Roosevelt Day we had a brief presentation of the T1 Coalition from Harry Lee James. This coalition has been established to focus private sector efforts to address transportation funding in Mississippi. Hopefully momentum will build until we have the interest of another “87 Highway Program”, which was implemented 26 years ago.

While we support the efforts of state and federal legislators to address transportation funding, we believe it is time to step up—in a positive, collaborative manner—and augment government efforts with the type of leadership and bold action that can only come from the private sector.

The T1 Coalition is the product of discussions by the Mississippi Road Builders Association (MRBA), the Mississippi Concrete Industries Association (MCIA), and the Mississippi Asphalt Pavement Association (MAPA). The mission of the T1 Coalition is to bring together interested parties to:

(i) produce a comprehensive statewide strategic plan to improve Mississippi transportation infrastructure in all modes, from the local to the state level, and
(ii) advocate for the funding and implementation of such strategic plan

The T1 Coalition will coordinate with the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) and other transportation stakeholders on any major transportation program proposals brought forward to present to the leadership in the House of Representatives, Senate, and Office of the Governor.

We realize that any effort of this magnitude will have to include the cities and counties.

Officers of the T1 Coalition are Charlie Williams (Butler Snow), President; Clark Holmes (Central Mississippi Planning and Development District), Vice President; Quincy Mukoro (Mississippi Municipal League), Secretary; and Chip Morgan (Delta Council), Treasurer. Additional board members are yet to be named.

We are encouraging involvement of our members through financial contributions, attendance at Public Hearings, Letters to the Editor, talking to your elected folks about the needs of your area in roads and bridges.

ACEC-MS plans to be an active member of the Coalition. Contributions made to T1 are a deductible business expense and may qualify for a state and/or federal income tax deduction. Contributions may be made through the American Council of Engineering Companies of Mississippi (ACEC-MS), or directly to the T1 Coalition. Any contribution will be appreciated.

The special Senate Task Force will be having meetings around the state in the near future and the T-1 Coalition is asking our members to attend the public hearings around the state and bring your County Supervisors, Aldermen, etc. to express the need for funding.

If you have any questions about the T-1 Coalition or the involvement of ACEC-MS and its members, please do not hesitate to contact Judy or any member of the Executive Committee, which includes Jeff Dungan, Jimmy Nelson, David Bowman, Scott Burge, David Compton, Carey Hardin and Allen Scott.
As your incoming President, I am both honored and humbled by the opportunity to serve our organization. I want to first thank our outgoing president, Ron Cassada, for an outstanding year of leadership. I look forward to working with our Executive Committee, committee chairmen, and general membership to continue moving our organization forward. I am especially thankful for our Executive Director, Judy Adams, and her assistant, Leah Head, and look forward to working with them to have another successful year. We are so fortunate to have such a competent and dedicated staff working tirelessly for the betterment of our organization.

Over the past several years, my appreciation for ACEC both at a state and national level has grown significantly. I attribute this growth in appreciation to my increased level of involvement. I recently attended the ACEC national meeting in Washington, DC and realized how strong our organization really is throughout our country. I would like to challenge each member to increase your level of involvement in ACEC in 2013-2014. I think that your appreciation for ACEC will grow as a result.

Now is a great time to be involved in ACEC. The increasing efforts on a state and national level to solve our infra-structure funding dilemma, as well as the implementation of the Affordable Healthcare for America Act makes having a “seat at the table” imperative for each of us. Our membership in ACEC guarantees just that.

I would also like to stress increased involvement in the legislative process by all of our members. ACEC-MS is our most effective way of monitoring and lobbying on behalf of the engineering profession. Judy and Al Sage need our help in contacting and educating our legislators during the legislative session. Please take an active role when asked to participate in the effort. There are also opportunities to support our efforts financially. Contributions to the legislative/legal fund, as well as, the PAC allow our state and national leaders to lobby more effectively on our behalf.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President. I look forward to seeing you at our Fall Fling on November 14 & 15, 2013 at the Capital Club in Jackson.
ACEC FALL CONFERENCE

October 27 - 30, 2013
Fairmont Scottsdale Princess
Scottsdale, Arizona

ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE AWARDS ARE COMING!
PROJECTS DUE DECEMBER 11

The definition of ‘excellence’: the quality of being outstanding; extremely good.

