



# ACEC ILLINOIS THE CONNECTOR

## LEADERSHIP & POLICY BRIEFING



KEVIN ARTL  
PRESIDENT & CEO

May 2026

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 **Illinois engineering firms shine nationally**



Illinois engineering firms are proving their mettle with national recognition this year's National Engineering Excellence Awards.

**Why it matters:** This recognition underscores the innovative spirit and technical prowess of Illinois' engineering community, highlighting transformative projects that enhance safety, mobility, and quality of life.

**Driving the news:** Six ACEC Illinois member firms earned accolades at the 2026 ACEC National Engineering Excellence Awards:

- Crawford, Murphy & Tilly - National Grand Award for runway upgrades at Reagan National Airport.
- HDR - Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Bridges over 87th Street and Roberts Road.
- A. Epstein and Sons International Inc. - Flyover in Chicago at Navy Pier.
- EXP U.S. Services Inc. - Replacement of Nettle Creek Aqueduct.
- Strand Associates, Inc. - Sequoit Creek Park for the Village of Antioch.
- GRAEF - Kennedy Expressway (I-90/I-94) Rehabilitation Project.

**What they're saying:** "These awards highlight the tremendous talent, creativity, and technical expertise found within Illinois engineering firms," said Kevin Artl, President & CEO of ACEC Illinois.

**Zoom in:** For more details, check out the stories in the [Springfield Herald News](#), [Sun-Times](#) and WMAV.

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## ACEC IL meets USDOT for key talks



ACEC Illinois Executive Committee recently met with USDOT leadership in D.C. to advocate for Illinois infrastructure priorities as federal transportation funding discussions progress.

**Why it matters:** These meetings are vital for ensuring Illinois' infrastructure needs are front and center in federal funding decisions. - ACEC Illinois is pushing for sustained infrastructure investment and efficient project delivery to support the state's major transportation projects.

**Key priorities:** Release of funding for awarded projects

- Mega Grant Priority: I-290 Eisenhower Expressway Reconstruction, crucial for regional mobility and economic competitiveness. (\$95.6m)
- RURAL Grant Priority: Illinois Route 9 Multimodal Improvement Project, enhancing ADA accessibility and flood mitigation. (\$52.8m)

**Broader discussions:** ACEC Illinois also addressed long-term funding stability, qualifications-based selection, and a dedicated federal commuter rail bridge program.

## Springfield debates Bears stadium, infrastructure priorities



As the Illinois legislative session nears its end, ACEC Illinois is actively engaging lawmakers on key issues impacting infrastructure and economic development.

**Why it matters:** These discussions affect Illinois' engineering industry, infrastructure investment, and economic growth. - The outcomes will shape the state's future projects and workforce development.

**Driving the news:** The Chicago Bears stadium proposal remains a focal point, with the Illinois House approving a measure for property tax relief. - A Governor's Office analysis suggests [minimal statewide relief](#), adding complexity to the debate as it moves to the Senate. The measure under consideration in the Senate also could potentially provide assistance to the One Central project in Chicago and a Springfield Conference Center plan.

**Infrastructure focus:** ACEC Illinois is deeply involved in discussions about **SB3825** with the ACEC IL Advocacy Team testifying before the Senate Appropriations Committee, emphasizing the bill's potential to transform water infrastructure and public health statewide. - The \$2 billion bond authorization for lead service line replacement is a strategic priority for ensuring safe water delivery and supporting engineering projects.

**Workforce development:** The RISE tax credit, aka **Retain Illinois Students of Engineering (HB1803)** is under active negotiation with ACEC Illinois, the measure's sponsor Representative Cochran and the Illinois Department of Revenue. - This initiative aims to fortify Illinois' engineering talent pipeline by offering incentives for hiring and retaining emerging engineers, addressing workforce shortages, and enhancing the state's competitive edge in infrastructure development.

As the legislature begins its final few weeks of session, ACEC Illinois is actively engaged on these key issues and more.

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## ACEC IL advocates in D.C. for infrastructure



Ten members of the **ACEC Illinois Leadership Institute** traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with congressional staff and champion key federal infrastructure priorities for Illinois.

**Why it matters:** These meetings are crucial for ensuring Illinois communities receive the necessary resources to plan and implement essential infrastructure projects. - The Leadership Institute's advocacy supports maintaining a robust infrastructure pipeline.

