



*Move Illinois:
The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*

NEWS

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**ILLINOIS TOLLWAY DEPUTY CHIEF OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION
HONORED WITH NATIONAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGINEERING**

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – Illinois Tollway Deputy Chief of Program Implementation Clarita Lao has been selected by the Gintong Pamana Awards Foundation to receive its 2017 Panday Pira Award for Outstanding Achievements in Engineering. The Panday Pira Award recognizes Filipino Americans nationwide whose accomplishments inspire, motivate and sustain others in the Filipino community.

Lao was recognized for her engineering career accomplishments spanning more than three decades, her leadership and management skills and dedication to engineering excellence. Her rise to a position of leadership at the Illinois Tollway serves as an inspiration to the Filipino community, especially Filipino women who aspire to succeed as engineering professionals.

“Clarita is an exceptional engineer who has accomplished great works on behalf of the Illinois Tollway and throughout her esteemed engineering career,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Greg Bedalov. “It’s great to see her recognized as a role model in the Filipino community for her accomplishments and I know she will continue to shine, serving as an inspiration to all engineers.”

Gintong Pamana, which means “golden legacy” in Tagalog, will recognize Lao as one of several outstanding Filipino American achievers from various fields at its 22nd annual awards ceremony in Rosemont on Saturday, August 26. The awards foundation recognizes Filipinos from a wide variety of endeavors, including community leadership, business and fashion, as well as academic excellence. The life experiences of the award recipients are intended to demonstrate to others in the Filipino community that their dreams and ambitions can be achieved.

“Clarita’s work experience speaks volumes about her leadership and management skills and her dedication to excellence in the field,” said Gintong Pamana Awards Foundation Executive Director Yoly Tubalinal. “Her recognition as Outstanding Engineer by the Philippine Engineers and Scientists Organization and her election as a fellow by the Board of Directors of the American Society of Civil Engineers are a testament to Ms. Lao’s significant accomplishments and professional distinction in the industry.”

Lao was recognized by the Philippine Engineers and Scientists Organization (PESO) in November 2014 with an Outstanding Engineer Award for her outstanding achievements in the field of transportation and named a fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers in 2013. She was nominated for the Panday Pira Award by Marilyn Solomon, former PESO president.

As deputy chief of program implementation, Lao is responsible for providing overall project management and support for multiple engineering projects from inception to completion, including projects that are part of the Tollway’s 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*.

She currently is overseeing design for the \$4 billion Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project from 95th Street to Balmoral Avenue, as well as construction of more than \$200 million in systemwide corridor

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maintenance and improvement projects. Previously, Lao was responsible for construction oversight of the \$719 million Tri-State Tollway (I-294)/I-57 Interchange Project in the Chicago Southland for the first phase completed in October 2014.

Lao has more than 36 years of combined experience in both the public and private sectors in planning, programming, managing, designing and coordinating the successful implementation of transportation projects.

About Move Illinois

The Illinois Tollway's 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*, is improving mobility, relieving congestion, reducing pollution, creating as many as 120,000 jobs and linking economies throughout the region. The first five years of *Move Illinois* is on schedule and within budget, delivering the rebuilt and widened Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) as a state-of-the-art 21st century corridor and opening a new interchange connecting the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) to I-57. Progress continues on projects addressing the remaining needs of the existing Tollway system, delivering the Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project and planning for emerging projects, including reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294).

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 roadways 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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