



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES
of Illinois

THE CONNECTOR

MAY 2023



KEVIN ARTL
PRESIDENT & CEO

LEADERSHIP & POLICY BRIEFING

Legislative Update

Over 6,500 individual pieces of legislation have been introduced in the General Assembly this year, but as we head into the final weeks of legislative session, ACEC Illinois has been successful so far in efforts to defend QBS, protect Illinois' road fund and advance legislation to help streamline processes and reduce red tape.

With a scheduled adjournment date of May 19th, much can still happen and we are monitoring items that could have a negative impact on the business climate while also looking for opportunities to expand tax credits and ease regulatory burdens for the industry.

Engineers Take to the Capitol

ACEC Illinois members participated in our annual lobby in April. Meetings included updates from Agencies and the Governor's Team, including: Secretary of Transportation



Omer Osman, IDOT Director of Highways Steve Travia, IDOT Chief of Staff Georgina White, Tollway Executive Director Cassaundra Rouse, Deputy Governor Bria Scudder and First Assistant Deputy Governor Camile Lindsay.

Legislative meetings included Speaker of the House Chris Welch, Senate President Don Harmon, Assistant Majority Leader Jay Hoffman, Senate Transportation Committee Chairman Ram Villivalam, Senate Transportation Minority

Spokesperson Don DeWitte, House Deputy Republican Leader Ryan Spain and many more.

During the meetings, ACEC IL members advocated to protect ReBuild Illinois funding, support the the I-290/Blue Line Modernization project, the ACEC IL Land Acquisition reform bill and measures to provide both IDOT and Illinois engineering companies new incentives to recruit and retain engineering talent.

ACEC Illinois Land Acquisition Reform Passes House Committee Unanimously

New legislation to streamline IDOT's land acquisition process was approved unanimously by the House State Government Administration Committee.

The legislation, **Senate Bill 2424**, sponsored by Senator Villivalam in the Senate and Rep. Abdelnasser Rashid codifies the past practice of having this essential service procured via qualifications-based selection (QBS). QBS has proven to deliver the best value to agencies and also taxpayers.

The legislation now heads to the House of Representatives for final approval before being sent to the Governor.

The Daily Line-- ACEC Illinois: Illinois needs a competitive edge to recruit and retain engineering talent

Below are excerpts from an ACEC Illinois Op-Ed published by The Daily Line. To read the full article, [click here](#).

After decades of neglect, Governor Pritzker and bipartisan leaders in the House and Senate made a promise to Illinois citizens — they were going to Rebuild Illinois. The \$45 billion Rebuild Illinois infrastructure program was a historic capital investment focused on repairing and modernizing the state's infrastructure network, while the bipartisan federal Infrastructure Investment in Jobs Act (IIJA) is a \$1.2 trillion investment in the nation's infrastructure that further fulfilled the need for funding. With many counties and municipalities also approving their own capital programs, the good news is that Illinois is considered one of the best-positioned states to take full advantage of the funding offered by the IIJA.

But now, Illinois must take the next critical step — make the investment in human capital so we can get the job done!

The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) Research Institute estimated that the nation needs an additional 82,000 engineers to fully deliver all the projects to be funded under the IIJA. Much like Illinois is at the center of the nation's transportation

network, we should also be at the center of the engineering industry's growth to meet the demands of these historic investments.

As every other state in the nation faces these same challenges, Illinois needs a competitive edge to recruit and retain engineering talent and make the state the top destination for engineers. Our goal is to recruit talent from across the nation and make sure those graduating from our own engineering schools, such as the University of Illinois, University of Illinois-Chicago, Illinois Institute of Technology and others across the state stay here in Illinois to work for Illinois firms or agencies on critical projects.

This is why we are supporting legislation such as **(HB 2424)** and **(SB 2190)**, which would enable the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to provide student loan repayment assistance to qualifying employees, incentivizing educated professionals to remain in-state to work on the state's highest priority infrastructure projects. We are also supporting **(HB 2425)** and **(SB 2282)**, which provide for a tax credit of 10 percent of the salary paid to recent graduates of Illinois' engineering schools and 5 percent of the salary paid to recent graduates of engineering schools outside of Illinois.

Kevin Artl is the President and CEO of the American Council of Engineering Companies of Illinois.



