

# THE FIRST WORD

May, 2013

## Another Record Crowd at ODOT/ACEC OKLAHOMA Partnering Conference

While we thought that last year's record crowd was outstanding, the 12th Annual ODOT/ACEC OKLAHOMA Partnering Conference exceeded our wildest expectations with 468 consultant and ODOT staff registrations!!!!

Even with a few "no-shows," estimated attendance was approximately 440, which is a record attendance!

Based on a quick review of the evaluations, it was simply an outstanding Conference, and as always, a great opportunity to strengthen the partnership between the consulting community and ODOT.



Some of the 440 in attendance.



Dr. Eric Cupp

The day-long Conference featured Dr. Eric Cupp's program on "Ethics for Decision Making." Dr. Cupp presented a thought-provoking program, while sprinkling in his "Texas-sized" humor as well as a common sense approach to a sometimes complex situation.

Other programs during the Conference addressed ODOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program as well as the I-244 bridge project over the Arkansas River in Tulsa.

New-appointed ODOT Director Mike Patterson addressed the gathering during the lunch program and then participated in an "Issues Forum" at which the ODOT Senior Staff took questions from the audience on a variety of topics. And, the topics were varied and, in some cases, pointed! It was a "no holds barred" Forum.



ODOT Chief Engineer Gary Evans, Director of Operations Casey Shell, Director of Engineering David Streb, and ODOT Director Mike Patterson

Our thanks to everyone who attended for making this a great Conference, and we look forward to the 13th Annual Partnering Conference scheduled for April 24, 2014 in Tulsa.



Great participation during breakout sessions



ODOT Civil Rights Division Manager Greg Pringle and Andy Penney lead DBA Breakout Session.

## ACEC OKLAHOMA "Citizen Lobbyist" Meet with Oklahoma Congressional Delegation

During the recently concluded ACEC Annual Convention, representatives of ACEC OKLAHOMA met with members of the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation to discuss the issues facing Congress which are important to the consulting engineering profession.

Members of the ACEC OKLAHOMA delegation included: Chairman-Elect Chuck Mitchell, ACEC National Director Steve Ford, Immediate Past Chair Stacy Loeffler, Mike Vahabzadegan, and Jim Sullins.



Sullins, Loeffler, Inhofe, Mitchell

The group met personally with Senator Jim Inhofe, and Congressmen Tom Cole, Jim Bridenstine, Markwayne Mullin, and James Lankford. While Senator Coburn and Congressman Lucas schedules did not allow for them to meet with the ACEC OKLAHOMA delegation, our group did meet with key staff of the Senator and Congressman.



Mitchell, Loeffler, Lankford, Sullins

Issues discussed included a long-term solution and stable funding source for the country's transportation, water, and wastewater infrastructure needs; a comprehensive energy policy to include not only oil and gas, but wind, solar, biomass, and nuclear energy sources as well as electrical transmission and pipelines; and, various business issues which impact ACEC member firms.

ACEC OKLAHOMA stays in close contact throughout the year with our Congressional Delegation, and the Hill visits during the ACEC Convention are a very important part of the overall ACEC government affairs program.

It is always an interesting time on the Hill, and we encourage all ACEC OKLAHOMA members to consider joining us for next year's ACEC Convention and Hill visits. You will learn a lot, and it is a very "eye opening" experience.

### Annual Meeting Notice

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 7, 2013 at the Sugar Bay Resort, St. Thomas, USVI.

The 2013-14 ACEC OKLAHOMA Annual Budget will be presented for consideration and approval, annual reports will be presented, and election of officers for the 2013-14 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.

For registration information, visit the ACEC OKLAHOMA website at: <http://www.acecok.org>.

### Brief Legislative Report

It's been a very quiet year for ACEC OKLAHOMA at the Legislature, so this report will be short and sweet.

With only three weeks left, the session is quickly winding down, and could adjourn prior to the mandated May 31st deadline.

