

# ACEC

American Council of Engineering Companies  
of Mississippi

December 2019  
Volume 25, Issue 2

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**"The Voice of Mississippi's Engineering Companies"**

**2019 Teddy Roosevelt Award Winner  
David Compton, P.E.**



**2019 PAC Winner  
Ron Cassada, P.E.**



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# ACEC/MS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Wayne Morrison



I want to thank Craig Carter and Jessica Gosa for their hard work at our ACEC/MS 2019 Fall Meeting and 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Fellows banquet was held at Albert's by Parlor Market. Chris Gill with Control Systems did an excellent job playing guitar as the entertainment sponsor. Sun-belt Sealing sponsored our reception and Environmental Technical Sales and Burns Cooley Dennis were our dinner sponsors. Our Fellows banquet is designed to honor our ACEC Fellows, to announce the year's Teddy Roosevelt Award winner and to have one last raising of PAC money for the year. This year's ACEC Fellows in attendance were Ed Dedeaux, Slade Exley and Stanley Spradling. A well-deserved congratulations to David Compton with Compton Engineering, Inc. of Gulfport, who was this year's recipient of the Teddy Roosevelt Award. He has been a great leader in our organization and for the State of Mississippi. Ron Cassada of Gardner Engineering, P.A., won the PAC draw down and donated it back to the PAC. Thank you, Ron! I cannot speak of ACEC's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary without thanking Mrs. Judy Adams for her 26-year term as Executive Director of ACEC-MS. ACEC-MS greatly benefited from her toil and perseverance. Thank you, Judy!!

The Executive Board met on Thursday, along with the Environmental and Transportation Committees. These committee meetings provide a great deal of important information about our state that affects our engineering profession. Our goal is to extend the time frame of these meetings to seek better ways in which ACEC/MS can help secure more funding for infrastructure. Our meeting sponsors this year were Buchart Horn, Inc., Clearwater Consultants, Inc., Dungan Engineering, P.A. and Turner Insurance and Financial Services.

Justin Kelly with J.D. Mellbery Financial began our Friday session speaking on Cyber Security and Fraud Protection. It is scary and alarming to know how vulnerable we are. Tom Hood, Executive Director and Chief Counsel of the Mississippi Ethics Commission, spoke to us on Ethics in Government Law. His presentation was very informative. David Bowman, Neel-Schaffer, Inc., and Stanley Spradling, Calvert-Spradling Engineers, spoke about the significance of being active and involved in ACEC. It was important and encouraging to hear how David and Stanley, two long-standing members, have personally benefited from ACEC and how their businesses have benefited as well. Our closing program Friday morning was led by Mike Pepper, Executive Director of Mississippi Road Builders Association. Mike provided valuable information on working together to secure additional infrastructure funding.

Our Winter Meeting is scheduled for February 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020, at the ACEC/MS Jackson office. We will be celebrating our Engineering Excellence Award (EEA) projects. We have eleven EEA projects this year which is an ACEC/MS record! A heartfelt thank you to all who submitted! Please make plans to attend our upcoming programs and committee meetings. You will be receiving an email with details regarding our Winter Meeting after the first of the year. Winter Meeting information will also be available on our website at [www.acecms.org](http://www.acecms.org).

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



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**ACEC/MS  
Capitol Day  
February 18, 2020**

# *SAVE THE DATE*

2020 Annual ACEC/MS Assembly:  
Forging a Progressive Mindset for  
Engineers of the Future

*FEBRUARY 13-14, 2020*

Engineering Excellence Awards Banquet  
The Railroad District

**New Members:**

**GPI**

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*Principal(s): Stephanie Sago Vivians, P.E.,  
President*



# ACEC President's Update: Linda Bauer Darr

Dear Colleagues –

I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving holiday! The highlight of last month was Chair Mitch Simpler and Former Chair Manish Kothari participating in a trade delegation to Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam with Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross. ACEC was the only trade association in the delegation, and Mitch and Manish met with government officials from each country to discuss how U.S. firms can help with their infrastructure, energy, and economic needs. Closer to home, the Planning Cabinet met with senior staff at the Council offices mid-month to lay out steps for implementing the new ACEC Strategic Plan. They heard staff proposals and generated new ideas that support the goals and objectives laid out in the Plan. The next step is to discuss the Plan with MO executives at the annual NAECE Winter Meeting in Naples, Fla. in early December. Click [here](#) to view the Strategic Plan.

Linda

## Membership

- Thanks to all the member firms who participated in our Ownership Transfer and Management Succession survey. We had a strong response (200+ firms). We will conduct follow-up interviews in December and plan to release the survey results in April 2020.
  - We had a strong turnout for the November 13 The NAECE Executive Toolkit webinar *Effective Utilization of Referrals and Testimonials*. On December 10, we will host a NAECE Town Hall online meeting with JP Moery, featuring open discussions on membership, sales, leadership, governance, and membership campaigns.
- Don't forget to register your MO staff for the next training session at the Council offices on February 10-11. Topics will include membership, PAC, Trusts, government affairs, leadership programs, coalitions, EEA, and non-due revenues. Click [here](#) to register.

## Government Advocacy

Our biggest win during the month was helping to secure repeal of the \$7.6 billion rescission of federal highway funding originally included in the FAST Act for July 2020. Click [here](#) to see the state-by-state funding map.

- ACEC/PAC is within \$100,000 of raising \$1 million for the fourth consecutive year. During the month, Arkansas and Illinois reached their annual fundraising goals and New York regained the lead in total annual ACEC/PAC contributions.
- We sent a letter to Senate leadership urging them to move forward with bipartisan energy technology and environmental legislation.
- Along with the AIA, we met with the Internal Revenue Service to discuss audit problems faced by engineering firms when claiming the R&D tax credit and potential industry-specific guidance.
- At the ACEC townhouse, we hosted dinners for Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Representative Bruce Westerman (R-AR) and a breakfast for Representative Earl Blumenauer (D-OR). Our government affairs staff also met with six Congressional candidates and five freshman members.
- With our coalition partners, we sent a letter urging Congress to extend expired tax provisions, including the Section 179D energy-efficient commercial buildings deduction and the Section 45 production tax credit for renewables.
- We met with Administration officials at the White House to urge publication of a proposed rule on NEPA implementation.
- In a letter to the Army Corps of Engineers, we raised concerns that proposed changes in Task Order Competition will add cost and time to the AE procurement process and limit competition for both firms and the Corps.
- ACEC senior staff presented at a water policy forum for ACEC/Texas in San Antonio and at the ACEC/Louisiana Fall meeting. The *Engineering Influence* podcast has surpassed the 5,000-download mark.



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