Eight Illinois Infrastructure Projects, Engineering Firms Selected For National Recognition

I-74 Corridor Over the Mississippi River, Jane Bryne Interchange Lead The Honor Roll

For their uniqueness, originality, technical innovation and social and economic value, eight Illinois infrastructure projects and the engineering firms behind their construction have been selected for honor at the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA). Known industry-wide as the "Academy Awards of the engineering industry," nomination for the awards took place in March and adjudication was conducted by a national 27-member panel of built environment leaders, along with experts from government, the media and academia.

Leading the pack of winners from Illinois with the Grand Award is the **I-74 Corridor Over the Mississippi River**, a one-billion-dollar complex, mega-project borne out of the need for increased capacity and structural improvements along a 7.8-mile stretch of I-74 in the Quad Cities (IL/IA) that was designed and constructed by Alfred Benesch and Co. and Modjeski & Masters for the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Iowa DOT. The **Jane Bryne Interchange**, a testament to engineering and transportation innovation which was reconstructed by AECOM and TranSystems as a joint venture for IDOT will receive the Honor Award for its capacity to reduce highway congestion that plagues Chicago, a national transportation hub with large amounts of vehicular, rail and freight traffic.

Six other Illinois infrastructure projects and engineering firms were named winners in the National Recognition Award category. They are the **Gantry Erection of the Mile Long Bridge on I-294** constructed by Collins Engineers, Inc. for Illinois Tollway as part of the \$4 billion Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project, **Lakefront Trail Widening at DLSD Bascule Bridge** completed by WSP USA for Chicago DOT's Division of Engineering to encourage non-motorized travel for Chicago residents and visitors and connect the downtown center and riverwalk with Navy Pier, the **Wells/Wentworth Connector** -

Section 3 improvements completed by WSP USA for the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), that creates a new road between Chicago's Loop and Chinatown; the **I-294/I-57 Interchange, Phase 2** constructed by T.Y. Lin International Great Lakes Inc. and Wight & Company for Illinois Tollway to help adjacent communities in the region to attract new development and support existing businesses; **Phillips 66 Dock Lines Replacements** completed by Farnsworth Group Inc. for Phillips 66, WRB Refining LP to help transport hydrocarbons to and from the Wood River Refinery and the **Tri-State Tollway's (I-294) BNSF Railway Bridge** constructed by Gannett Fleming, TranSystems Corp. and HR Green for Illinois Tollway.

"The commitment of state agencies and Illinois engineers to the development, maintenance and modernization of our state's road and transportation infrastructure has always been exceptional," said **Omer Osman, Secretary of the Illinois Department of Transportation**. "We are proud and delighted that many of the transformative projects across our state have been selected for honor on the national stage and we look forward to celebrating with all the winners."

"We are happy to see that many of the road and bridge projects recently delivered by our engineering and construction partners have been selected for national recognition," said **Cassandra Rouse, Executive Director, Illinois Tollway**. "This recognition highlights and strengthens our commitment to constant maintenance and upgrade of Tollway infrastructure that are critical for the safe movement of goods and people, the creation of jobs and improvement of our state's economy."

Press Coverage of ACEC IL EEA Winners

WHBF-TV Online: ["I-74 bridge wins national engineering honors"](#)

MSN: ["I-74 bridge wins national engineering honors"](#)

What's the Impact of Inflation and Supply Chain Issues on Project Cost—check out the [ENR Cost Report](#). Ryan Macander, Chair of the ACEC IL Construction Committee, provided an update on this information and Illinois specific cost-drivers during the IDOT D1 Committee Meeting.

Industry Updates

Update from IDOT for End of Fiscal Year Deadlines



**Illinois Department
of Transportation**

As you know, IDOT Bureau of Construction has been working very hard over the past several years to streamline our processes for contract management. Thus far, we have implemented several phases of our new Construction & Materials Management System (CMMS), and CMMS is now handling most functions related to construction documentation. The next phase of implementation is to replace our construction accounting system (BCM) with CMMS as well. Currently the processes for approving contract authorizations and pay estimates involve a lot of manual data entry into BCM. This phase of CMMS implementation will automate many of these functions, thereby

allowing us to streamline our approval processes considerably. There are a couple of phases left to fully integrating the authorization and payment process into CMMS, but this next step is the most significant and requires the most preparation. This email is to inform you that preparatory deadlines will be implemented next month.

