IN FOCUS

First, as we have just celebrated the best our industry had to offer at the Diamond Awards, I would like to send out a big thank you to all that made the event a great success. This includes those that submitted nominations for the various categories, the winning designers and clients, our generous sponsors, attendees and distinguished guests, our volunteer Committee members and ACEC/PA staff. Thanks to your support it truly showcased the best of our industry. It’s not too early to start thinking about nominations for next year!

As we move into spring, there is a much that we have been working on behind the scenes that will start to bloom in the coming months:

- ACEC National Convention in Washington DC from April 15 to 18, 2018.
- ACEC/PA’s inaugural Spring Conference to be held in Harrisburg from April 30th to May 2. Unlike the Fall Conference which is dedicated largely to Transportation, the Spring Conference will have a jam-packed agenda that will have broad appeal.
- ACEC/PA’s Annual Meeting to be held in Newport, RI from June 11 to 14, 2018. Stay tuned for details.
- As we look at our committees, we will be adding Water, Energy and Diversity Committees that will provide value to a larger sector of our industry. Look for emails requesting participation on these important new additions. Also, not to be forgotten an Ad-Hoc Committee has been established to evaluate an Emerging Leaders Program and a Young Professionals Group.

We have great speakers lined up for March at the Chapter meetings and Government Affairs Breakfast. Please sign up and plan to attend. Bring a colleague!
Cut in corporate tax rate, loophole fix could generate $330M
When it comes to calculating corporate net income, Pennsylvania is considered a “separate” reporting state — meaning companies based here that have subsidiaries file separate reports as if the subsidiaries were standalone businesses… Read more

Expert: Pennsylvania corporate tax rate may deter growth
On paper, Pennsylvania has the second-highest corporate net income tax rate in the country, according to a report by the state's Independent Fiscal Office… Read more

U.S. Supreme Court asks for responses to GOP bid to block new Pa. congressional map
U.S. Supreme Court Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. on Wednesday asked participants in a key Pennsylvania gerrymandering case to respond to a request from top Republican lawmakers that the nation’s highest court step in and block the new congressional map… Read more

Trump plans return to Pennsylvania amid close US House race
Democrat Conor Lamb is pounding Republican Rick Saccone in fundraising ahead of a special election in Pennsylvania for a vacant U.S. House seat, as President Donald Trump plans a pre-election rally in a contest viewed as a gauge of Republican strength before 2018’s midterm elections… Read more

A change in the (GOP primary) weather
You can pretty much tell the state of a race by how contenders handle debates… Read more House races are in full swing, but layered with uncertainty

House races are in full swing, but layered with uncertainty
Pennsylvania's congressional races are in full swing, while Republicans are waging legal battles in federal courts in an effort to block a new map of 18 districts imposed by the state Supreme Court… Read more
Timing may be everything in GOP's attempt to block new congressional district map in court
As federal courts consider Republican efforts to block Pennsylvania’s new map of Congressional districts, one of the primary issues the judges will have to decide is: When is it too late to change… Read more

PA General Fund revenues got a lot of help from one-time, non-tax payments in February
Pennsylvania’s General Fund is looking pretty good eight months into the fiscal year, but things aren’t quite as good as they appear… Read more

State disputes claim 100K noncitizens registered to vote
Pennsylvania election officials said Wednesday that there is no evidence to back up a claim that more than 100,000 noncitizen immigrants had been registered to vote in the state, responding to a conservative group's lawsuit in federal court… Read more

Right-to-know in Pa.: The excuses made for not opening open records
Most agencies receive few or no requests for records under Pennsylvania's public access law and only a fraction of them are appealed, according to a report on law's costs released Tuesday… Read more

Pa. GOP Gubernatorial Debate Becomes Confrontational
A debate between the three Republicans seeking their party’s nomination to challenge Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf in November’s election quickly became confrontational Thursday night, as former health care systems consultant Paul Mango relentlessly attacked the party’s endorsed candidate, state Sen. Scott Wagner… Read more

UPCOMING EVENTS

Government Affairs Breakfast - Wednesday, March 14
The Honorable Pennsylvania House of Representative and Transportation Chairman John Taylor… Read more

Hershey Country Club
Register now

Central Chapter Meeting - Wednesday, March 14
Welcome Karen Gabel, Consultant Agreements, PA Department of Transportation, Bureau of Project Delivery, Highway Delivery Division, Contract Management Section… Read more
Eastern Chapter Meeting - Tuesday, March 20
A panel discussion with:

- Christopher J. Kufro, PE, Assistant District Executive for Design, PennDOT 5-0;
- Christopher A. Drda, P.E., Assistant District Executive, Design, PennDOT District 8-0; and
- Tim Stevenson, P.E., Design Portfolio Manager, PennDOT 6-0

Read more

Desmond Hotel
Register

ACEC/PA Spring Conference
April 30, May 1-2, 2018
Harrisburg, PA
Watch for details

Save the Date for the 2018 Annual Meeting
June 11-14, 2018
Gurney’s Newport Resort & Marina, Newport, RI

Reserve your room today and learn a bit more about the location!
Details

Committee Growth
ACEC/PA is adding additional committees to encompass the expanded membership and growing environment in the industry. With an emphasis on industry and business challenges, the need to collaborate and move the industry forward, we will soon hold our 2018 Board & Committee Leadership Retreat to determine the future focuses of ACEC/PA. Shortly after this strategic planning event, we will engage the membership on new items, ways to become involved, what to expect, how you can use ACEC/PA and much more. We are very excited for the next chapter of ACEC/PA!
Leadership Positions
ACEC/PA is seeking leadership (Chair & Vice Chair) for newly created committees. Shortly we will be asking the membership to fill these voluntary positions to help us move ACEC/PA forward.

