all tried to empower our employees more. On the parking side, we empower our enforcement staff to go out and do the right thing, and we try to give them the recognition they deserve.”

All of that is of personal interest to Jackson and will be a continuing priority during her term as IPI chair. “I want to stay involved in the professional-level side of what IPI does,” she says. “I’m still very interested in training seminars and Conference programming and so on. I definitely see that outreach continuing.”

Another priority is ensuring that members and industry professionals continue to be informed about all IPI offers. Getting the word out, she says, is critical. “We’ll continue to work on the initiatives we’ve started, and I want to make sure members take advantage of all IPI has to offer,” she says.

That includes research. “I want people to know IPI is the source for parking information,” she explains. “I want people to say their information came from IPI—that we are the source.” That will involve further building IPI’s library of information in ways members, especially those new to the industry, can easily access and use.

“We have this new generation of directors coming in who aren’t coming in from the school of hard knocks,” says Jackson. “They’re coming in with finance, business, and economic development backgrounds, backgrounds many directors didn’t have way back when. Our professionals have a different education level than they did 20 or 30 years ago, and it’s important for people coming from other industries to learn this industry even though they might not have worked from the bottom up. They need to understand permits and events, enforcement, TDM, and customer service. You don’t only have to know the business side

of parking but understand the functional side too. IPI is the source for that.”

Sustainability will also play a big role in the next few years, she says, as it will in the rest of the world. “We’re trying to get people to think about alternative modes,” says Jackson. “If you live in a downtown, you might not have a car. You might rely on public transportation or a bike or a carshare option. In the last five to 10 years, all of that

has integrated and weaved its way into the transportation-parking marriage.”

Jackson says she’s excited for her term as IPI chair and ready to hit the ground running and she’s looking forward to putting her unique background and perspective to work on a new level. “We as a group of people represent an important industry,” she says. “We are gaining that recognition. Parking really matters.”

Macurco

GAS DETECTION

Gas Detection
Ventilation and Control

Building owners and facility managers want to provide safe and effective parking garages while minimizing the energy costs associated with HVAC. Macurco Gas Detection helps engineers, integrators and installers to provide suitable gas detection and control systems for enclosed parking garages.

Detection products for Carbon Monoxide (CO), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), Natural Gas, Propane and other Toxic & Combustible Gases



Manufactured by Aerionics, Inc. Phone: 1-877-367-7891
Email: info@aerionicsinc.com Website: www.macurco.com