It has been impressive to see the strength of our industry in these unprecedented and challenging times. How reassuring was it to have our work recognized as essential both nationally and by the state of Indiana? With the many uncertainties and difficulties planning a course forward, our engineering community has been given the opportunity to channel one of our greatest strengths: problem solving. We are, by nature, collectively great at identifying the problem and creating a variety of plans to arrive at a desired solution.

Our problem right now is the constraint of limited personal contact. We can turn this constraint into something positive and use it to make our industry and ACEC Indiana stronger. From this moment forward, we will be embracing practices that we never envisioned possible just months ago and doing so at an accelerated rate. It is true that engineers often resist change, which makes the last several months even more amazing. We have made the best out of a difficult situation. What else can we do?

**Elevate Our Voice:** At the core of ACEC Indiana is our mission to be the collective voice of the Indiana consulting engineering community. The progress that we made collectively has created familiarity and trust with our elected officials, government agencies, and other professional organizations. The trust we have worked so hard on will be the foundation for being persuasive. We are going to have to arrive at solutions to continue our industry’s progress on the improvement to our infrastructure and not allow it to regress backwards. Now more important than ever, we collectively need to support ACEC individually by reaching out to our elected officials nationally and within the state to advocate for funding infrastructure. Americans need to have clean drinking water and need to be able to cross a river to get essential services. Remind them that we can build our economy out of this recession.

**Embrace Something Different:** In 2020 and 2021, ACEC Indiana will be doing more things differently than at any time in our history. It would be easy to sit back and wait for things to return to normal. But it is very likely that you would begin to feel more isolated and lose a sense of community. Instead, ACEC Indiana desires to enhance relationship-building among our members. Our goal should be to encourage ourselves and our staff to lean in and get more involved. I truly believe the more you get involved in ACEC, the more you get back and that you and our industry are better because of it.

What will our involvement look like? Different. We will be meeting more virtually. Make time to join our virtual meetings and contribute your ideas. We need everyone to contribute ideas because one person’s good idea becomes great when working with others. It will help us continue our momentum going forward. It has been amazing to see the openness of our conversations during this challenging time and how we improve each other.

Starting in August, ACEC Indiana is going to have a monthly “Coffee with Colleagues”. It will be an opportunity for you to strengthen your relationship with our ACEC Indiana Community virtually while drinking coffee or whatever you prefer during the start of your day. **Click here for more information and to register.**

So take 20 minutes right now and contact your elected officials about the importance of funding our infrastructure, look at our upcoming ACEC Indiana events, and lean in. I look forward to seeing how we can make ACEC Indiana even better and more valuable to our industry with new ways of doing things! Stay safe and smile.