You Are ACEC/PA
We have 21 different committees looking for your leadership and expertise. Check out the committee page to see which one is for you. Those interested in learning more should contact the ACEC/PA office at (800) 651-1946 or ACEC/PA Executive Director Leeann Sherman.

Save the Date
ACEC Annual Convention
April 15-18, 2018
Washington, D.C.
Read more

RESOURCES
Intelligent Infrastructure, Interactive Buildings, & Smart Cities: The Role of Engineering in the Age of Conscious Cities
Wednesday, March 7, 2018 ● 1:30 - 3 p.m.
Learn more

New Member
Please join us in welcoming SWCA Environmental Consultants to the ACEC/PA membership.

Jonathan Libbon, Project Manager, has attended several Western Chapter meetings to date. Please welcome he and his team to ACEC/PA.

ACE Mentor Program exposes students to architecture, engineering and construction
Central Penn Business Journal
Allison Hanna knew early on that she wanted to pursue a degree in landscape architecture. Her interest only grew after she attended workshops sponsored by ACE Mentor Program of Central Pennsylvania during her senior year at Cumberland Valley High School...Read more.

Cheryl Moon-Sirianni: Champion for women in civil engineering

*Penn State College of Engineering*

Cheryl always had her sights set on attending Penn State. After graduating from Freeport Area High School in 1983, she went off to University Park to major in petroleum engineering.

Everything changed for Cheryl after her first year. That summer, she had an internship with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), where she worked on a bridge project in Kittanning, Pennsylvania. “I was bitten by the civil engineering bug,” she says. “I was so intrigued by how the bridge design worked, and knew that civil engineering fitted me better than petroleum engineering.”

Cheryl was not only bitten by the civil engineering bug; she was bitten by the PennDOT bug. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering in 1987, Cheryl began her career with PennDOT – and has been there for 31 years. In November 2017, she was appointed district executive for District 11, which covers a three-county Pittsburgh region.

“The people I work with are by far the best folks that anyone can hope to work with,” Cheryl says. “We all work so well as a team, working toward a common goal to get a good project out for the public. To be selected to continue working with them in this position is extremely flattering.”

As the first woman to lead District 11, Cheryl is responsible for 800 men and women who work in the district, and oversees more than $370 million in construction projects, 2,569 miles of roadway, 1,796 bridges, and four tunnels in Allegheny, Beaver, and Lawrence counties.

“Every day is different,” she explains. “One day we could have a landslide that we’re struggling to fix, another day we could have a major snowstorm and a flooding incident, and other days we’re working hard to get design projects out and trying to figure out where funding goes. You’re always challenged every single day.”

Cheryl is a strong advocate for women, especially for women entering the field of civil engineering.

“What I see with a lot of young women is they don’t have the confidence – they don’t feel they can do everything a counterpart can do,” she says. “Never sell yourself short. You are just as capable, if not more capable, than the other folks sitting around you.”

Cheryl has facilitated all four of the Women’s Forums for Architecture, Engineering and Construction professionals, held twice a year in the Pittsburgh area, where women discuss topics such as childcare and
the stresses of balancing life and family. “Anything I can do to make other folks’ jobs easier and help them navigate through life’s difficult situations makes me feel better,” she says.

In addition, Cheryl is a member of the Penn State Beaver Advisory Board, where she chairs the Recruitment and Retention Committee. A big focus of the committee is to try to attract students from underrepresented communities to engineering, who might think engineering is not an option for them.

“Civil engineering is a great career choice. There are so many opportunities in civil engineering – you can choose to be a public servant, a hydraulic engineer, a bridge designer, a roadway designer, build skyscrapers, you can choose to work in the office, out of the office – there’s a lot of flexibility,” she explains.

Cheryl has had many professional achievements throughout her career with PennDOT. She received the Secretary’s Award for Excellence in 1996; the American Society of Civil Engineers Service to the People Award in 2006; she was a National Award Nominee for the White House Champions of Change, Connecting Transportation and Ladders of Opportunity in 2014; and received the Engineer of the Year Award from the Engineers Society of Western Pennsylvania in 2015.

“I love my job – I’ve loved my job my whole career,” she says. “You should never be in a job where you’re not having fun. That’s not saying every day is parties and streamers, but you should be walking in the door every morning with a smile on your face and ready to tackle the day. And if you’re walking in with your head down and depressed every day, maybe you’re not in the right place. Just have fun and enjoy the opportunities you have – life is short so you should live every single day to the fullest.”

Cheryl lives in Economy, Pennsylvania, where she enjoys golfing and spending time with friends and family. Her daughter, Gina, is currently a junior at Penn State majoring in industrial engineering.

ACEC/PA Needs Your Help

- Do you have committee news to share or know of a colleague/firm making a difference? We’d want to share that news! Please send ACEC/PA Executive Director Lecann Sherman the information for inclusion in an upcoming edition of forward.

- We want to communicate with you. Please take a moment to update your profile with us so you don’t miss any important news or events.

Did You Know?
Today is National Oreo Cookie Day!
Nabisco first filed to trademark ‘Oreo’ In March 1912.