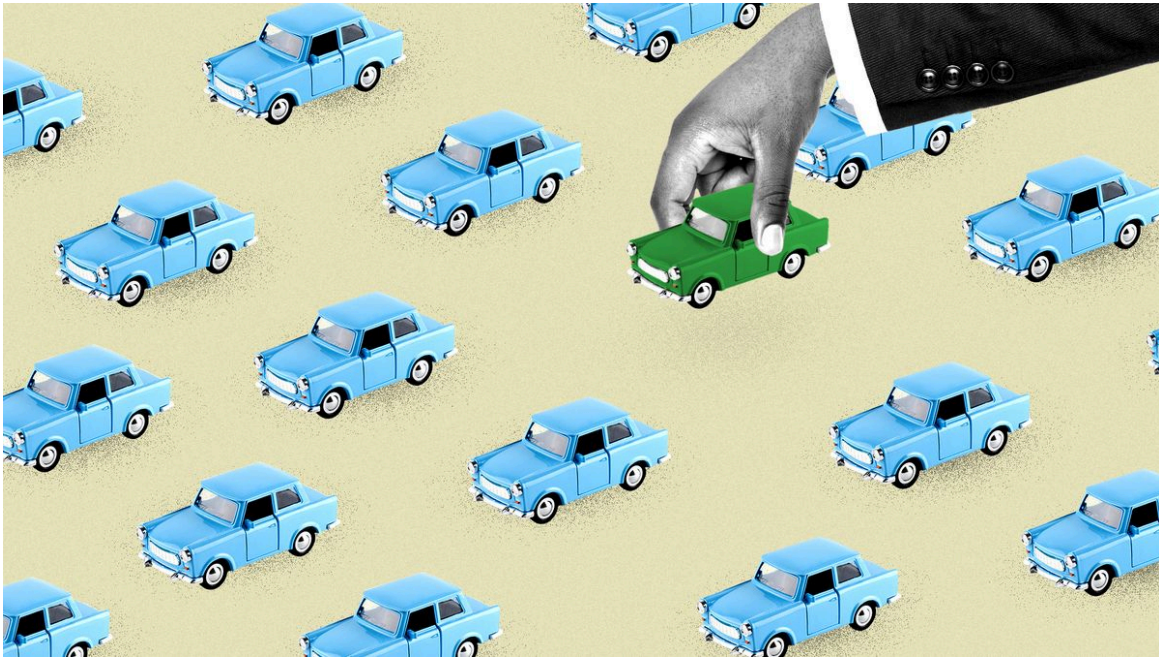
**Driving the news:** The delegation met with key congressional offices, including staff from the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Cong. Mike Quigley, Cong. Mike Bost, Cong. Nikki Budzinski, Cong. Chuy Garcia, Sen. Tammy Duckworth and Sen. Dick Durbin, focusing on surface transportation reauthorization and the Water Resources Development Act.

**The experience:** For Leadership Institute participants, the trip offered a firsthand look at the intersection of federal policy and engineering practice. - The historic House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee room served as a backdrop for discussions on sustained investment and public-private partnerships.

**Broader impact:** Through programs like the Leadership Institute, ACEC Illinois is preparing the next generation of industry leaders to advocate for policies that build a stronger infrastructure future.

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## Congress debates infrastructure funding



Congressional negotiations are ongoing for the next federal surface transportation reauthorization bill, aiming to replace the current law before its expiration on Sept. 30-- but with a scheduled bill mark-up for this week postponed, time and options are dwindling.

**Why it matters:** These discussions hold major implications for Illinois and the engineering industry, affecting federal funding levels, project delivery, and infrastructure stability. - The outcome will impact ReBuild Illinois and local transportation initiatives.

**Driving the news:** The House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee delayed the markup of the “highway bill” to May. - Chairman Sam Graves and Ranking Member Rick Larsen are negotiating the bill’s funding structure and size, with proposals ranging from \$500-\$600 billion.

**What they’re doing:** ACEC Illinois is actively engaging with Illinois’ congressional delegation and national leaders. - During a recent D.C. fly-in, ACEC Illinois Board members met with Congress and transportation staff to discuss infrastructure priorities like maintaining strong bridge formula funding and advancing a commuter rail bridge program.

**Between the lines:** A key issue is the potential inclusion of [electric and hybrid vehicle fees to support the Highway Trust Fund](#). - With increasing vehicle efficiency and EV adoption, fuel tax revenues are lagging behind infrastructure needs.

**Zoom in:** An [extension at this point seems more likely than a reauthorization](#) as it seems likely both chambers will miss the September 30th deadline.

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In April, The Market Edge Podcast hosted Mollie Carmichael, Principal, Masterplan and Product Insights from Zonda Homes. The podcast shares insights into the housing crisis from affordability to supply challenges and the projected surge in active adult communities.

[Listen Here!](#)

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## Sign up for the ACEC Illinois Energy Forum:

Please fill out below to be included on a special energy focused newsletter and briefings coming soon!

[Sign Up Here!](#)

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# ACEC ILLINOIS



## NCAA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT BRACKET CHALLENGE

First Place - Trophy Smack Belt!

