



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. ACEC Georgia 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 - local, state and federal - 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 & technology trends and 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.



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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.

NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES with industry peers and potential clients.

INFORMATIVE AND RELEVANT EVENTS AND WEBINARS with speakers who influence and engage with the engineering industry.

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.

OPPORTUNITY FOR INVOLVEMENT AND LEADERSHIP on Forums, Committees and Councils.

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



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAM

For more than twenty-three 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, 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
- Transportation Forum
- Vertical Construction Forum
- Water & Environmental Forum

TASK FORCES

- Inclusion & Diversity
- QBS
- STEM Workforce
- Technology

COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS

- Communications
- Government Affairs
- Leadership Development
- Membership
- PAC Board
- Program Content

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 that ends up covering their ACEC Georgia membership dues.

“Keck & Wood has been a member of ACEC Georgia for a number of years. In the Fall of 2013, we were covered by a well-known provider with good coverage and a \$1,000 deductible. We felt that we had a competitive benefit plan for our 25 employees. As we began our annual review of healthcare options, we anticipated a substantial increase in our rates and also needing to go to a substantially higher deductible as a result of the Affordable Care Act. Our broker looked at several alternatives and confirmed that we could switch to one of the ACEC Life/Health Trust options through United Healthcare that was nearly identical to our current plan in coverage, except it also had reduced out-of-pocket maximums. This option was available with a \$1,300 monthly cost savings over continuing with our current provider. The decision to change to the ACEC Life/Health Trust plan required little debate!”

– Edgar Williams,
Senior Vice President, Keck & Wood, Inc.

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

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.



IN A FLASH E-NEWSLETTER

This monthly e-newsletter from ACEC Georgia delivers updates on legislative actions and activities, upcoming programs, initiatives and exclusive content affecting Georgia's engineering community, as well as an Affiliate Spotlight focusing on one member 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 agencies in violation of policies to ensure fair, legal business practices and enable members to not risk their “political capital” and client relationships by voicing their concerns individually.



PROVIDES

weekly Capitol Updates during the legislative session and a monthly Political Pulse e-newsletter with what’s going on at the local, state and federal government levels 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.

RECENT POLITICAL ADVOCACY WINS:

PRESERVING THE \$400 OCCUPATIONAL TAX CAP FOR ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS & LAND SURVEYORS

Introduced in 2020, house bill 715 would have removed the longstanding \$400 cap on occupational taxes charged by local governments on engineers, architects, land surveyors and other licensed professions (the so-called \$400 club”). The bill would have changed the way that cities and counties calculate and charge occupational taxes by eliminating the options of using gross receipts as well as the \$400 flat fee, and would have resulted in significant local occupational tax increases on engineering firms. ACEC Georgia led the successful effort to stop this bill from moving forward after it had initially passed out of the house ways & means committee.

EXPANDING PRIVATE PLAN REVIEW AND INSPECTIONS BY ENGINEERS & ARCHITECTS

Passed into law in 2019, House Bill 493 now allows developers, builders, and contractors to go straight to licensed private-sector engineers and architects (rather than local government reviewers/inspectors) for inspections and plan review. ACEC Georgia and the Associated General Contractors of Georgia (AGC) worked together with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG), the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) and the bill’s sponsor, Rep. Kevin Tanner (R-Dawsonville) for over a year on this legislation. The new law streamlines prior provisions for private plan review and inspection by shortening the time within which the governing authority has to perform plan review and inspections and, most importantly, by allowing owners to elect to go immediately to using private engineers or architects regardless of whether the governing authority can provide the service within the stated time frame. Previously, an owner could only use private plan review or inspections if the local government could not complete the review/inspection within a specified time frame.

TRANSIT GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING COMMISSION

This state legislation (HB 930) created a new transit governance named the “ATL” administratively attached to GRTA. The ATL consists of 13 counties divided into 10 districts with an elected Board (similar to the State Transportation

Board). The law allows for a 1% transit-only T-SPLOST for up to 30 years for all districts that pass the required local referendum for the tax, and also allows CIDs to create special districts for transit projects. ACEC Georgia was instrumental in helping pass this historic legislation.

SIGNIFICANT TAX REFORM BENEFITS FOR ENGINEERING FIRMS

Among other things, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 lowers the corporate tax rate from 35% to 21% and creates a 20% tax deduction for passthrough firms, including S corporations, partnerships and LLCs. Engineering firms were originally excluded from this deduction, but as a result of extensive advocacy 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 final version of the bill also preserves the ability of engineering firms to continue to use the cash method of accounting – as opposed to forcing firms to undergo the expensive process of switching to accrual accounting – which was a critical ACEC priority going into this process. The bill also preserves ESOPs and other retirement savings mechanisms, as well as private activity bonds and renewable energy incentives.

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

This law (HB 943) prohibits the use of broad form indemnification and/or duty to defend clauses in contracts for engineering, architectural and/or land surveying services. The bill was signed into law by Governor Nathan Deal on April 26, 2016. ACEC Georgia led the effort (writing and lobbying for the bill) 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 \$945 million per year in new, dedicated funding for GDOT – and this amount will increase over time due to indexing mechanisms in the legislation. The bill was signed into law by Governor Nathan Deal on May 4, 2015.



EVENTS & PROGRAMS

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, enabling 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

These meetings take place quarterly with two in the Atlanta region and two moving between Savannah, Macon and Augusta.

Topics vary depending on location and current events but include economic, legislative and political outlooks, updates from the Army Corps of Engineers and procurement officers.



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.

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.

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 L. "SULLY" SULLIVAN is President & CEO of ACEC Georgia, as well its chief lobbyist and public policy advocate. 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." Prior to joining ACEC Georgia, Sully was an attorney and equity partner at Andersen, Tate & Carr, one of metro Atlanta's largest full-service law firms.

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CHANDLER CARTER serves as Director of Professional Development and STEM Programs. In this role, Chandler is responsible for ACEC Georgia's program content, leadership development programs, and STEM outreach activities.

Contact Chandler with questions about: ACEC Georgia practice area forums, STEM, any ACEC Georgia programs, including the Future Leaders Program and Engineering Leadership Academy, or how to get more involved. Chandler.Carter@acecga.org | 770-214-3024



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

Contact Jennifer with questions about: Membership, sponsorship opportunities, or how to get more involved. Jennifer.Head@acecga.org | 404-665-3539 | @Jennyhead77



BRITTNEY LOVE serves as the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer. Brittney is primarily responsible for developing ACEC Georgia's financial management strategy as well as implementing the work initiatives required to meet the organization's strategic goals. Brittney manages all accounting and budgeting affairs and works closely with ACEC Georgia's Treasurer and Board of Directors.

Contact Brittney with questions about: invoicing, dues or volunteer opportunities with ACEC Georgia. Brittney.Love@acecga.org | 404-537-1275



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

Contact Lisa with questions about: Engineering Georgia magazine, receiving emails and communications, or any of ACEC Georgia's awards programs. Lisa.Exley@acecga.org | 404-537-1415



ASHLEY JENKINS serves as the Director of Government Affairs. As such, Ashley is responsible for ACEC Georgia's political advocacy efforts at the federal, state and local government levels. She has extensive experience representing clients' legislative agendas on both the state and local level.

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