There are other state accounting systems that CMMS must interact with. For the switchover (from BCM to CMMS) to be completed successfully, we must ensure that there are no "pending" transactions in any of these accounting systems, including the Comptroller's system, at the time of the switch. In our current environment, a pending transaction can take 3-4 weeks to complete its cycle, therefore IDOT must lock down our transaction processes several weeks prior to the switchover. To minimize risk for added industry disruption, we have scheduled our BCM/CMMS switchover to overlap with the Illinois Comptroller's annual fiscal year shutdown period, which typically occurs between early June to mid-July. By overlapping with the Comptroller's shut down period, industry will avoid back-to-back disruptions and experience a payment timeline that is similar to most June/July periods.

Please be aware that the following dates have been provided to our district staff. The most critical date is the deadline for submitting pay estimates.. As usual, IDOT staff will work diligently to include as much completed work as possible on a pay estimate prior to the established deadline.

- May 17 – LAST DAY TO SUBMIT AUTHORIZATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023. Note that work may still be authorized after this date, but the BC-22 Authorization form may not be submitted or published, and funds may not be adjusted until FY 24.
- May 26 – LAST DAY TO ENTER A NEW CONTRACT INTO BCM. This action creates the funds to pay for mobilization.
- May 30 – LAST DAY TO SUBMIT PAY ESTIMATES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023.

IDOT Staffing Updates

LaMarche appointed Deputy Secretary of Communications and Legislative Affairs

Mr. Jeremy LaMarche will be appointed as the Deputy Secretary of Communications and Legislative Affairs for the Illinois Department of Transportation. Mr. LaMarche is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a Double Major in Political Science/History. He also earned his Law Degree from Loyola University Chicago School of Law. Mr. LaMarche most recently served as the Director of Intergovernmental Policy and Secretary to the Authority at the Regional Transportation Authority.

Armstrong Appointed Bureau Chief for Operations in the Office of Highways Project Implementation

Mr. Kyle Armstrong will be appointed as the Bureau Chief for Operations in the Office of Highways Project Implementation for the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Mr. Armstrong is a graduate of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where he earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering. He has been employed at IDOT for nearly 25 years, the majority of his career being spent in the Bureau of Operations.

Thanks,
Kevin Artl
President and CEO
American Council of Engineering Companies of Illinois

MEMBER FIRM SPOTLIGHT



Ed Schoonveld, PE, has been busy building JWI's engineering and technology departments for the past 15 years. He is proud of the work his team has accomplished, the commitment to their own career growth, and the comradery. JWI boasts countless successfully completed projects across the greater Chicagoland area for the Illinois Tollway and DOT, the Chicago DOT, local counties as well as the Department of Aviation. From the planning and design of ITS and fiber backbones to the construction of major bridges and highways, we are honored to work alongside some of the best engineers in the industry. We are currently working on the Tollway's Fiber Optic Maintenance & Operations Systemwide, the Central Tri-State ITS SMART Corridor Construction, and O'Hare International Airport Transit System (ATS), to name a few.

Our directors have combined industry experience of over 120 years, so it's hard to pick just one favorite project from such storied careers. Each of our directors shared a project of which they are most proud to have played a part. Hope Garrett, PE: the Elmhurst Road Interchange Project at I-90. Jim Laskero, PE: the I-355 South Extension project. Chris Trcka, PE: the I-90 Jane Addams SMART Corridor project. John Farsatis, PE: the Dan Ryan Reconstruction project.

Being a part of ACEC has helped us stay connected with our peers, meet new clients, and advocate for fellow DBEs. There are many benefits as a member, from networking

opportunities and participating on various committees to improving procurement methods, such as enhancing QBS, to the ACEC's advocacy (legislative and otherwise) for DBE and small engineering firms that would otherwise be out of reach. The most important thing for us is being able to address issues affecting the industry. With the assistance of the ACEC and the collective support of fellow firms, we can find a resolution and accomplish great things – together. We are proud to be ACEC members and encourage others in our engineering community to join.

COMMITTEE CHAIR SPOTLIGHT



Emerging Professionals Committee Chair:

**Kevin Spitz, P.E. CM
Mead & Hunt**

How long have you been a part of ACEC IL?

- I joined ACEC IL in 2016 when I was asked to be a part of the ACEC Chicago Agencies committee.

What position(s) have you held within the ACEC-IL organization?

- I have been the chairman of the Emerging Professionals Committee since July of 2020.

Tell us a little bit about the committee you chair.

