

# THE FIRST WORD

May, 2011

## ACEC Midwest States Conference, June 2-4, Branson Joint Conventions of Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas

The annual **ACEC Midwest States Convention**, the annual joint convention of Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas and Arkansas ACEC member organizations, will be held Thursday - Saturday, June 2-4 at the Chateau on the Lake in Branson.

This is a great opportunity to get to know your fellow consultants from the adjacent states; participate in outstanding educational programs; and, relax and enjoy the beautiful Branson area surrounding the area's premier resort, The Chateau on the Lake.

The convention will kick-off Thursday evening at 6:00pm with the Opening Reception, *Sponsored by Lockton Companies*, giving you a chance to get together with fellow members for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres on an informal basis.

Friday morning June 3rd, following a Networking/Roundtable breakfast, the Annual Meetings of the four individual organizations will be conducted. These business meetings will include consideration/approval of the annual budget, election of officers, and other general business activities.

Friday afternoon, *Brad Dawson, LTV Dynamics*, will present two programs: **Revolution - A Futurist Perspective** and **Climbing the Innovation Pyramid - The New Path to Profitability and Growth**.

These two programs will challenge your long-held beliefs on how businesses should operated, and what fundamental changes are necessary in your offerings and in your clients.

And, many are familiar with the concept of self-actualization. A term coined by Abraham Maslow in 1943 as the ultimate level of human achievement, in which an individual fully utilizes his/her talents and creativity. Is it possible for a business to realize a similar level? Can there be such a thing as corporate actualization? Brad's program will help answer that and other questions.

Friday will conclude with a sunset cruise, dinner and entertainment on the famous Branson Belle, *Sponsored by ACEC Business Insurance Trust / & ACEC Retirement Trust / Prudential Retirement Services*.

Saturday morning will be dedicated to the discussion of issues of interest with your peers in a roundtable format. Discussion will include areas such as business practices, liability, profitability, ownership, human resources, business development, information technology, etc. This will be your opportunity to share your thoughts, concerns, successes, and failures with consultants from the four-state area, as well as gather ideas from others which will help you manage your business.

Saturday afternoon will be free time, where you can enjoy the area, or, play in the annual **Golf Tournament** at the new **Payne Stewart Golf Club**, *Sponsored by ACEC Life Health Trust and United HealthCare*.

The Convention will wrap up that evening with a Reception and Dinner, with food, fun, and entertainment

Registration information has been sent to all members and is also available at our website: [www.acecok.org](http://www.acecok.org).

**IMPORTANT -- The room block for the ACEC Midwest States Conference at the Chateau on the Lake will be held until May 9th. Contact the hotel at (888) 333-5253 for a rate of \$172 per night. PLEASE CALL THE HOTEL ASAP TO RESERVE YOUR ROOM!!!!**

This is going to be a great meeting, and we look forward to seeing everyone there!

## ACEC OKLAHOMA "Leadership For Engineers" Graduates Class #2

Mid-April saw the final of three two-days sessions to complete the 2011 version of ACEC OKLAHOMA's "Leadership For Engineers" program.

As with last year's program, the evaluations from the participants were simply outstanding, and all gave the program consistently high marks from start to finish.

Information for Class #3 will be coming out late this summer. We encourage you to begin thinking now about who your firm should nominate, and respond quickly with the information comes out. The 2011 class filled up about three weeks prior to the deadline, and 2012 will probably fill even more quickly.

Congratulations to this year's class, pictured below. They were highly motivated, fully engaged in the programs, and built great, new relationships which will help advance their careers as well as serve their firms well. Plus, they "survived" the full range of Oklahoma weather, starting the class in February during a snowstorm and record-breaking cold, through a nice, Spring March, and ending with a cold, rainy April which included thunderstorms and tornados. (Maybe we should rename this, "Survival for Engineers.")



Leadership For Engineers Class of 2011  
(left to right) Front Row - Don Steel, Mike Thompson, Alec Bass, Shane Smith, Rick Belden  
Second Row - Keith Marquardt, Blake Haley, Brandon Claborn, Damon Domer, Mark McKinney  
Third Row - Jason Henderson, Jeff Cowan, Josh Dougherty, Kevin Bahner, Greg Sparks

## ACEC OKLAHOMA Meets With FHWA Administrator

Victor Mendez, Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, was in Oklahoma City last week to participate in the annual Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon.



While here, Administrator Mendez attended the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's monthly meeting, and following the meeting, held a special roundtable

discussion with a select group of transportation industry representatives. FHWA Oklahoma Division Administrator Gary Corino and Assistant Administrator Ivan Marrero joined Mendez to lead the meeting.

ACEC OKLAHOMA President/CEO Jim Sullins was one of a group of about 20 individuals, ranging from contractor groups and suppliers to city, county, tribes, and COG officials, who spent about two hours with the Administrator.

Mendez reviewed the "Everyday Counts" initiative and ways to speed up project delivery at all levels, then opened the meeting for an open-forum discussion and comments.

From the consultants perspective, Sullins stated that initial holdups in project delivery begin with the contract review process.

Sullins noted that DOTs and consultants negotiate scope, timelines, delivery objectives, and "fair and reasonable" fees through a lengthy, in-depth process, only to have the start of the design phase held up, sometimes for many months, by the FHWA review process.

He urged the Administrator to streamline the review process to allow consultants to begin the design process in a more timely manner.

