



Award-winning video tackles critical engineering shortage

February 25, 2008 - Spotlights

Finding and retaining qualified personnel is the most critical issue facing the engineering industry, according to a recent survey conducted by the American Council of Engineering Companies of New York (ACEC New York) among its 240 member firms. In five years, 71 percent of survey participants said they won't have enough engineers to meet their needs and in ten years, 62% anticipated a continuing shortage. Currently, only 5% of today's American college students are graduating with engineering degrees, compared to 25% of Russian and 46% of Chinese graduates.

Instilling our American youth with a sense of excitement about the fields of engineering, technology and science is a central challenge for ACEC New York. To meet this challenge, our organization is broadening its strategy beyond reaching out to middle school students to target high school students and first or second year college students who are still in the process of deciding on a career. Recognizing the need for a communications tool that would appeal to this market, ACEC New York has developed a fast-paced video using Flash animation and high-tech graphics, real project photos, and video clips of young engineers describing their achievements and the satisfaction derived from their career choice.

Produced as a CD-ROM and titled "Consulting Engineering—A Career that Matters," the 8-minute video was created to raise awareness of the diversity of engineering disciplines—from geotechnical to structural to mechanical—and to help attract college students to a profession that is now facing a significant, and growing, shortage of personnel. The video received a 2007 platinum AVA award in the category of "Career Video," the highest honor given by the Association of Marketing and Communications Professionals.

"Engineers are essential to our safety and quality of life and to our ability to compete technologically. With this video, we hope to promote engineering as a viable and desirable career," said Jay Simson, ACEC New York's executive director.

The video is currently being shown on college and university campuses statewide, and is being used by the association's scholarship committee in presentations to current engineering students to reinforce their career choice.

"In addition to sharing our personal accounts with the engineering students in their classrooms, this year we were able to show this great new video, inspiring the students and generating a heightened level of interest," said Susan Walter, co-chair of ACEC New York's scholarship committee and a principal of Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.

High school students will also have the opportunity to view the video when ACEC New York engineers visit their schools during National Engineers Week, February 17-23, 2008, and periodically throughout the year.

The young engineers featured in the video are: Diane Fiorelli, geotechnical engineer, Langan

Engineering & Environmental Services; Mark Leuner, civil engineer, Hatch Mott McDonald; Carolyn Cammalleri, mechanical engineer, Lilker Associates Consulting Engineers, PC; Pradipto (Raj) Das, electrical engineer, PB Americas, Inc.; George Kokosalakis, structural engineer, Mueser Rutledge Consulting Engineers; Iana Jackson, transportation engineer Clough Harbour & Associates, LLP; and Neil Garry, structural engineer, Klepper, Hahn & Hyatt Engineers and Landscape Architects. "Consulting Engineeringâ€”A Career that Matters" can be viewed by going to the home page of www.acecny.org. For more information or to obtain a copy of the CD-ROM, contact Hannah O'Grady at hannah@acecny.org.

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