



ACEC

Georgia

The BUSINESS of Engineering



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# ABOUT US

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Georgia (ACEC Georgia) is the voice of the business of engineering in Georgia. ACEC Georgia advocates for public policy and legislation that will improve the business climate, promote economic development, and protect the integrity of the engineering industry. Our programs and events provide unique business development opportunities, information on current trends and best business practices, as well as leadership training to develop the next generation of engineering industry leaders.

**Our focus centers around the four points of our Value Proposition:**



## **POLITICAL ADVOCACY**

Fighting for the business interests of the engineering industry at every level of government - federal, state and local - by advancing and securing policies that will positively impact firms in every part of our state.



## **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

Creating networking opportunities, programs and events that allow our members to connect with potential clients, teaming partners, as well as the leaders who influence Georgia's engineering industry.



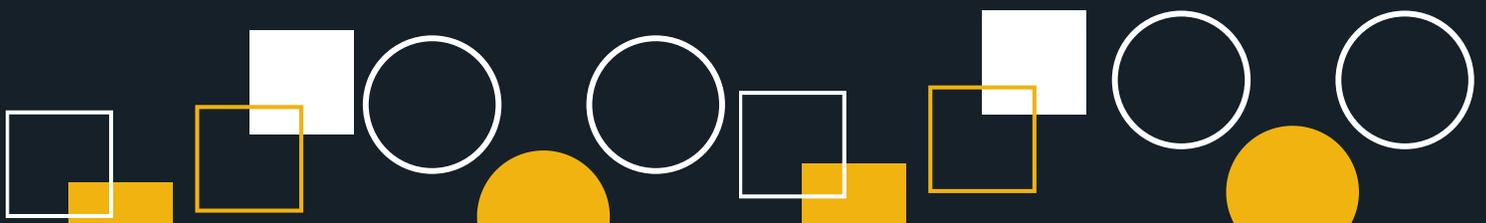
## **BUSINESS RESOURCES**

Providing resources and content that help our members manage their firms more efficiently, productively, and profitably by highlighting industry best practices; HR, IT, risk management and legal issues; business, economic, and technology trends through practice-area forums that facilitate the exchange of knowledge about the unique business challenges faced by firms within specific engineering disciplines.



## **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Providing best-in-class leadership training programs specifically designed for the up-and-coming talent at every level of our member firms' organizational charts, focused on instilling business development, client & people management and "big picture" leadership skills.



# MEMBER BENEFITS

**ADVOCACY FOR YOUR FIRM AT THE FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LEVELS** for pro-business legislation that will advance the interests of Georgia's engineering industry.

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES** with elected officials, agency leaders, teaming partners, and industry peers.

**BUSINESS RESOURCES** to grow and run your firm efficiently with programs and webinars on industry trends.

**GET ENGAGED IN THE ENGINEERING INDUSTRY** with Practice Area Forums, Committees, and Task Forces.

**REDUCED PRICING** on all ACEC Georgia events, awards, and initiatives.

**ACCESS TO ACEC'S JOB BOARD**, the best engineering niche career center, partnering with 41 other engineering associations to provide an active jobs marketplace for firms and candidates.

**ACCESS TO ACEC'S TRUSTS:** Business Insurance Trust, Life/Health Insurance Trust, and Retirement Trust.

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## ACEC Trusts

Membership in ACEC Georgia provides the opportunity to get insurance and retirement benefits through one of ACEC's Trusts: Business Insurance Trust, Life/Health Insurance Trust, and Retirement Trust. Firms often experience significant savings by switching, which ends up covering their ACEC Georgia membership dues.

Contact us to get a free quote to see if one of these trusts can save your firm money!

*“One of the greater returns Aulick Engineering has found through ACEC Georgia is access to the ACEC Life/Health Trust. The Trust provides access to competitive group benefits like those of a large corporation and results in affordable pricing that is not typically available to smaller businesses. It also offers access to brokers who know our industry and can assist small businesses through the process. The time and cost savings the ACEC Life/Health Trust provides is one determining factor in making ACEC membership a good investment for our firm.”*

**JENNIFER AULICK ETHERIDGE, PE, MBA,  
PRESIDENT/OWNER, AULICK ENGINEERING**



# WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

### INTRODUCTION TO THE BUSINESS OF ENGINEERING

ACEC Georgia's Introduction to the Business of Engineering is designed to provide employees with 0-5 years of experience with a broad initial exposure to the critical components of the "business side" of a consulting engineering firm. Participants will leave with an understanding of the importance of business development, client management, and other firm profitability factors that will make them far more valuable to their firms as they also continue to develop their technical abilities.

### FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAM

For more than 26 years, this nine-month program has prepared participants for leadership roles within their firms by providing training in management, presentation, and business development skills, as well as the "nuts and bolts" of business, such as firm and project accounting principles, risk management issues, legal issues and an entire session focused solely on the public policy issues affecting the industry.

### ENGINEERING LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

This nine-month intensive leadership development course, held every other year, is designed for leadership-track employees who are experienced in managing projects and people and who are being considered for higher-level roles within their firm. The course is focused on expanding their perspective from the day-to-day nuts-and-bolts of managing to the big picture and strategic thinking required to lead a firm, department, or practice area.

## PRACTICE-AREA FORUMS

Designed to bring together professionals from the same disciplines to discuss common challenges and potential solutions to the business issues unique to their specific practice area.

- Aviation Forum
- Energy Forum
- Geotechnical Forum
- HR Forum
- IT Forum
- Land Development Forum
- Small Firm
- Survey/Geospatial
- Transportation Forum
- Water & Environmental
- Vertical Construction Forum

## TASK FORCES

- Inclusion & Diversity
- QBS
- STEM Workforce
- Technology

## COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS

- Communications
- ELA Steering
- Future Leaders Program Steering
- Government Affairs
- Inclusion & Diversity Steering
- Membership
- PAC Board
- Program Content
- Women in the Workforce

# BUSINESS RESOURCES

## ENGINEERING GEORGIA MAGAZINE

The award-winning statewide magazine of Georgia's engineering industry, Engineering Georgia is published bi-monthly in partnership with ten other industry associations with the goal of providing engaging, non-technical content that is of interest to engineers and non-engineers alike. With a reach of more than 10,000 across the state, readers include decision-makers from the leading A/E/C firms, as well as the public and private sector clients who hire engineering companies and the local and state officials who influence these industries. ACEC Georgia members receive free copies of each issue.

## ENGINEERING INC. MAGAZINE

This publication from ACEC National keeps members abreast of the latest business management news, mergers and acquisitions, as well as other industry developments and trends from across the country. It is the industry's primary source for in-depth interviews with federal policymakers whose views impact the marketplace.

## LAST WORD E-NEWSLETTER

This national e-newsletter keeps members current on the latest industry news, training opportunities and legislative updates on a weekly basis.

## ACEC ENGINEERING BUSINESS INDEX (EBI)

This quarterly pamphlet charts the health of the engineering industry using responses from leaders at member firms to provide a pulse on company performance and market trends.



## AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

### ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

This annual competition recognizes engineering achievements which demonstrate the highest degree of merit and ingenuity across ten different categories. The award submission period is from late Summer to early Fall, and winners are recognized during the Georgia Engineering Awards, as well as featured in an issue of Engineering Georgia magazine.

### GPTQ PRECONSTRUCTION DESIGN AWARDS

Presented in partnership with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), these awards recognize transportation projects that demonstrate planning and design expertise. The award submission period is from late spring to late summer, and winners are recognized during the Georgia Transportation Summit, as well as featured in the an issue of Engineering Georgia magazine.

### R. BERL ELDER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP TRUST

These scholarships are granted to students pursuing an engineering degree at one of Georgia's higher-education institutions. Preference is given to students who have interned at an ACEC Georgia member firm. The application period opens in April and closes in August with the scholarships awarded in November at the Georgia Engineering Foundation's annual banquet.



# ADVOCACY

## ON BEHALF OF ITS MEMBERS, ACEC GEORGIA:



### ADVOCATES

for legislation that will advance the interests of the business of engineering in Georgia across all levels of government.



### WORKS

for a more pro-business climate and defends against unfair business practices.



### ADDRESSES

issues on behalf of the industry with state and local agencies to ensure fair, legal business practices so that members do not have to utilize their own “political capital” or risk client relationships by voicing their concerns individually.



### PROVIDES

weekly Capitol Updates during the legislative session as well as regular updates and communications regarding relevant political news that may have an impact on the industry and your firm.



### MONITORS

regulatory issues and government agency actions that affect engineers.



### FIGHTS

to protect the practice, profession and industry of engineering.



## ACEC GEORGIA PAC LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

The ACEC National Political Action Committee (PAC) is the engineering industry’s most powerful tool for supporting federal candidates who promote a pro-business legislative agenda. The ACEC Georgia PAC Leadership Circle represents the leading engineering firms in the state – firms that have set the standard for supporting their industry by contributing at least \$1,000 per year in combined individual contributions to the ACEC National PAC.

Learn more at [www.acecga.org/pages/PACLeadershipCircle](http://www.acecga.org/pages/PACLeadershipCircle).

