

# 2023-2024 Annual Report



**Committee Name:** Workforce Development Committee

**Date:** 5/30/24

**Committee Chair/Vice Chair:** Brendan Lieske/Cindy Yerkey

**Committee Mission:** With worker expectations changing, education costs increasing, and technology demands ever increasing, the Engineering industry must establish clear lines of communication with its educational training partners about the impacts of demographics, technology, and firm business models on workforce needs. This committee will foster and support the development of future professionals in Ohio's built environment.

## **Summary of 2023-2024 Committee Activities/Accomplishments:**

Our committee has been meeting monthly and making progress on our goals. The following is a list of our accomplishments so far.

1. Developed a database of current programs in Ohio that are actively working to attract students into pursuing careers in built environment. Connected with four of these organizations as a pilot program. These include NAWIC's Block Kids, Ohio Educational Service Center, Future Cities, and Ohio Academy of Science. These organizations were selected because of their statewide coverage and diversity in the age of students that they target. We have had guest speakers from 3 of the 4 organizations join our monthly meetings to present to our committee. We have suggested ACEC Ohio sponsor Future Cities and Ohio Academy of Science, as sponsorship was identified in their presentations as a great way to start helping. In addition, each of these organizations is always looking for volunteers to help as mentors, coaches, judges, etc.
2. Hosted two committee meetings with guest ACEC Ohio members who are actively on university advisory boards. The goal of these meetings was to learn what steps Ohio universities are currently taking to attract and retain students to enter into our industry. We also discussed where we think the gaps are and how ACEC Ohio can help. Some ideas that came from this discussion are listed in the future goals.

## **Future Goals:**

1. Our next steps for supporting the Ohio organizations include:
  - a. create a portal for ACEC Ohio members to provide volunteer opportunities for our members with these organizations
  - b. host a road show for these organizations to present at the ACEC Ohio chapters
  - c. develop additional ways to sponsor these organizations
2. Our next steps for developing partnerships with higher education institutions and supporting their workforce development goals for our industry include:
  - a. develop a list of ACEC Ohio members who are willing to volunteer at universities. Include searchable information such as region, discipline, and volunteer level (advisory board, senior design mentor, class guest speaker, etc.)
    - i. start by surveying ACEC Ohio members
  - b. build a liaison committee with ACEC Ohio members and university representatives to discuss curriculum needs, student experiences, etc.

- i. Start by sending out a survey to university contacts to gauge interest and learn more about their current efforts and goals.
  - c. Additional ideas include:
    - i. Advertise a University Spotlight, to share what other universities are doing to help raise the bar
    - ii. Reach out to the Ohio Department of Higher Education to learn more about their current efforts and goals
    - iii. Reach out to school counselors and superintendents to learn more about their current efforts and goals
    - iv. Advertise value of Co-ops/internships to students to increase interest

#### Longer Term

3. Create a working group within the committee to explore current technical/vocational school curriculum that is on the Industry Recognized Credentials list. Create a list of curriculums that should be added to support the industry, work to add those skills to the credential list.
4. Develop a series of videos on careers in the built environment to share with students in high school or younger. Develop list of STEM schools to share it with, outreach to teachers and school counselors.
5. Develop portal for internships at our member companies that student can access, consider more than just college students.
6. Develop an apprenticeship program for technician series, on the job training for those that can't or don't want to seek higher education. (Resource guide from ACEC Ohio on requirements needed for certain positions at our member companies?)
7. Develop a virtual course for students that are attending online schools in Ohio.
8. Provide resources to schools to use for those K-5 students ex: Engineering for kids