

THE FIRST WORD

April, 2009

ACEC OKLAHOMA Board/General Membership Meeting Set for Thursday, April 16th in Tulsa

The next ACEC OKLAHOMA Board and **General Membership Meeting** will be held on **Thursday, April 16th in Tulsa**. The General Membership Meeting will begin at **5:00pm** at the **Doubletree Hotel Downtown**. It will be preceded by the Board of Directors meeting at 2:00pm at Wallace Engineering.

Our Guest Speaker will be Brian Downs, Executive Director of Oklahomans for Responsible Government. Downs will discuss the **ONE OKLAHOMA**, a new coalition formed to oppose the Oklahoma Education Associations (OEA) HOPE initiative petition (State Question 744) which will be on the next General Election Ballot slated for November, 2010. As you might remember, OEA circulated a petition last summer which will place before the voters a constitutional requirement that public education be funded annually at the regional average. If passed by the voters, the Oklahoma Legislature would be required to add some \$850 Million immediately to public education, which already receives over 55% of the states current budget.

This will be a very informative meeting as the HOPE initiative, if passed, will have a very detrimental impact on every engineering firm in Oklahoma, regardless of whether you regularly practice in the "public" arena or not.

Please plan to attend this important and informational program. Registration information has been sent to all member firms, and is also available on the ACEC OKLAHOMA website: www.acecok.org

We look forward to seeing everyone on April 16th!!!!

Welcome New Member

ACEC OKLAHOMA is excited to welcome our newest member, URS Corporation.

URS Corporation's Tulsa office is located at 1437 S. Boulder, and provides engineering services for Air Transportation, Industrial, Facilities, Mass Transit/Rail, Surface Transportation, and Water/Wastewater.

Charles Johnson and Michelle Barnett are the key contacts for the firm.

We welcome URS Corporation to the ACEC OKLAHOMA family, and look forward to having them as active members of the Council.

Annual Membership Update Forms Mailed

It's that time of year again! The 2009-10 ACEC Membership Certification update forms have been mailed to the senior principal of all member firms, and we ask that you **return your form no later than April 17th**.

This is your chance to update the information which we have on file regarding your firm which appears in both the ACEC OKLAHOMA and ACEC in the on-line directories. Also, we ask that you update your employee count, which is critical to ACEC OKLAHOMA's and ACEC's budgeting process.

Thanks in advance for your prompt attention in completing the form and returning it to ACEC OKLAHOMA.

April Legislative Report

The 2009 Legislative Session is well past the half-way point, and there's now even talk of adjournment coming a week earlier than the constitutionally mandated "last Friday of May."

After a flurry of activity in the early weeks of the session, things have quieted down for ACEC OKLAHOMA, which is NOT a bad thing. Anytime the Legislature leaves the profession alone as well as not taking any steps backward regarding broad issues of importance to the business of engineering, it's a good year. But, it's not over yet, so ACEC OKLAHOMA will closely watch all activities at the Capitol for any last minute "woolly-boogers" that might pop up.

ACEC OKLAHOMA is a member of two coalitions which are actively working two issues of importance to the engineering profession: TRUST, which is a coalition of transportation organizations, and, The Construction Alliance, which is a coalition of labor groups, contractor associations, building code enforcement agencies, and professional associations/societies which was formed to pursue authorization for the Oklahoma Uniform Building Code Commission. Here's some background on both groups:

**** TRUST** – Formed several years ago to push for an increase in the state motor fuel tax, TRUST (Transportation Revenues Used Strictly for Transportation) has evolved into THE voice of transportation advocacy in Oklahoma. Following the demise of the motor fuel tax state question, TRUST re-focused its efforts toward increasing transportation funding through legislative action. In the past couple of years, TRUST and its member organizations are responsible for the large increases in funding for transportation which we have seen and which will continue in coming years. Additionally, TRUST is constantly educating both legislators and the public on the continuing needs of transportation through several out-reach programs which keep the issue in the forefront of public opinion.