1st place: \$500

2nd place: \$250

3rd place: \$100



(138)

Jason Martin 5fw5AQ

1st Place

160



(175)

Brian Welker p9Nlm2

2nd Place

154



(140)

Matt Davidson

3rd Place

136



## MEMBER UPDATES:

Woman  
OF THE YEAR

**Harvind  
Kaur  
Singh**

President & CEO  
Singh + Associates

**WTS 40**  
YEARS

Greater Chicago

**Congratulations:  
Woman of The Year**

Harvind Kaur Singh

President & CEO  
SINGH + Associates



Harvind Kaur Singh is the President and CEO of SINGH + Associates, a role she assumed in April 2019 following the leadership transition from company founder, Sadhu Singh Rikhiraj. Harvind has become a transportation nerd and a strong advocate for policy and funding in public infrastructure. She is committed to inclusive, transparent decision-making, ensuring diverse perspectives are considered, and the best path forward is openly debated. Drawing on her background as a television and radio writer and producer, Harvind brings a distinctive blend of communication, creativity, and strategic leadership to the AEC industry.

Under her direction, SINGH has continued to grow while cultivating a people-first culture and a forward-thinking business approach. She sets the strategic vision for the firm and oversees all aspects of operations, with a focus on building strong client relationships, empowering staff, and advancing innovation across disciplines.

Harvind is a passionate advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion within the engineering and construction industries. She was appointed to the State of Illinois Diversity Task Force focused on Disadvantaged, Minority, and Women Business Enterprises. Her leadership extends nationally through active involvement in numerous professional organizations. She currently serves on the WTS Greater Chicago Chapter Advisory Board, the ACEC Illinois Board of Directors, and Director on the Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association (IRTBA) Planning and Design Board. Through Harvind's unwavering commitment to WTS Greater Chicago, she has become a driving force in advancing inclusion across the transportation industry. As both an active member and corporate-level Executive Partner, she empowers women's leadership from mentoring rising professionals, to expanding opportunities for engagement at the WTS international level.

Committed to lifelong learning and staying ahead of industry trends, Harvind participates in executive education programs, industry seminars, and business development forums.

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**Team Spotlight: Bernadette Armendariz, MUPP, Planner**



InNova Consulting, Inc. is proud to spotlight and welcome Bernadette Armendariz, MUPP, to the InNova family.

Bernadette focuses on community engagement, bringing a thoughtful and people-centered approach to planning and infrastructure projects. Her experience has involved data and policy research and analysis, as well as community engagement work with a metropolitan transit agency, where she supported initiatives that connect technical solutions with real

community needs.

With a Master of Urban Planning and Policy (MUPP) from the University of Illinois Chicago, she brings both strategic insight and a strong understanding of how to create inclusive, effective engagement processes.

Bernadette highlights the growing importance of community voice in shaping infrastructure. She emphasizes that engagement is not one-size-fits-all and that early, intentional collaboration leads to stronger, more meaningful outcomes.

Her work reflects a commitment to bridging the gap between planning, policy, and the everyday experiences of the communities we serve. We are excited to have her on the team and officially welcome her to the InNova family





Morreale Communications is proud to announce the promotion of



## Michael Schuch

Associate Vice President,  
Transportation,  
Infrastructure and Mobility

Morreale Communications is proud to announce the promotion of Michael Schuch to Associate Vice President. With an extensive background in transportation, Schuch excels at leading communication strategies for complex, multidisciplinary projects. With years of leadership experience at the firm, he has become a trusted partner for government agencies and prime consultants alike. He will continue to deliver results-oriented solutions for the firm's key transportation clients, while overseeing the execution of large-scale infrastructure projects across the firm's portfolio.

### About Morreale Communications

Morreale Communications is a strategic communications firm that partners with organizations in times of change, opportunity and crisis. We empower clients to activate their voice by developing communications strategies that shape public opinion to transform outcomes and deliver results. Now in our 20th year, Morreale's celebrated Transportation, Infrastructure and Mobility practice demonstrates a proud history of supporting some of the most critical and high-profile road, highway, rail and airport projects across Illinois. Our award-winning firm specializes in strategic communications, public involvement, education and advocacy, issues management, and stakeholder and community engagement on behalf of a wide range of local and state transportation clients.

Certified BEP | DBE | WBE | WOSB

To learn more, visit [www.morrealecomm.com](http://www.morrealecomm.com)



## ENGINEERING ENTERPRISES, INC. WELCOMES ONE NEW STAFF MEMBER

Engineering Enterprises, Inc. (EEI), an award-winning civil engineering and land surveying firm, is pleased to announce the hiring of **Cindy Rosenthal** as a Project Engineer. **Cindy** graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering. She joins our Environmental Group, bringing valuable experience from her prior internship experiences.