- Taking over this committee during the height of COVID was a challenge. A lot of the exposure that young professionals gain by informal interactions at the water cooler, attending meetings with bosses, or being invited to a networking event immediately ceased to exist. We looked for ways that the Emerging Professionals Committee could fill that void. We created a webinar series hosted by committee members and based entirely around less familiar topics (how *does* my company win the work I'm doing? What is a project budget and why is it my problem? I've heard the word scope, but maybe don't fully understand what it means?) We created Media Club (returning this June) to help foster small group interactions between emerging professionals and industry leaders. We helped company owners and presidents by hosting a webinar and creating a quantitative survey on what Young Professionals think Post-Covid workplace should be. And when COVID restrictions eased, we included social and service events to the mix as well. Finally, I stress to our members that as important as it is to get in front of industry leaders, it is equally important we network within our own committee. I am a steadfast believe that today's emerging professionals are tomorrow's decision makers.

What's the number one reason people should join your committee?

- Our committee members get to take ownership of the programs they create. From our webinar series to social and service events to media club we provide opportunities for our members to network, gain exposure in the industry, and learn about the topics that are important to them.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

- In my spare time I enjoy a jog around the neighborhood, cooking dinner for the family, playing catch with my twin 7-year olds boys, playing some dollhouse with my 4-year old daughter, or if I truly have some time for myself – rocking out playing the piano and singing.

Tell us one fun fact about yourself.

- Before settling down after having a third child, I was an NCAA Women's Division III and Junior College Basketball Official. Before work and during my lunch hour I would study rules and game film so I could use my nights and weekends to travel across the Midwest calling about 60 basketball games each winter!

ACEC Illinois Engineers at the Capitol



UPCOMING EVENTS

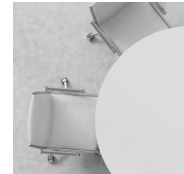
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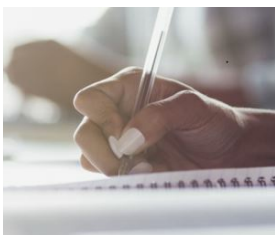
ADVOCACY



EDUCATIONAL



BUSINESS



Alternative Project Delivery Workshop with IDOT and Tollway

May 15, 2023 | 9:00a.m. - 5:30p.m.

Location: Harry Caray's, Lombard
70 Yorktown Center
Lombard, Illinois

Registration [Here](#)



Two-Dimensional Hydraulic Modeling of Rivers Course

May 16, 2023 | 8:00a.m. - May 18, 2023 | 4:30p.m.

Location: Northern Illinois University
1120 E. Diehl Road
Naperville, IL 60563

Registration [Here](#)



ACEC Illinois Golf Outing

May 22, 2023 | 12:00p.m.

Eagle Brook Country Club
2288 Fargo Boulevard, Geneva, IL 60134

Registration [Here](#)



Spring Board Meeting & Luncheon

June 6, 2023 | 9:30a.m. - 2:30p.m.

Location: Harry Caray's, Lombard
70 Yorktown Center
Lombard, Illinois

Registration [Here](#)

MISSING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOURS FROM CLASSES YOU ALREADY TOOK?

- EMAIL BETHANY@ACECIL.ORG
- INCLUDE: CLASS NAME, DATE OF CLASS, ATTENDEE EMAIL ADDRESS



UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Click Here: [Committee Meeting Schedule \(acecil.org\)](#)

Please contact Emily Martinez, Director of Membership, for committee meeting details: emily@acecil.org

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES



ENGINEERING ENTERPRISES, INC. WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBER

Tony Radomski has joined our Construction Group as a Project Technician. He holds a IEPA Public Water Supply Operator, Class C license and IEPA Wastewater Treatment Works Operator, Collection Systems and Class 4 license. He brings 17 years of hands-on experience that will be valuable in the field overseeing water and wastewater infrastructure projects for our clients. He will primarily be working out of the Sugar Grove office.

[Full Article Here](#)



PETER WALLERS, PE, CFM, CHAIRMAN ENGINEERING ENTERPRISES, INC. AWARD WINNER

Congratulations to Peter Wallers, PE, CFM, Chairman of the Board of Engineering Enterprises, Inc. (EEI) on being chosen for the 2023 Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Visionary Award.

Pete graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Marquette University. He is a licensed Professional Engineer (PE) in Wisconsin and Illinois. He is also a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM). Pete was named the President and CEO of EEI in 2006 and became Chairman of the Board in 2020.

[Full Article Here](#)



ENGINEERING ENTERPRISES, INC. ANNOUNCES PROMOTION OF CURTIS DETTMANN, PE

Engineering Enterprises, Inc. (EEI) is pleased to announce Curtis T. Dettmann, PE, promoted to Senior Project Manager. His recent promotion within the firm is in recognition of his ability to take on additional responsibilities, demonstrated leadership and positive impact on the organization.

