



## 2021 January NEWSLETTER: **THE CONNECTOR**



### LEADERSHIP & POLICY BRIEFING

ACEC Illinois President & CEO – Kevin Artl

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#### **Big Changes at the State House**

After a nearly 40-year reign as Speaker of the House, Michael Madigan's term has come to a close as the Illinois House elected State Rep. Chris Welch to serve as Speaker for the 102nd General Assembly. In addition, Senate Republicans elected Senator Dan McConchie to the position of Senate Republican Leader and Senator Don Harmon was re-elected as Senate President and Rep. Jim Durkin retains his role as House Republican Leader. With the series of changes and new leadership among the legislative leaders, it is widely expected that individual members and committees will have greater influence in policy making moving forward.

#### **ACEC Illinois Champions Get Leadership Roles**

Key ACEC Illinois Champions will be serving in leadership roles in the upcoming General Assembly, including:

- State Senator Ram Villivalam—Senate Transportation Committee Chair
- State Senator Don DeWitte—Assistant Republican Leader and Senate Transportation Minority Spokesperson
- State Representative Jay Hoffman—Assistant Majority Leader
- State Representative Marty Moylan—House Transportation Committee Chair
- State Representative Ryan Spain—Assistant Republican Leader
- State Representative Tim Butler—Assistant Republican Leader

#### **A Very Busy "Behind the Scenes" in both Springfield and DC**

With the Illinois General Assembly and Congress continuing to find ways to effectively function during COVID, what's going on "behind the scenes" is now taking precedent and really considered a precursor to action as opposed to just innuendo or rumor. Let's take a closer look at what's going on "Behind the Scenes".

*Springfield*

- Both the House and Senate seem to be advancing toward a schedule that will have very limited in-person meetings until mid-March, but both chambers will seek to do committee work remotely and may even attempt to enact legislative authority to have full floor votes done remotely.
- The budget will dominate legislative discussions this Spring as lawmakers seek federal relief to gap a \$5 billion budget deficit. Without substantial relief, the state will most likely be forced to borrow against a Federal line of credit.
- On the transportation front, there are serious conversations occurring with industry and elected officials regarding project delivery tools, specifically Design Build. On recent calls with ACEC Illinois members, Deputy Governor Christian Mitchell, Senate Transportation Chair Ram Villivalam and Senate Minority Spokesperson Don DeWitte all expressed interest in evaluating the options and exploring the potential of design build, expanded tolling and P3 opportunities.
- In addition, ACEC Illinois has been working with legislative staff to finalize language for a bill that will codify the use and acceptance of electronic signatures for IDOT, Tollway, CDB, IEPA and other state agencies. We expect to introduce the measure in the coming weeks and it already has broad, bi-partisan support.

### *Washington*

- COVID Relief is at the forefront of conversations right now as the Biden Administration seeks to build a bi-partisan consensus for its \$1.9 trillion COVID Relief Package. The Administration's package includes \$350 billion in state and local government assistance.
- In terms of infrastructure, Biden wants to spend \$2 trillion on infrastructure, including \$50 billion on road and bridge repairs just in his first year in office, the looming question is how. Transportation Secretary Nominee Pete Buttigieg has begun to distance the Administration from supporting a gas tax increase (the tax has not changed since 1993) while leaving options like deficit spending as a possibility.

### **PPP Updates**

ACEC Illinois continues advocacy efforts to find a fix for PPP. Last week I had briefings with Cong. Marie Newman's office and Cong. Rodney Davis' office as we seek federal legislation to ensure PPP loan forgiveness rules are applied fairly and equitably to our industry. This week we have meetings with the FHWA and additional members of Congress. ACEC Illinois has also been briefing Illinois lawmakers on the potential impact the PPP guidance could have on Illinois engineering companies. If you would like to contact your member of Congress on this issue, [click here](#).

### **Governor Completes Illinois Tollway Board**

#### *Jacqueline Gomez Fuentes Appointed to Tollway Board*

Governor Pritzker appointed Jacqueline Gomez Fuentes to fill the last vacant spot on the Illinois Tollway Board. Fuentes serves as the Director of Supplier and Workforce Diversity at the Obama Foundation. The appointment requires Illinois Senate approval.

### **Representative Davis Introduces Bill to Invest in Infrastructure Improvements**

U.S. Representative Rodney Davis has introduced H.R. 2541, the Building United States Infrastructure and Leveraging Development (BUILD) Act, with Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) to encourage road, bridge, rail, and freight improvements. [Read more here](#).

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

# BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



**Mark Harms, P.E.**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**SCI Engineering Inc.**

**How long have you been in the Engineering industry?**  
36 years

**What position(s) have you held within the ACEC-IL organization?** Committee chair for a number of years, board member, VP, Chair, National Director.

**What's the number one reason firms should become an ACEC-IL member?** This organization represents our business concerns like no other. ACEC leads with effective liaison with public agencies to increase the understanding with the way our profession works (QBS) and fair methods of compensation.