"We are excited to welcome Cindy to our team," said Brad Sanderson, PE, Chief

Operating Officer / President. "Her addition to the team strengthens our workforce and positions us to better serve our clients and communities."

For more information about EEI and our services, please visit: [www.eeiweb.com](http://www.eeiweb.com).

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About Engineering Enterprises, Inc. (EEI)

Engineering Enterprises, Inc. (EEI), founded in 1974, is an award-winning consulting engineering firm providing services to public agencies and private entities throughout northern Illinois. Over 80 experienced firm members including licensed professional civil engineers, land surveyors, and support team members provide a full range of services for planning, design, and construction of infrastructure projects, funding assistance, and municipal consulting. Our core values guide our staff on every project from initiation through completion keeping us committed to quality, service, and value for our clients. By offering outstanding service to every client, every day, we are able to assist with bettering the communities in which we serve.



## Klingner Engineer Licensed in Missouri

**QUINCY, ILL., MAY 11, 2026** — Matthew Wendler, Transportation Engineer and Resident Construction Representative for Klingner & Associates, P.C. (Klingner), is now a registered Professional Engineer (PE) in the State of Missouri. His experience includes roadway/highway design and construction inspection for both municipal and state projects.

Wendler, who is also licensed in Illinois, is based in the firm's Quincy Regional Office. He holds a bachelor of science in math / physics-engineering from Bethel University and a bachelor of science in civil engineering from the University of Notre Dame.

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### **ABOUT KLINGNER & ASSOCIATES, P.C.**

Klingner & Associates, P.C. (Klingner) is a family and employee-owned engineering, surveying, and architecture firm focused on enhancing communities across the Midwest. Founded in 1905, Klingner features a staff of 160+ licensed engineers, architects, surveyors, and support personnel. This multidisciplinary team manages projects of all sizes and complexities from offices in Quincy, Ill.; Galesburg, Ill.; Carbondale, Ill.; Columbia, Mo.; Hannibal, Mo.; Cape Girardeau, Mo.; Burlington, Iowa; Davenport, Iowa; and Pella, Iowa. [www.klingner.com](http://www.klingner.com)

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## ENGINEERING ENTERPRISES, INC. ANNOUNCES PROMOTION OF FIVE VALUED EMPLOYEES

Engineering Enterprises, Inc. (EEI), an award-winning civil engineering and land surveying firm, announced the promotion of five employees to new roles within the company. The promotions reflect EEI's continued growth and its commitment to developing talent across the organization.

EEI is confident these team members will excel in their new roles and continue contributing to the firm's success. Please join us in congratulating them on their well-deserved promotions.



**Joshua Boatman** has been promoted to Survey Field Manager. A member of EEI's Land



**Matthew Taylor** has been promoted to Senior GIS Analyst. With more than 10 years at EEI,



**Angela Driessen** has been promoted to Project Technician (CAD). Over the past year, Angela

Survey Group for 27 years, he has consistently demonstrated growth as a surveying professional and a commitment to quality field operations.

he has been an integral part of the GIS Group, supporting a wide range of projects, including the mapping of numerous lead service line replacement initiatives.

has contributed to the firm's CAD department's success and continued growth.



**Austin Ford**

has been promoted to Project Technician (Field). Over the past year, he has supported EEI's Construction Group on one of the firm's largest lead service line replacement programs.



**Charlie Gambs**

has been promoted to Senior Technician (Field). During his year and a half with EEI's Land Survey Group, he has contributed to the success of numerous projects through his technical expertise and dedication.

For more information about EEI and its services, please visit [www.eeiweb.com](http://www.eeiweb.com).

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About Engineering Enterprises, Inc. (EEI)

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## ACEC Career Center

### Find Your Next Hiring Match

The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) Career Center helps you connect with qualified candidates who align with your firm's needs and long-term goals. Showcase your job openings and simplify the hiring process of growing your firm! As an added benefit, you can post internship opportunities at no cost—helping you reach emerging talent early.

Get started [here](#).



# ACEC ILLINOIS



**AFFILIATE MEMBER FIRM:**

**ProjectHuddle LLC**

Naperville, IL

[www.projecthuddlellc.com](http://www.projecthuddlellc.com)

Project Huddle LLC is a proud women-owned firm in Chicago founded by Disha Katwala. ProjectHuddle LLC focuses on project controls, program/project management, Construction Management services from inception to a completion of the project aimed at meeting a client's requirements in order to produce a functionally and financially viable project.

[Visit Here!](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS... ACEC ILLINOIS



[CHECK OUT THE CALENDAR  
HERE!](#)

Questions - please reach out!

### SUBMIT UPDATES & ARTICLES:

Please submit firm update & news articles by the 20th 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.



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