

### January 27, 2027

*Harry Caray's Ballroom, 70 Yorktown Shopping Center, Lombard, IL 60148*

#### Session 1: Managing Risk and Driving ROI in Engineering Firms

Instructors:

**Kevin Artl**  
President & CEO  
ACEC Illinois

**Paula Dixon**  
Former Senior Vice President  
Holmes Murphy & Associates

**Libby Braband**  
President  
Libby Dalton Braband Consulting, LLC

8:00 AM to 8:30 AM: Arrive

8:30 AM: Program Starts

12 PM to 1 PM: Lunch

4:30 PM: Program Concludes

### February 17, 2027

*Maggiano's Little Italy Oak Brook, 240 Oakbrook Center, Oak Brook, IL 60523*

#### Session 2: Building Stronger Firms: *Executive Communication, Talent Strategy & Organizational Culture*

Instructor:

**Kristi Weierbach, Ph.D., SPHR, SHRM-SCP**  
Managing Director, Workforce Advisory  
Stambaugh Ness

8:00 AM to 8:30 AM: Arrive

8:30 AM: Program Starts

12 PM to 1 PM: Lunch

4:30 PM: Program Concludes

### March 10, 2027

*Maggiano's Little Italy Oak Brook, 240 Oakbrook Center, Oak Brook, IL 60523*

#### Session 3: Protecting the Firm: *Executive Judgment in Navigating Risk, People & AI*

Instructor:

**Kristi Weierbach, Ph.D., SPHR, SHRM-SCP**  
Managing Director, Workforce Advisory  
Stambaugh Ness

8:00 AM to 8:30 AM: Arrive

8:30 AM: Program Starts

12 PM to 1 PM: Lunch

4:30 PM: Program Concludes

### April 7, 2027

*Maggiano's Little Italy Oak Brook, 240 Oakbrook Center, Oak Brook, IL 60523*

#### Session 4: Capital Strategies: *Valuation, Ownership and Mergers & Acquisitions*

Instructor:

**David S. Cohen, Esq., ASA**  
Managing Director  
Matheson Financial Advisors, Inc.

8:00 AM to 8:30 AM: Arrive

8:30 AM: Program Starts

12 PM to 1 PM: Lunch

4:30 PM: Program Concludes

### May 12, 2027

*Maggiano's Little Italy Oak Brook, 240 Oakbrook Center, Oak Brook, IL 60523*

#### Session 5: Engineering Under Pressure: *Crisis Prevention, Preparedness & Communication for Engineering Leaders*

Instructors:

**Hayley Burns**  
Partner  
River Strategies

**Tracy Slutzkin**  
Partner  
River Strategies

8:00 AM to 8:30 AM: Arrive

8:30 AM: Program Starts

12 PM to 1 PM: Lunch

4:30 PM: Program Concludes

# EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP 2027

## ACEC ILLINOIS INSTITUTE

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**January 27, 2027 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM**

*Harry Caray's Ballroom, 70 Yorktown Shopping Center, Lombard, IL 60148*

### Session 1: Managing Risk and Driving ROI in Engineering Firms

**About:** This one-day session is designed to help engineering professionals better understand ACEC Illinois, manage firm risk, and develop the business development skills needed for long-term success. Attendees will explore the resources, advocacy, and opportunities ACEC Illinois provides, identify common areas of risk and strategies to reduce exposure, and examine how return on investment (ROI) and seller-doer principles can contribute to firm growth and client development. Through practical, real-world strategies, participants will gain tools they can apply to strengthen client relationships, support business development efforts, make informed decisions, and ultimately add greater value to their firms. The session will also challenge attendees to consider an important question: Is this investment of time, money, or effort producing value for the firm?



**Kevin Arlt**  
President & CEO  
ACEC Illinois



**Libby Braband**  
President  
Libby Dalton Braband Consulting, LLC



**Paula Dixon**  
Former Senior Vice President  
Holmes Murphy & Associates

**February 17, 2027 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM**

*Maggiano's Little Italy Oak Brook, 240 Oakbrook Center, Oak Brook, IL 60523*

### Session 2: Building Stronger Firms: Executive Communication, Talent Strategy & Organizational Culture

**About:** This executive leadership program is designed to strengthen the capabilities leaders need to guide their firms through growth, change, and complexity. This session will focus on building organizational capacity through culture, executive communication, talent strategy, succession planning, mentoring, and organizational alignment. Participants will explore proactive, growth-oriented approaches for developing future principals, retaining key talent, and positioning their firms for long-term success. Leaders will leave with actionable ideas for strengthening collaboration, accountability, and organizational readiness across their firms. This interactive session will provide practical strategies, facilitated discussion, and real-world application to help executives lead with greater clarity, confidence, and foresight.