# MAJOR POLITICAL WINS

## **CREATING AN INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS & LAND SURVEYORS (PELS) BOARD**

For many years, ACEC Georgia worked collaboratively with the engineering organizations that make up the Georgia Engineering Alliance to solve the chronic customer service complaints and enforcement issues that plagued the PELS Board's operations. These issues jeopardized public safety and hampered employee recruiting, retention, and career advancement. After exhausting every other option, House Bill 476 was introduced to create an independent PELS Board. Signed into law by Governor Kemp on May 9, 2022, this bill was the culmination of years of cooperative effort by ACEC Georgia in working with the General Assembly and the offices of the Governor and Secretary of State. ACEC Georgia has been and will continue to be a resource for the PELS Board as it transitions from being under the Secretary of State's purview to becoming a completely independent board.

## **PROHIBITING THE USE OF BROAD FORM INDEMNIFICATION AND DUTY TO DEFEND CLAUSES IN GEORGIA**

In 2016, Governor Nathan Deal signed House Bill 943 into law, which prohibits the use of broad form indemnification and/or duty to defend clauses in contracts for engineering, architectural and/or land surveying services. ACEC Georgia exclusively led the effort that resulted in its successful passage.

## **PASSING THE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING ACT OF 2015**

ACEC Georgia helped lead the effort to pass the Transportation Funding Act of 2015 (HB 170), which created approximately \$1 billion per year in new, permanent, constitutionally dedicated funding for Georgia DOT. This amount will increase over time due to indexing mechanisms built into the legislation.

## **EXPANDING PRIVATE PLAN REVIEW AND INSPECTIONS BY ENGINEERS & ARCHITECTS**

Passed into law in 2019, House Bill 493 creates the option for developers, builders, and contractors to go straight to licensed private-sector engineers and architects for local government inspections and plan review. ACEC Georgia worked collectively with stakeholders for over a year on this legislation.

In 2020, with local governments shut down due to the pandemic, ACEC Georgia worked with the Governor's Office to get Executive Orders that allowed engineering firms to remain open and projects to continue to move forward. These Orders included significant expansion of private plan review and inspections, and these changes were later made permanent by legislation that was signed into law later in 2020.



# MAJOR POLITICAL WINS

## (CONTINUED)

### TRANSIT GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING COMMISSION

ACEC Georgia was instrumental in the successful passage House Bill 930 that created a new transit governance agency (the “ATL”), and also created a new 1% transit only T-SPLOST that can be put in place for up to 30 years after passage of the required local ballot referendum.

### SIGNIFICANT TAX REFORM BENEFITS FOR ENGINEERING FIRMS

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 lowered the corporate tax rate from 35% to 21% and created a 20% tax deduction for passthrough firms, including S corporations, partnerships, and LLCs. Engineering firms were originally excluded from this deduction but following an extensive advocacy effort by ACEC National in Washington, Congressional leaders modified the final version to provide engineering firms with full use of the new 20% passthrough deduction. The law also allows engineering firms to continue to use cash basis accounting (rather than accrual), which was a critical ACEC priority. The bill also preserves ESOPs and other retirement savings mechanisms, as well as private activity bonds and renewable energy incentives.

### CREATING A STRUCTURAL ENGINEER LICENSE

In 2020, ACEC Georgia helped lead the effort to create a new professional engineering license category for structural engineers. The Structural Engineer (SE) license was created to help alleviate some of the competitive disadvantages Georgia structural engineers were facing when competing against engineers from states that have created some form of established SE license.





# PROGRAMS & EVENTS

ACEC Georgia offers a variety of programs, providing valuable information to members and the opportunity to reach potential clients, peers and leaders of the engineering industry.

## **BUILDING GEORGIA LEGISLATIVE DAY**

For two decades, ACEC Georgia and the Associated General Contractors of Georgia (AGC) have co-hosted a joint legislative event, allowing members to tour the State Capitol, hear from legislative and state agency leaders, and meet face-to-face with legislators.

## **GEORGIA ENGINEERING AWARDS**

This black-tie awards event is a celebration of exceptional engineers, engineering projects and the achievements of the industry as a whole. Winners of ACEC Georgia's Engineering Excellence Awards and GSPE's Engineer of the Year Awards are honored, among others.

## **GEORGIA ENGINEERS SUMMER CONFERENCE**

While providing only business-oriented content, this annual conference is focused on offering the "3 Cs" – Content, Clients, and Connections. Join industry and business leaders to learn more about top trends impacting the A/E/C industry and how you can manage your firm through them. This conference also offers networking and summer fun in a resort atmosphere – a perfect trip for the whole family!

