



NEWS

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**ILLINOIS TOLLWAY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREG BEDALOV PRESENTED
2017 CHAMPION AWARD FROM NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF MINORITY ENGINEERS**

Bedalov recognized for advocacy of small, minority and women-owned firms

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – Illinois Tollway Executive Director Greg Bedalov has been named the 2017 Champion by the National Organization of Minority Engineers (NOME) in recognition of his efforts to promote diversity, inclusion and opportunities for minority businesses to work with the Tollway, including on the 15-year, \$14 billion *Move Illinois* capital program.

The NOME Champion Award presented at the annual awards ceremony today recognizes leadership in the government or corporate community that exemplifies providing access and advocacy for the advancement of small, minority and women-owned and operated engineering firms within the architectural, engineering and construction community.

“The Tollway is committed to advancing our diversity program and breaking down barriers to make sure everyone has access to opportunities,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Greg Bedalov. “We make diversity part of everything we do, so it’s an honor to be recognized as a champion.”

Under Bedalov’s leadership, the Illinois Tollway has built upon the success of its diversity program by expanding existing programs and launching new initiatives to provide greater opportunities for small, diverse and veteran firms, as well as underemployed individuals.

“Mr. Bedalov’s leadership, vision and decisive actions to promote inclusion and opportunities for minority businesses to grow and thrive make him a worthy recipient of our Champion Award,” said NOME President and Founder Michael Sutton. “His efforts as executive director of the Illinois Tollway have led to the creation of a more robust diversity program that should serve as a model for other state and national agencies to follow.”

In 2017, the Tollway increased funding for its Department of Diversity and Strategic Development to \$4 million from \$2.6 million in 2016 to expand technical assistance to small, diverse and veteran-owned firms. The Illinois Tollway Technical Assistance Program helps prepare new and established firms to participate as subcontractors and prime contractors on highway and vertical construction contracts.

Bedalov also established a Diversity Advisory Council in 2015 to gain outside perspectives on how the agency could further build upon its established foundation of inclusion. The council is comprised of representatives of advocacy agencies with a long history of assisting DBE businesses and underemployed individuals in the Chicago region. This group is instrumental in developing recommendations to guide and increase diverse DBE participation on Tollway contracting opportunities.

About NOME

NOME is organized to promote the advancement of minority owned and operated engineering firms. Its vision is to increase social, political and economic benefits for minority engineers nationwide, by making opportunities attainable by removing barriers by supporting communication and fellowship among minority engineers; promoting public awareness of social issues facing minority engineers; advising on

legislation that affects the interest of consulting engineering firms; advancing the science, technology, and practice of engineering; and building businesses that are sustainable and sellable.

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 292 miles of interstate tollways 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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