**Kristi Weierbach**  
Ph.D., SPHR, SHRM-SCP  
Managing Director, Workforce Advisory  
Stambaugh Ness

**March 10, 2027 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM**

*Maggiano's Little Italy Oak Brook, 240 Oakbrook Center, Oak Brook, IL 60523*

### Session 3: Protecting the Firm: Executive Judgment in Navigating Risk, People & AI

**About:** This executive leadership program is designed to strengthen the capabilities leaders need to guide their firms through growth, change, and complexity. This session shifts the emphasis to executive judgment in high-stakes situations involving people, risk, governance, crisis leadership, and reputation. It will also examine how artificial intelligence can support – not replace – sound leadership decision-making. Participants will gain practical frameworks for balancing competing priorities, assessing consequences, and making timely decisions under pressure. This interactive session will provide practical strategies, facilitated discussion, and real-world application to help executives lead with greater clarity, confidence, and foresight.



**Kristi Weierbach**  
Ph.D., SPHR, SHRM-SCP  
Managing Director, Workforce Advisory  
Stambaugh Ness

**April 7, 2027 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM**

*Maggiano's Little Italy Oak Brook, 240 Oakbrook Center, Oak Brook, IL 60523*

### **Session 4: Capital Strategies: Valuation, Ownership and Mergers & Acquisitions**

**About:** This session will provide engineering professionals with a practical understanding of the financial and strategic decisions that shape the future of their firms. Through an interactive discussion, attendees will explore key drivers of firm value, ownership transition strategies, and the major considerations involved in mergers and acquisitions from both the buyer and seller perspectives. The session will also examine current industry trends influencing capital strategy, including private equity, ESOPs, technology and AI investment, and workforce challenges. Participants will leave with greater insight into the strategic decisions that can drive firm growth, support leadership and ownership transitions, and strengthen long-term sustainability.



**David S. Cohen, Esq., ASA**  
Managing Director  
Matheson Financial Advisors, Inc.

**May 12, 2027 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM**

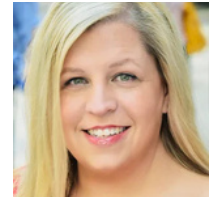
*Maggiano's Little Italy Oak Brook, 240 Oakbrook Center, Oak Brook, IL 60523*

### **Session 5: Engineering Under Pressure: Crisis Prevention, Preparedness & Communication for Engineering Leaders**

**About:** This is an interactive training designed to make crisis competency a core leadership skill. The session focuses on helping leaders recognize risks earlier, prevent avoidable crises, and create a culture of empowered, prepared teams. Participants will examine the changing risk landscape facing engineering firms, from job site and safety incidents to AI, cyber threats, internal communications, employee conduct, and reputational challenges. Real-world case studies will demonstrate how leadership decisions, communication, and the speed of information can either contain or escalate a crisis. Participants will then work through realistic engineering crisis simulations, making decisions in real time as new information and challenges emerge. The training emphasizes judgment over rigid formulas, giving leaders practical tools to assess situations, engage the right people, communicate with discipline, and adapt under pressure.



**Hayley Burns**  
Partner  
River Strategies



**Tracy Slutzkin**  
Partner  
River Strategies

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## **Optional Sessions:**

**April 19 – 20, 2027**

**Illinois Dinner & ACEC Capitol Hill Visits.** Join ACEC Illinois and fellow members in Washington, DC for an opportunity to connect with industry leaders, receive a legislative briefing, and meet with Illinois legislators on Capitol Hill. The experience will include networking, dinner, a briefing and reception on April 19, followed by breakfast, additional briefings, Capitol Hill visits, and site visits on April 20. ACEC Illinois will provide travel recommendations closer to the event.

**June 2027**

**ACEC IL Spring Board Meeting, Awards Luncheon & Executive Leadership Institute Graduation** brings together engineering leaders to celebrate industry achievements, connect with peers, and look ahead to what's next for ACEC Illinois. The day includes a Board Meeting, networking luncheon, Executive Leadership Institute Graduation, and the presentation of other prestigious industry awards. Executive Leadership Institute participants who complete Sessions 1–5 will receive their Certificates of Completion during the luncheon. Please note: Participants may miss only one Illinois session and still receive their Certificate of Completion. The Washington, D.C., trip is optional. Registration is required, but the event fee is waived for active Leadership Institute participants.