**What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**  
Camping, cycling, hiking, photography.

**Tell us one fun fact about yourself.**  
Always enjoy playing board games with our kids, especially Trivial Pursuit, except for the darned pink wedges. My Achilles heel.

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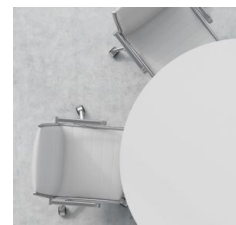
## save the date UPCOMING EVENTS



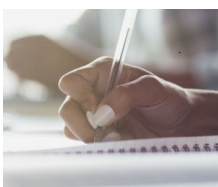
ADVOCACY



EDUCATIONAL



BUSINESS



### **IDOT R2 and R5 Update and Lookahead**

February 4, 2021

Panelists: Keith Roberts (R5) and Masood Ahmad (R2)

Details & Registration [Here](#)

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### **Webinar: Illinois Tollway Update**

February 9, 2021

11:00am

Please join us for a virtual Illinois Tollway Update with Executive Director José Alvarez. After the update we will have Q & A with Kevin Artl, ACEC Illinois President/CEO moderating.

Details & Registration [HERE](#)

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### **Secrets Management Don't Want you to know**

February 10, 2021

Noon-1:00pm

-1 PDH

-Complimentary to ACEC Illinois members

-Hosted by the ACEC IL, Emerging Professionals Committee

Details & Registration [Here](#)

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### **Optimizing 2021 Tax Incentives for Engineering Firms**

February 25, 2021

10:00am-11:00am

Details & Registration [Here](#)

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### **Life on the other Side, A public Agency Perspective**

March 10, 2020

Noon-1:00pm

-1 PDH

-Complimentary to ACEC Illinois members

-Hosted by the ACEC IL, Emerging Professionals Committee

Details & Registration [Here](#)

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## **UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

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

Please contact Amanda Johnson, Director of Membership, for committee meeting details:  
[amanda@acecil.org](mailto:amanda@acecil.org)

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## **MEMBER UPDATES:**

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**ENGINEERING ENTERPRISES, INC. IS PROUD  
TO ANNOUNCE THE OPENING OF ITS NEW  
BRANCH OFFICE IN ROCKFORD**



EEl's Rockford office will be led by Tim Holdeman. Tim brings over 30 years of consulting, water utility and public works management experience with him. As a former Rockford employee, he witnessed infrastructure investment in the region firsthand. Tim is especially excited to work in the downtown Rockford office and be part of the energy in the area.

For Full Article Click [Here](#)



## Klinger Hires Engineering Assistant

QUINCY, IL, JANUARY 25, 2020 — Victoria Crouthamel, EI, has joined the Civil / Site Department of Klingner & Associates, PC (Klingner) as an Engineering Assistant. Crouthamel, who is based in Klingner's Quincy office, brings seven years of experience assisting with design, land planning, technical reports, construction plans, and permitting. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Engineering from the University of New Hampshire.



## Clark Dietz Hires New Chief Financial Office

CHAMPAIGN, IL, January 25, 2021 – Seth Swartz, CPA has joined Clark Dietz as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and is based out of the Champaign office. Seth attended Parkland College and the University of Illinois, where he earned both B.S. and M.S. degrees in Accounting with a concentration in taxation. After passing the CPA exam, Seth joined Clifton Larson, where he worked for five years. Since 2013 Seth has served as vice president and controller for a group of companies focused on distribution in the music industry. Locally, Seth has served on the board of directors for University Baptist Church and Foundation in Champaign. We are pleased to welcome him to the team.



Natasha P. Woodlock, E.I.



Ryan M. Sikes, P.E., PTOE

## Engineering Enterprises, Inc. Announces Two New Staff Members

For Full Article Click [Here](#)

**CBBEL Named One of Best Workplaces for Commuters in 2021**



For the fourth consecutive year, Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. (CBBEL) has been named one of the nation’s Best Workplaces for Commuters. The designation honors CBBEL’s long-standing and award-winning [Bike-to-Work program](#), now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year. For Full Article Click [Here](#)

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## Geotechnics names new department manager



For Full Article Click [HERE](#)

Geotechnics – a division of Klingner & Associates, P.C. (Klingner) – has named Brian Joseph Sick, PE, its new Geotechnical / Construction Materials Testing Department Manager. Sick is a long-time employee of Geotechnics with over 25 years of experience. In this new role, Sick will oversee the full-service laboratory in Hannibal, MO; a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-validated laboratory in Burlington, IA; and a staff of engineers and technicians performing geotechnical and environmental drilling investigations and construction materials testing services in Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois.