## **ANNUAL ECONOMIC AND LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK**

The Legislative Outlook takes place at the beginning of each legislative session to meet and hear from Georgia Legislators on the upcoming session. The Economic Outlook takes place in the fourth fiscal quarter each year to ascertain the economic climate for the upcoming year.





# PROGRAMS & EVENTS

(CONTINUED)



## **GEORGIA TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT**

This annual event, hosted by ACEC Georgia and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), provides industry, community and business leaders with an entire day focused on the state of transportation infrastructure in Georgia – from roads and bridges, to trains, ports and airports. More than two decades running, this is now the largest transportation event in the state with more than 1,200 people in attendance.



## **INTRODUCE A GIRL TO ENGINEERING (IGE)**

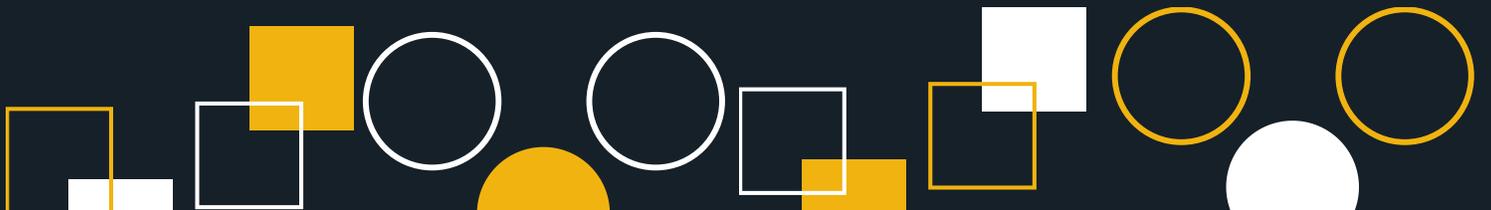
This half-day program is designed to introduce upper elementary and middle school-age girls to engineering through fun, interactive activities, exhibit booths and interactions with professionals who work in engineering or other STEM-related fields.

## **STEM DAY: DREAM BIG**

This is a half-day program sponsored by the engineering community to introduce students to engineering through fun projects and activities.

## **NATIONAL CONFERENCES**

ACEC National hosts two annual conferences: the Fall Conference (held in a different location each October) and the Spring Convention & Legislative Summit (held in Washington D.C. each April). Each Conference provides first-rate educational opportunities (up to 20 PDHs at each), opportunities to network with peers from across the nation and valuable business insights.



# OUR STAFF



**Michael "Sully" Sullivan**

**MICHAEL "SULLY" SULLIVAN** is President & CEO of ACEC Georgia. Sully's has served on the boards of numerous statewide and regional organizations, including several gubernatorial appointments. He has also been included in Georgia Trend Magazine's annual list of "100 Most Influential Georgians," James Magazine's annual list of "Most Influential Georgians" and James Magazine's annual list of "Georgia Super Lawyers."

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**Chandler Baker**

**CHANDLER BAKER** serves as Director of Professional Development and STEM Programs. In this role, Chandler is responsible for ACEC Georgia's program content, leadership development programs, forums, task forces, STEM outreach activities, and oversees the ACEC Georgia Junior Board.

Chandler.Baker@acecga.org | (770) 214-3024



**Jennifer Head**

**JENNIFER HEAD** serves as Director of Membership and Programs. In this role, Jennifer is the primary liaison for all members, and oversees member recruiting and retention. In addition, she manages the planning and implementation of ACEC Georgia programs, meetings, conferences and summits.

Jennifer.Head@acecga.org | (404) 665-3539



**Melisa Beauchamp**

**MELISA BEAUCHAMP** serves as the Director of Finance and Operations. Melisa is responsible for managing all accounting, budgeting, and fiscal management activities, as well as HR and office operations. She works closely with ACEC Georgia's President, Treasurer and Board of Directors to develop ACEC Georgia's annual budget and financial management strategies.

Melisa.beauchamp@acecga.org | (404) 537-1275



**Brett Hillesheim**

**BRETT HILLESHEIM** serves as Director of Communications and Marketing. He leads all internal and external communications, program marketing, and public and press relations, including serving as the Editor-in-Chief of *Engineering Georgia* magazine.

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**Christy Tarallo**

**CHRISTY TARALLO** serves as the Director of Government Affairs. Christy is ACEC Georgia's chief lobbyist and public policy advocate, and is responsible for overseeing all political advocacy efforts at the federal, state and local government levels.

Christy.Tarallo@acecga.org | (478) 960 -8958



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