Being excellent isn’t easy, but engineers do it every day. Each year ACEC of Mississippi provides opportunities to put the spotlight on your projects at the Engineering Excellence Awards. The competition recognizes engineering firms for work that demonstrates a high degree of achievement, value, and ingenuity.

The Grand Conceptor Award is considered “Best in Show” and is presented to the project judged to be the best overall in competition. The Grand Award and Honor Award are presented as well. For the second year, the People’s Choice Award category will give everyone at the Awards Dinner a chance to vote on their favorite project.

The Engineering Excellence Awards provides a chance for firms to receive statewide recognition and the bragging rights that come with a prestigious EEA win. Entries for the Engineering Excellence Awards must be submitted by December 11, 2013. You can find the entry form online at www.acecms.org/Awards. For additional information, contact Leah Head at (601) 420-2001 or leah@acecms.org.

ZWEIGWHITE SALARY SURVEY

ACEC MS, along with other state ACEC member organizations, is collaborating with ZweigWhite to produce its annual series of regional salary surveys. ACEC member participation is a key element in providing a comprehensive report on salary trends at a broad base of engineering firms nationwide.

ZweigWhite will mail the 2014 Salary Survey to ACEC MS member firm key contacts in late September. It is also available online. The deadline to participate is October 25.

To encourage participation, ACEC MS members who participate in the survey receive the report for $95, a savings of $200. In addition, when members order a book, ACEC MS will receive 25% of the revenue generated from member purchases. This is a great way to support ACEC MS and get the information you need at a discount.

ZweigWhite’s 2014 Salary Survey of Northeast and South Atlantic Engineering Firms, 2014 Salary Survey of Central Engineering Firms and the 2014 Salary Survey of Mountain & Pacific Engineering Firms are the most up-to-date and comprehensive surveys for engineering firms operating in these regions.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

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September will be a crucial legislative month, with the federal debt ceiling and needed action on overall government funding high on Congress’ to-do list. One of ACEC’s major priorities is the Water Resources and Development Act which is expected to be considered by House Committee in September with floor action to follow immediately afterwards. At Committee Chairman Bill Shuster’s (R-PA) request, ACEC is working with legislators to build support for WRDA; it would represent the first major infrastructure initiative to come out of the House, as well as a key test vote ahead of larger infrastructure initiatives. Our Fall Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona has record numbers of advance registrants spurred by a strong business program and notable speakers; early registration discounts continue through September.

- Advocated a broad-based national energy policy, hydraulic fracturing, and a broad definition of clean energy with Rep. Diane DeGette (D-CO) and staff from the office of Senator Mark Udall (D-CO) during the ACEC Environment and Energy Committee meeting in Denver.

- Australian Embassy staff briefed ACEC’s International Committee on public and private partnerships (P3s) in Australia and opportunities for U.S. firms.

- Key government agencies (Corps of Engineers, Small Business Administration, Air Force, and State Department’s Office of Overseas Building Operations) briefed ACEC on funding, impact of sequestration, and future programs.

- Updated representatives of twenty federal agencies involved in export promotion on the needs and challenges facing U.S. engineering firms overseas.

- Supported an increase in right-of-ways, permits, and temporary easements to construct, operate, and maintain oil and natural gas pipelines on federal lands by endorsing the Energy Infrastructure Improvement Act to grant issuing authority to the Department of Interior (DOI), rather than Congress.

- Supported the expanded availability of low cost capital for renewable energy projects by endorsing the Master Limited Partnerships Parity Act, introduced by Reps. Ted Poe (R-TX) and Sen. Christopher Coons (D-DE).