



Move Illinois:
The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 26, 2018

ILLINOIS TOLLWAY CHIEF ENGINEERING OFFICER AND CHIEF OF DIVERSITY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT NAMED 2018 VANGUARD AWARD RECIPIENTS

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway’s Chief Engineering Officer Paul Kovacs and Chief of Diversity and Strategic Development Gustavo Giraldo were selected for the first-ever Vanguard Award by the Construction Industry Conference. Both recipients were recognized at an awards ceremony in Chicago.

“Paul Kovacs and Gustavo Giraldo have been at the forefront of the Illinois Tollway’s efforts to increase economic opportunities in diverse communities throughout Northern Illinois,” said Construction Industry Conference Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer Suzanne Stantley. “It is an honor to present these two leaders in diversity and inclusion with our inaugural Vanguard Award as an example for others in the construction industry to follow.”

This Vanguard Award recognizes an organization’s continuous and outstanding efforts in the area of inclusion and diversity for businesses. This is the first year that the Construction Industry Conference has presented the Vanguard Award. Kovacs and Giraldo were recognized for their dedication to the Tollway’s outreach to diverse businesses as part of the agency’s 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*.

“Thanks to the leadership of department chiefs such as Paul Kovacs and Gustavo Giraldo, we have successfully diversified the pool of businesses and individuals participating on Tollway projects,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Liz Gorman. “We are proud of their achievements and tireless work to ensure that Illinois Tollway continues to be an industry leader in diversity and inclusion initiatives.”

Nearly one-third of the more than 1,200 unique construction and professional engineering services firms that have participated in *Move Illinois* are disadvantaged, minority-, women- or veteran-owned firms. And, of the nearly \$6.1 billion the Tollway has invested since *Move Illinois* began in 2012, approximately \$1.8 billion has been committed to small, diverse and veteran-owned firms.

Tollway diversity and inclusion efforts include the creation and expansion of several programs. Last year, the Tollway expanded its Technical Assistance Program to prepare established firms including small, diverse and veteran firms to participate as prime contractors on highway and vertical construction contracts. There are now seven providers in 12 locations across the entire Tollway system, including Aurora, Chicago, Chicago Heights, Rockford and Waukegan that have served more than 430 unique clients, more than two-thirds of which are African American-owned business owners.

The Tollway also expanded its Partnering for Growth Program to include agreements for both professional engineering services firms and construction firms. Partnering for Growth encourages contractors and professional engineering services firms to assist disadvantaged, small and veteran-owned businesses in remaining self-sufficient, competitive and profitable by serving as mentors providing meaningful instruction. Since 2005, the program has facilitated nearly 150 mentoring agreements.

Paul Kovacs is responsible for the policies, practices and procedures of the Engineering Department, which oversees all design and construction operations on the agency's 294-mile system of roadways serving more than 1.6 million daily users in Northern Illinois. Currently, he is responsible for delivering the seventh year of the Tollway's *Move Illinois* Program.

Gustavo Giraldo spearheads Tollway efforts to increase access to economic opportunities for disadvantaged, minority- and women-owned business enterprise firms, as well as small and veteran-owned businesses and underemployed individuals. He is responsible for leading the implementation of diversity policies and programs, ensuring diverse participation in the *Move Illinois* Program and engaging communities through advocacy, outreach and networking events.

About *Move Illinois*

The Illinois Tollway's 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*, is improving mobility, relieving congestion, reducing pollution, creating as many as 120,000 jobs and linking economies throughout the region. The first six years of *Move Illinois* are on schedule and within budget, delivering the new Illinois Route 390 Tollway and a rebuilt and widened Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) with its new SmartRoad corridor, as well as opening a new interchange connecting the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) to I-57. Progress continues on projects addressing the remaining needs of the existing Tollway system, delivering the new I-490 Tollway Project and reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) and planning for emerging projects.

About the Illinois Tollway

The Illinois Tollway is a user-fee system that receives no state or federal funds for maintenance and operations. The agency maintains and operates 294 miles of roadways in 12 counties in Northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90), the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80) and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

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