ACEC OKLAHOMA is an active member of TRUST, and part of a small group which meets regularly at the Capitol to keep watch on the latest activities both in Oklahoma City as well as Washington, DC.

This session, TRUST and its member organizations are keeping a close watch on anything which might erode the advances which we have made the past couple of sessions.

**** CONSTRUCTION ALLIANCE** – This new coalition was formed early this session to pursue the creation of the Oklahoma Uniform Building Code Commission, a new state agency which would be charged with the development/adoption of a "minimum standard" residential and commercial building code for Oklahoma.

Members of the coalition include both ACEC OKLAHOMA and AIA, along with the AFL-CIO, most contractor trade groups (ABC, NECA, PHCC, etc.), the state Homebuilders Association, Oklahoma Municipal League, city Fire Marshal groups, and many city code enforcement officials along with representatives of the State Fire Marshal's office.

This is a rather "eclectic" group which in many cases find themselves on opposite sides of issues at the Capitol, it has been quite encouraging to see all of these groups come together and be able to work toward a common goal, which all agree will be beneficial to all concerned.

While there is much left to be done, the Alliance did secure introduction of Senate Bill 1182, which provides the framework for creating the Commission. The bill is working its way through the legislative process, and barring any unforeseen problems, may become law before the end of the session.

Even if the bill is enacted this year, there will be a 2-3 year "ramp-up" for the Commission to get started, and before the first code will be adopted. But, this is a start, and the future looks bright for enactment of a "minimum" statewide code in a few short years.

As the session draws towards an end, ACEC OKLAHOMA will monitor activities closely and keep you up-to-date on any "breaking" issues which may arise.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please don't hesitate to call ACEC OKLAHOMA.

ACEC Midwest States Conference

(ACEC Oklahoma, ACEC Missouri, ACEC Arkansas, ACEC Kansas)

June 3-10, 2009 - The Buccaneer Resort, St. Croix, U.S.V.I.

This is going to be one of the best meetings ever so dont miss out!!

The 2009 ACEC Midwest States Conference will be held on June 3-10 at The Buccaneer Resort in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. This is going to be an outstanding convention and is your chance to participate in the best educational line-up we have ever offered, while enjoying the company of your fellow consultants from Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, and Kansas surrounded by the beauty of the Caribbean and the island of St. Croix, U.S.V.I.



Here is a highlight of the seminar programs for the meeting:

- Contractual Liability and Insurance Issues for Engineers;
- Strategy, Structure & Leadership Secrets of the Best Engineering Firms;
- Whats It Worth? Firm Valuation in Turbulent Times;
- Marketing & Business Development in this Challenging Economy;
- Success with Ownership Transition and Exit Strategy Planning; Risk Management: A Thought Process, Not Just Contract Language;
- Proven Solutions to Accelerate Your Collections & Cash Flow;
- Understanding the Dynamics of Risk in the A/E Industry; Electronic Delivery Issues for A/E Firms;
- How to Protect Project Profits During Lean Times; Discussion of ACEC National Issues;
- Advanced Strategies for Lawsuit Protection, Tax Reduction & Real Estate Planning;

Along with the 22 hours of PDHs, we've also planned a Welcoming Reception, Board/Membership Meetings, Sunset

Cruise, Multi-State Officers/Directors Installation Reception & Banquet and a trip to Buck Island Reef National Monument. The Buccaneer also has its own golf course so you can play golf as much as you like without going a n y w h e r e .

Registration Information is attached, or click on the following link: <http://www.acecok.org>

Make your room reservations now for the ACEC Midwest States Conference. **Wednesday, April 15, 2009** is the cutoff day for our

reserved block of rooms at The Buccaneer. The group rate is \$230.00 plus tax for Oceanview / Oceanfront rooms. The room rate includes full American buffet breakfast daily, welcome cocktail, twice daily maid service and turn-down, snorkeling, kayaks, floating mats, use of fitness room and jogging trail. To reserve your room at The Buccaneer, call 1-800-255-3881. Be sure to say you want the "ACEC 2009" rate.

