

CKL Engineers LLC

Mae Cheri Whiteside, P.E., Principal



Growing up in the concrete and brick environment of public housing on Chicago's South Side, with no access to parks or green space, Mae Cheri Whiteside developed a strong desire to create a healthier environment.

Working to improve her local community is the primary reason Mae pursued her career in engineering. After earning her bachelor's degree in civil engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), she gained experience in both the public and private sectors before establishing CKL Engineers in 2010.

Three years later, CKL Engineers was awarded its first major contract for the Illinois Tollway's *Move Illinois* Program.

CKL successfully earned a \$1.2 million wetland mitigation contract for the Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project in 2013. Shortly afterward, her firm was selected as part of a team to perform construction management and inspection services for bridge widening, noisewall and retaining wall construction as part of the \$2.5 billion Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) Rebuilding and Widening Project.

Because of its work on the *Move Illinois* Program, CKL Engineers has hired two full-time employees and has plans to hire more with the goal of providing new opportunities to businesses and technically qualified residents from economically depressed neighborhoods.

Engaging her community in helping to build Illinois' future is a key goal for Whiteside and CKL Engineers. In 2014, Mae was awarded the Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award by the Women's Transportation

Symposium Greater Chicago for her efforts to mentor students at IIT and speak to students at high schools throughout Chicago about careers in engineering. Mae also received the 2014 Inspiration Award from the National Society of Black Engineers, IIT student chapter.

"The Illinois Tollway has an incredible attitude of inclusion and fairness. It is deliberate, honest and a true champion of diversity. Thanks to Move Illinois, I have a success story to tell."



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Mae Cheri Whiteside looks forward to growing her company with Move Illinois.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOLLWAY'S MOVE ILLINOIS PROGRAM, VISIT WWW.ILLINOISTOLLWAY.COM.