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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Chicago's Wacker Drive/Congress Parkway Reconstruction Named Year's Most Outstanding Engineering Triumph** *Annual Engineering Excellence Awards Showcased World's Best Engineering Efforts*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Wacker Drive/Congress Parkway Reconstruction project located in downtown Chicago, has won the 2014 “Grand Conceptor” Award signifying the year’s top engineering achievement in the 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Engineering Excellence Awards—a national juried competition sponsored by the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC).

More than 600 attended Tuesday night’s black-tie Engineering Excellence Awards Gala in Washington, D.C. hosted by Comedian Rex Havens and recognizing 143 preeminent engineering accomplishments from throughout the world.

In one of the most complicated highway/bridge projects ever attempted by the City of Chicago, the 10-year, \$300-million effort completely reconfigured a primary double-decked downtown traffic interchange, while incorporating complex construction staging to keep 135,000 vehicles and a staggering 150,000 pedestrians a day moving through the construction zone.

The seven-firm engineering team, led by TranSystems completely reconstructed the deteriorated Upper and Lower Wacker Drive viaduct, lifting the vertical clearance by more than one foot, while separating lower level through lanes and service drive to alleviate congestion and improve motorist safety. Upper level access ramps were also reconfigured, a new three-acre publicly accessible park was created, while new lighting and ventilation was incorporated to improve visibility and air quality. The complex bridge/highway was completed on time and within budget—a feat rarely if ever accomplished in a project of this magnitude.

The Wacker Drive/Congress Parkway Reconstruction joins the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, (Kansas City, 2013); Lake Borgne Storm Surge Barrier (New Orleans, 2012) and the Hoover Dam Bypass (2011) as recent distinguished Grand Conceptor Award winners.

#### **Other Top 2014 Winners for Engineering Excellence were:**

#### **2014 Grand Awards**

- **Cleveland Museum of Art Addition & Renovation**, Cleveland, OH, by Karpinski Engineering;
- **Dragon Bridge**, Da Nang, Vietnam, by Louis Berger and Ammann & Whitney;

- **Dos Rios Water Recycling Center Filter Improvements**, San Antonio, by CP&Y, Inc.
- **Ward County (Texas) Water Supply Project**; From Monahans to Odessa, TX, by Freese and Nichols, Inc.;
- **King Road Grade Separation**, Burlington, Ontario, Canada, by **Hatch Mott MacDonald**;
- **OTIA III State Bridge Delivery Program**, Oregon, by HDR Engineering/Fluor Corporation; and
- **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Headquarters**, Seattle, by **GeoEngineers/KPFF**.

**2014 Honor Awards:**

- **Bing Performing Arts Center**, Stanford, CA, by Degenkolb Engineers;
- **U-Link Tunnels under I-5**, Seattle, by HNTB Corporation;
- **Checkered House Bridge Rehabilitation**, Richmond, VT, by FINLEY Engineering Group, Inc.; Harrison & Burrowes Bridge Constructors, Inc.; CHA Consulting, Inc.;
- **Brooklyn Botanic Garden Visitor Center**, Brooklyn, NY, by Weidlinger Associates;
- **Jacques Chaban-Delmas Vertical Lift Bridge**, Bordeaux, France, by Hardesty & Hanover;
- **Barclays Center**, Brooklyn, NY, by Thornton Tomasetti;
- **Terraced Reforestation for Sustainable CSO Control**, Covington, KY, by Strand Associates;
- **Tesla Water Treatment Facility**, Tracy, CA, by Stantec;
- **Colton Crossing Flyover Rail-to-Rail Grade Separation**, Colton, CA, by HDR Engineering;
- **New Runway 10C-28C & Associated Taxiways**, Chicago, IL, by O'Hare Airport Engineers (Joint Venture) AECOM; Jacobs; Milhouse Engineering and Construction; Delta Engineering Group;
- **495 Express Lanes**, Northern Virginia, by HNTB Corporation;
- **Spaceport America**, Upham, NM, by URS Corporation;
- **PHX Sky Train**, Phoenix, AZ, by Gannett Fleming;
- **Chattahoochee River Ecosystem Restoration**, Columbus, GA, by McLaughlin Whitewater Design Group (a Division of Merrick & Company);
- **Bagby Street Improvements**, Houston, TX, by Walter P Moore;
- **The Bullitt Center**, Seattle, by PAE

For further information about the annual ACEC Engineering Excellence Awards program, contact Alan D. Crockett at 202-347-7474 or by email at [acrockett@acec.org](mailto:acrockett@acec.org)

*The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) is the business association of America's engineering industry, representing nearly 5,200 independent engineering companies throughout the United States engaged in the development of America's transportation, water and energy infrastructure, along with environmental, industrial and other public and private facilities. Founded in 1909 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., ACEC is a national federation of 51 state and regional organizations.*