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## Sargent & Lundy announces 2021 Executive Appointments

For Full Article Click [Here](#)

### Senior Vice Presidents



### Vice Presidents



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# WELCOME NEW MEMBER:





TKDA  
5151 Mochel Drive # 205  
Downers Grove, IL 60515  
630-499-4110  
www.tkda.com

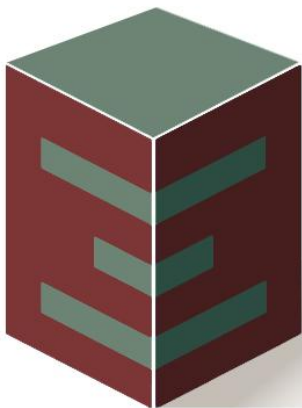
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## WELCOME NEW AFFILIATE MEMBER:

River Strategies  
1540 N. LaSalle Dr.  
Chicago, IL 60610  
312-442-2375  
RiverStrategies.com



Next Generation Strategies  
4N752 Ware Woods Drive  
Saint Charles, IL 60175  
312-972-7348  
NextGenerationstrategies.com



## ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE AWARDS **2021**

The Engineering Excellence Awards recognize the year's most outstanding engineering achievements. ACEC Illinois uses the Engineering Excellence Awards Program to celebrate the amazing work provided to member clients, recognize the accomplishments of our emerging professionals, applaud the contributions made to the engineering profession, and highlight the impact made to society.

2021 Project Highlights: [HERE](#)

2021 Engineering Excellence Awards Winner List: [HERE](#)

2021 Emerging Professional of the Year Nominations: [HERE](#)

**Please join us in our virtual celebration this year!**  
**REGISTRATION & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES: [HERE](#)**

*\*All registrants will be mailed a Wine & Dine Box!*

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## **Gov. Pritzker Announces Appointment to the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority**

Building on a strong team of diverse experts in their fields, Governor JB Pritzker announced the following appointments in his administration:

### **ILLINOIS STATE TOLL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY**

Jacqueline Gomez will serve on the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority.\* Gomez serves as the Director of Supplier and Workforce Diversity at the Obama Foundation where she is responsible for the implementation and management of the Foundation's diversity and inclusion programming. Previously, Gomez worked as the Director of Contract Compliance for Cook County and the Vice President of Business Development and Marketing at Sumac, Inc. In 2018, Gomez received the Advocacy Award for business diversity and inclusion from the Hispanic American Construction Industry Association. Gomez earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a Master of Business Administration from National Louis University.

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## 2021 ACEC PAC Fundraiser

- \$100 per ticket
- Each ticket purchase gets an ACEC Illinois Fleece Vest
- 1 entry will be drawn for \$100 gift card to Cooper's Hawk



Drawing to be held March 5<sup>th</sup>  
Upon purchase, you will receive an email for vest size and preferred delivery address.

## Make Your PAC Contribution

Join ACEC Illinois members the third Tuesday of every month for networking. Grab your cup of coffee, join the meeting, and then be ready for a 30-45min breakout group.

\*Conversation topics will be provided but suggestions are

always welcomed.



## COFFEE WITH COLLEAGUES

Third Tuesday of the Month  
at 9:00am



Join us for a  
Virtual Coffee Break!



[REGISTER HERE](#)

## Blues OR Bliss??

Did your health insurance renewal give you the blues?  
Were you presented:

- alternate carriers or alternate networks within the same carrier for savings opportunities?
- a reduction in medical spend by bundling other lines of coverage?
- alternate funding solutions

Far too often, brokers wait until the renewal to analyze these items and the result is that it doesn't leave a whole lot of time to actually make changes. If you are looking for a partner the entire year and not just at renewal, please give us a call.

Dan Daley:  
630.737.9358 | [ddaley@GoCGO.com](mailto:ddaley@GoCGO.com)



Thank you to ACEC for sponsoring  
the 2021 MATHCOUNTS® trophies!

ACEC  
Illinois



If you'd like to support MATHCOUNTS this year,  
contact the ISPE office at 217/544-7424  
or email Jeannine Harlow at:  
[jeannine@frontlineco.com](mailto:jeannine@frontlineco.com)

The Illinois Engineering Initiative (formerly the Illinois Society of Professional Engineers Foundation) annually hosts Illinois' MathCounts competition. MathCounts is a math competition held annually throughout the US for students in grades 6-8. This year the event is being held virtually. ACEC IL was able to be a sponsor for the event this year.

Learn more about MathCounts and the Illinois Engineering Initiative [HERE](#)

## FURRY FRIENDS

#ACECILPETS



We would love to see your  
furry coworkers!

Tag us in your posts:

#ACECILPETS

## 2021 Celebrates ACEC Illinois' 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Be on the lookout for some exciting announcements and reflections throughout the year.



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### CHECK OUT OUR NEW MEDIA PAGE

Follow the link: [Videos | ACEC-IL](#)

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### SUBMIT UPDATES & ARTICLES:

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

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

Website: [www.acecil.org](http://www.acecil.org)

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