BACKGROUND

ACEC Indiana State PAC supports candidates for the Indiana General Assembly, not statewide or local candidates. It generates approximately $25,000 per year, mostly through corporate support in conjunction with payment of Annual ACEC Indiana Membership Dues. Firms are requested to contribute an amount equal to 10 percent of their annual state dues. If all firms participated at the suggested level, the State PAC would generate approximately $40,000 per year, which is better, but not huge. However, many firms, especially regional and national firms, are unable to support the State PAC corporately, so we implemented a “personal giving” option for principals and other active members to support the state advocacy effort. Thus far, it has received only nominal interest.

TODAY

ACEC Indiana’s new Strategic Plan calls for increased advocacy to achieve legislative goals, such as protection of the recently passed State Highway and Local Road Funding Program, pursuit of a long term solution to water-related infrastructure funding, expansion of QBS and more. To achieve these goals, two ingredients have been identified: a more engaged “grassroots” network of members, and a more influential Indiana State PAC.

As membership grows, and with financial support from ACEC Indiana itself, ideally, the ACEC Indiana State PAC could reach $50,000 annually, which is double from current levels. It is good “seed” money, but it only tells part of the influence that ACEC Indiana member firms play today. Many consulting engineering leaders regularly make contributions directly to legislative candidates and incumbents that added up, far exceed the ACEC Indiana State PAC. Capturing that total sum of financial support would yield a different view of ACEC Indiana’s “sphere of influence” with policy makers and help our organization carry a stronger “voice” on behalf of the professional consulting engineering membership.

“POWER Club” was created to recognize firms and members who meet certain giving “thresholds” and voluntarily disclose limited information on direct contributions they make to state legislative candidates or caucuses, and have an opportunity to be part of select ACEC Indiana State PAC activity.

HOW TO QUALIFY

ACEC Indiana’s State PAC is part of the foundation of the advocacy program, so we are going to build on it with a “POWER Club” to recognize both corporate and personal giving:

Corporate: Firms that contribute corporately an amount equivalent to at least 10% of its Annual Dues; Individuals of those firms that also commit to make at least 1 direct contribution (the firm would be listed and the qualifying individuals)
Personal: Individuals that contribute personally to the State PAC qualify for “POWER Club” if they meet the 10% threshold. If a lesser amount is contributed, individuals can be listed as a “Booster” of the Power Club. “Booster” suggested annual giving to the State PAC: Principals $200, other staff $100. Same commitment to make at least 1 “direct” contribution applies to Individual “POWER Club” members and Boosters

It's simple and here is how it will work:

1. ACEC Indiana will provide a list of “approved” candidates to receive direct contributions based on transparent and objective criteria each year.

2. When you make a direct contribution to any of these candidates, or their respective caucuses, voluntarily report the amount via a simple “check off” system online. You won’t be asked to disclose the name of any candidate; instead, we only want to know if they are a Republican or Democrat, Senate or House…that’s it!

At the end of the year, the goal is to be able to capture the total sum of contributions made to each caucus in the Indiana House and Senate. This will provide meaningful data to policy makers who can help ACEC Indiana achieve its legislative goals! Who you make your contributions to is only known by you, and it is an honor system that your contributions are only going to candidates on the “approved” list.

Examples:

• ABC Firm Annual Dues = $5,000 and makes a corporate contribution to the State PAC for $500. In addition, it has three Principals, and each of them commit to make 1 “direct” contribution to an “approved” candidate.” Therefore, both the firm and the 3 Principals would be recognized as “POWER Club.”

• XYZ Firm has same annual dues as ABC and makes same contribution to the State PAC, but it commits to make at least 1 “direct” contribution using corporate funds to an “approved” candidate. None of its Principals make the commitment. Therefore, only the firm would be recognized as “POWER Club.”

• Individuals of MNO Firm contribute personally to the State PAC and commit to make at least 1 “direct” contribution to an “approved” candidate. Same Annual Dues of $5,000. One of them contributes an amount equivalent to 10% of Annual Dues of that firm ($500), and would be listed as a “POWER Club” member. If no one contributes enough to be a “POWER Club” member, they could make smaller contributions ($200 or less), and would be listed as “Boosters” of “POWER Club”.

Join the Club and help boost the POWER of the State PAC! Questions? Contact Beth Bauer at: bbauer@acecinindiana.org or call (317) 637-3563.