Following the meeting, Mendez held a similar forum with the ODOT senior leadership and staff.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mendez commented that this was the first of a series of similar meetings he plans to hold with stakeholders in a number of states, and assured the group that the comments and suggestions were appreciated and would be closely review by senior FHWA staff.

## Nominating Committee Sets 2011-12 ACEC OKLAHOMA Slate of Officers

Nominating Committee Chairman Tom Hendrick and Past Chairmen Steve Ford and Darold Davis have submitted their nominations for the 2011-12 ACEC OKLAHOMA Board of Directors. Those nominated are:

- Alan Soltani, SAIC - Chairman-Elect
- Chuck Mitchell, Crafton Tull - Vice Chair Membership
- Joe Davis, Triad Design Group - Treasurer
- Brent Schniers, Garver - Vice Chair Business Practice
- Marty Hepp, Cobb Engineering - Vice Chair Education/PR

Stacy Loeffler, BKL, will automatically become Chairman of the Board, having served this year as Chair-Elect. Current Chairman Jim Benson, Poe and Associates, will remain on the Board as Immediate Past Chairman, and Jim Stewart, PSA Consulting Engineers, will remain serving the final year of this three-year term as ACEC National Director.

Election of Officers will take place Friday, June 3rd at the Annual Meeting. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at that time. Additionally, members may vote in advance by writing ACEC OKLAHOMA.

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## OFFICIAL NOTICE OF ACEC OKLAHOMA ANNUAL MEETING

As required by the ACEC OKLAHOMA By-Laws, this shall serve as official notice of the Annual Meeting of the Council, scheduled for 9:00am, Friday, June 3, 2011 at the Chateau on the Lake in Branson, MO.

The 2011-2012 ACEC OKLAHOMA Annual Budget will be presented for consideration and approval, annual reports will be presented, and election of officers for the 2011-2012 year will be conducted.

The Annual Budget and the Nominating Committee Report will be e-mailed to all ACEC OKLAHOMA members prior to the Convention.

All ACEC OKLAHOMA members are encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting, which will be held in conjunction with the ACEC Midwest States Convention, a joint meeting of Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas, and Arkansas. See Page 1 for more details.

## PRESIDENT'S MONTHLY UPDATE

May, 2011

David Raymond, ACEC President & CEO

As Congress returns this week, ACEC is focused on several key near-term objectives, most importantly the six-year transportation reauthorization, which the T&I Committee hopes to report out within the next month; repeal of the 3% withholding mandate for which ACEC continues to gain co-sponsors (now 84 in the House and 15 in the Senate); passage of the Federal Aviation bill with more funding and ACEC's QBS language in the Passenger Facility Charge program; and review/recommendations on SBA's proposed new small business size standard. April activity is summarized below.

\* Polish government officials briefed ACEC members on infrastructure and energy development opportunities stemming from their new \$100 billion program.

\* Assembled working group of small, medium and large firms to develop a consensus position on the Small Business Administration's proposal to increase the SBA size standard for the engineering industry from \$4.5 million to \$19 million in gross receipts.

### General

\* President Obama signed into law the ACEC-backed repeal of the expanded IRS Form 1099 filing mandate, which eliminates onerous paperwork burden on member firms.

\* The Minuteman Fund provided grants to: ACEC/Georgia to support a new sales tax referendum to fund transportation; ACEC/Nebraska to fight government competition; and ACEC/Nevada for an amicus brief to defend the state's Economic Loss Doctrine.

\* ACEC/Hawaii has become the second state organization to meet its 2011 ACEC/PAC fundraising goal, joining Wisconsin in crossing the finish line early.

### Government Affairs

\* Urged Securities and Exchange Commission officials to maintain the engineering exemption in a proposed new rule on municipal advisor registration.

\* Defense Department officials briefed ACEC on their proposed design-build selection process change – to increase consideration of project life-cycle costs – for reaction and comment prior to the plan's public release. (See April 27, Last Word)

\* Lobbied to oppose the House budget resolution that would limit spending to existing revenue projections, resulting in a 30% decrease in annual highway and transit funding from the Highway Trust Fund.

\* Urged negotiators on the final FAA reauthorization bill to provide maximum levels of airport infrastructure investment and to retain a House-passed provision supporting QBS on projects funded with Passenger Facility Charges.

## May 9th Deadline for ACEC's Professional Liability Insurance Survey

ACEC's Professional Liability Insurance Survey of Member Firms for Fiscal Year 2010 will continue through Monday, May 9. This annual survey collects information on Member Firms professional liability insurance, their claims experience, and the impact of the threat of litigation.

Member Firms that complete the survey will receive a free copy of the complete results upon request. An email with a link to the survey has been sent to the primary contacts of the Member Firms. You can also click here to access the survey: (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ACECPLISURVEY2011>)

## Welcome New Members

ACEC OKLAHOMA is excited to welcome two new member firms to the Council.

**NewTran Solutions** of Tulsa is a one-person firm providing planning, engineering design, and pre-construction project program management of transportation infrastructure. Jimmie Sitz is the principal of the firm.

**Gonzalez-DeLa Garza & Associates**, Oklahoma City, is a DBE civil engineering and consulting firm for highways, traffic, water, wastewater, drainage analysis/systems, SWPPP, permitting, design/build, and bridge. Ayda Gonzalez and Edward De La Garza are the principals of the newly opened Oklahoma office.

ACEC OKLAHOMA looks forward to having both **NewTran Solutions** and **Gonzalez-De La Garza & Associates** as active members of the Council!