Also, **AIR FARES HAVE DROPPED DRAMATICALLY** in recent weeks. One ACEC OKLAHOMA member said he got his air tickets last week for around \$500 roundtrip!!!!

Please drop me a note or give me a call if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you in St. Croix, U.S.V.I. in June!!



ODOT / ACEC OKLAHOMA Partnering Conference April 23rd, Renaissance Hotel, Tulsa

The 8th Annual ODOT / ACEC OKLAHOMA Partnering Conference will be held on Thursday, April 23rd at the Tulsa Renaissance Hotel and Conference Center. Registration will begin at 8:30am, with the Conference beginning at 9:00am.

The program format will follow those of previous years, with an education program in the morning, followed by lunch and a series of afternoon breakout sessions.

This year's morning program will be, **COACHING AND MENTORING DURING CHALLENGING TIMES**, lead by John Daley of the Daley Institute in St. Louis.

The one thing that your competitors can't duplicate in this high tech world is our people. We also have to remember that during these challenging times we must retain and develop our best talent and take market share.

Everyone is also looking very closely at every dollar they spend to maximize the value received. Having committed and focused employees minimizes the risk of stressed out talent that try to minimize their costs at the expense of client perceived value. Think about the last time you were in a restaurant and you wondered if the prices were up while what you received was less. In these times do you look for maximum value for each dollar? Motivated, secure employees can provide 110% productivity with minimal or no increase cost. We will explore how that could be attained.

Participants will discuss goals, challenges and best practices for their team. They will leave with tools that can build a Culture of Performance with an ROI!

This will be an interactive workshop and follow up conversations will be welcome.

Afternoon breakout sessions will include discussion on:

- Session 1 — **DTM FILES** – Mike Lipps, Duit Construction
What is needed; Why is it needed; How is it being used; What format; What equipment uses it.
- Session 2 — **DBE GOALS FOR PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING CONTRACTS** – Darren Kaihlanen, Civil Rights Specialist, Federal Highway Administration; Susan McClune, Regulatory Services, ODOT
- Session 3 — **DIRECT DEPOSIT (ODOT)** – Chelley Hilmes, Comptroller, ODOT

Registration information has been sent to all ACEC OKLAHOMA members as well as to all consulting firms on

ODOT's consultants list, and the registration form is available on ACEC OKLAHOMA's website, www.acecok.org.

Even if your firm does not provide service to ODOT, you are invited to attend the program, especially the morning educational session, which is applicable to all consulting firms, regardless of discipline or practice area.

We look forward to seeing everyone on April 23rd!

PRESIDENT'S MONTHLY UPDATE

David Raymond, ACEC President & CEO
April 1, 2009

General

DOT Secretary Ray LaHood will speak at the ACEC Convention in Washington, D.C. at the end of April.

Provided stimulus information to MOs; and special educational seminars on stimulus spending.

Met with Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, as well as White House staff re stimulus and other matters.

Government Affairs

The House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved the "Water Quality Investment Act of 2009" which includes a significant boost in federal loans for wastewater, and the application of QBS to EPA State Revolving Fund projects.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved an FAA reauthorization bill that expands the reach of QBS to include certain projects funded through PFCs.

ACEC's Environment and Energy Committee meeting featured presentations by House and Senate environmental committee staff, EPA's Office of Wastewater Management, and Corps of Engineer's Engineering /Construction Team.

ACEC's Federal Agencies and Procurement Advocacy Committee meeting featured presentations from NAVFAC, GSA, and State Department Office of Overseas Buildings Operations.

Successfully defended the use of QBS on a major overseas infrastructure procurement for A/E services managed by USAID.

Outlined the engineering industry's views on stormwater Effluent Limitation Guidelines in comments submitted to EPA, including input on prescriptive sediment and erosion control and ACEC's preference for the Best Management Practice option.