Curt has been with the firm for three years and he has demonstrated his strong project management and leadership skills on every project he takes the lead on.

According to Brad Sanderson, PE, Chief Operating Officer / President states, "Curt continues to excel on a variety of design and construction projects and is well deserving of this promotion."

[Full Article Here](#)



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CONSTRUCTION
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**The Economic Outlook with
FMI's Jay Bowman**



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Building Bridges

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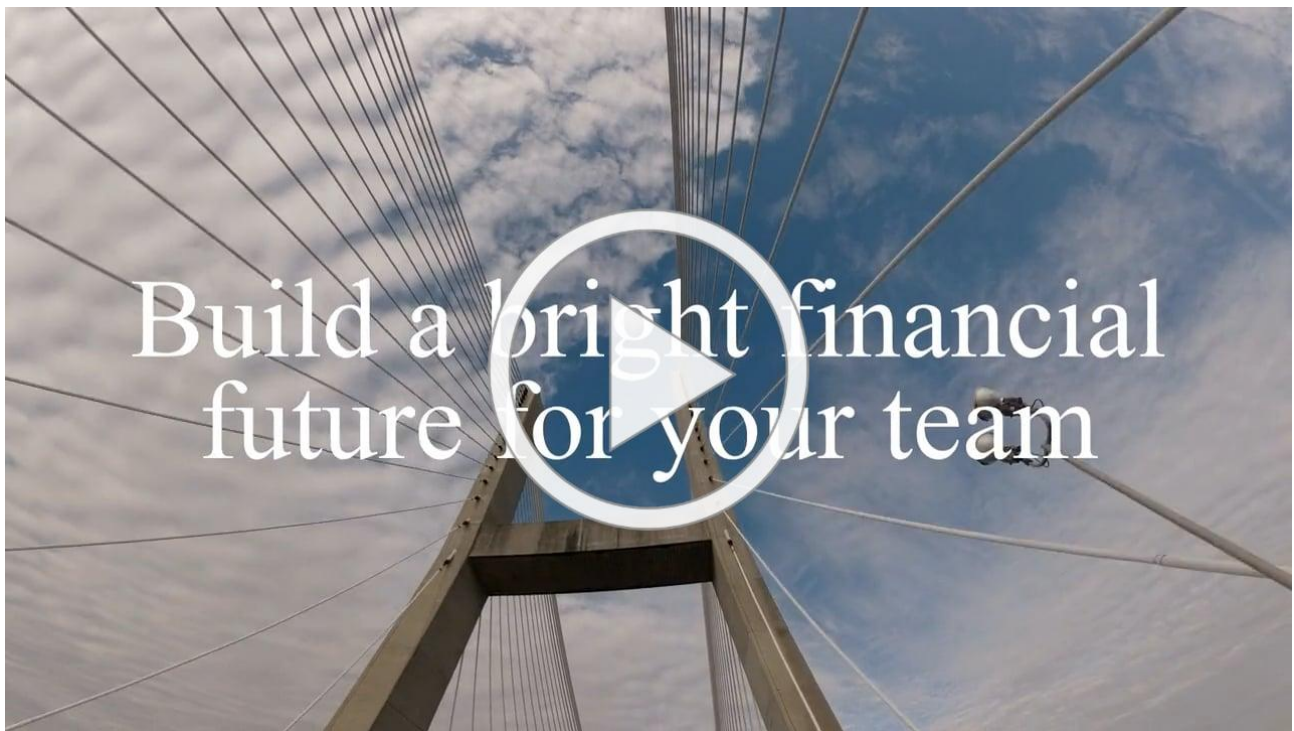
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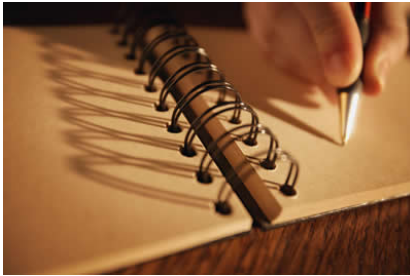
We would love to see your furry coworkers!

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SUBMIT UPDATES & ARTICLES:

Please submit firm update & news articles by the 15th of each month to: bethany@acecil.org

Articles and updates will be included in the membership newsletter, posted on our website, and shared through our social media feeds.

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