The major issues have been addressed....\$7.1 Billion Budget for next year is one step away from the Governor's desk; Worker's Comp reform has been signed by the Governor; and, beginning in 2015 the state income tax will be reduced to a top rate of just under 5%. And, additionally, a "pay as you go" plan to upgrade and renovate the State Capitol Building has been approved.

ODOT funding was protected, and the County road/bridge program received some enhancements.

All-in-all, a quiet year for ACEC OKLAHOMA is a good thing as there were no "attacks" on the engineering profession meaning no major battles to be fought.

## Leadership For Engineers Class #4 Graduates

After six days, 11 sessions, and some 26 hours of class time, Class #4 of ACEC OKLAHOMA's "Leadership For Engineers" has graduated.

These outstanding 15 individuals now join the graduates from the previous three years, bringing to 60 the number who have successfully completed this outstanding program.

Plans are already underway for Class #5 in 2014, and registration information will be coming in late summer.



Kristin Killgore  
Zahl-Ford



Cassidy Doescher  
EST



Jenny Sallee  
Garver



Denise Hale,  
White Engineering



Ben Fletcher  
Meshek & Associates



Eric Atkinson  
Tetra Tech



Justin Hartman  
Wallace Engineering



Paul D'Andrea  
Crafton Tull



Dustin McNally  
Guy Engineering Services



Scott Sanders  
Guernsey



Russell Beaty  
SAIC



Tim Purkeypille  
Poe & Associates



Travis Collins  
Cobb Engineering Company



Norman Tan  
Terracon



Jason Unruh,  
Red Rock Consulting

# President's Report

May, 2013  
David Raymond, ACEC President

## General

- A record 1,300-plus attended last week's Annual Convention in Washington, D.C.; prominent speakers included Chuck Todd of NBC News, Geoff Colvin of Fortune Magazine, Assistant Secretary of Commerce Nicole Lamb-Hale and EPA Assistant Administrator Michelle DePass.
- ACEC/PAC raised a record \$163,000 at the convention; and ACEC/HI became the third state to make its PAC goal for 2013, following ACEC/IN and ACEC/WI.
- ACEC's new national leadership took office with Gregs Thomopoulos succeeding Ted Williams as chair and Dick Wells becoming chair-elect. Additionally, Manish Kothari, Chris Poland, Clint Robinson and Ron Brenke join current members Ralph Christie, Mike Matthews, Bill Stout and Peter Strub on the 2013-14 Executive Committee.
- Signed partnering agreement with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Chief, Lt Gen Tom Bostick, that bolsters support for QBS and addresses a wide range of other issues.
- Hosted ambassadors and commercial representatives from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Morocco, Oman, and Qatar to discuss business opportunities for A/E firms.
- ARUP won the Grand Conceptor Award at the EEA gala for the new Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Kansas City. (See *Last Word* for other winners).
- The Board of Directors approved the 2014-2016 budget, calling for expanded efforts on issues pertaining to private client markets, contracting out, and public awareness of infrastructure investment needs.

## Government Advocacy

- Carried out successful Convention lobbying focused on boosting support for transportation, water and energy initiatives.
- Secured House committee passage of legislation to approve the Keystone XL pipeline.
- Hosted VIP luncheon on Capitol Hill with Senator David Vitter (R-LA), ranking member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, and Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), a leading transportation advocate who serves on both the House Budget and Ways and Means Committees.
- Testified before the House Small Business Subcommittee on the use of employment-based visas by small engineering firms and the need to increase the H-1B visa cap.
- ACEC's Transportation Fact Sheet was included as part of the official record by the House Budget Committee in a hearing on long-term revenue options for the Highway Trust Fund.
- Hosted a fundraiser for Rep. Bill Shuster (R-PA), Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee; ACEC/PAC also co-hosted in-state congressional events this month for Reps. Adrian Smith (R-NE) and Eric Swalwell (D-CA).
- Submitted ACEC's tax reform principles to the House Ways and Means Committee, emphasizing the need for reforms that benefit both large and small firms.
- Briefed House Ways and Means Committee staff on ACEC's concerns over proposals to limit the use of cash accounting.

