



*Move Illinois:
The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*

NEWS

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BRADLEY UNIVERSITY PRESENTS 2018 OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARD TO ILLINOIS TOLLWAY BOARD DIRECTOR NELI VAZQUEZ ROWLAND

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – Illinois Tollway Board Director Neli Vazquez Rowland was selected for the 2018 Outstanding Leadership Award by the Bradley University Department of Civil Engineering & Construction Advisory Board. Vazquez Rowland will be recognized at an awards dinner today in East Peoria.

“This is well-deserved recognition for Neli Vazquez Rowland, who has demonstrated her leadership skills on a wide range of Tollway issues and initiatives,” said Illinois Tollway Board Chairman Bob Schillerstrom. “Her breadth of experience in finance, contracting and social and economic development serves as a great asset to the Tollway and we are very proud of her accomplishments.”

The Outstanding Leadership Award is presented annually to non-alumni who have demonstrated sustained commitment to Bradley University, its Department of Civil Engineering & Construction and their local community. Vazquez Rowland is being honored for her leadership in advancing opportunities for minorities, women and veterans to do business with the Tollway, as well as her efforts to help people overcome poverty and homelessness and support for academic programs.

“There is nothing more rewarding than helping others achieve their full potential,” said Vazquez Rowland. “This recognition from Bradley University encourages me to continue my efforts helping people achieve their goals and improve their lives personally, academically and professionally.”

Dr. Amir Al-Khafaji, executive director of the Bradley University Center for Emerging Technology in Infrastructure, cited Vazquez Rowland’s work as a member of the Tollway Board, including increasing opportunities for small, diverse and veteran-owned firms through the Tollway’s 15-year, \$14 billion *Move Illinois* Program.

The award also recognizes Vazquez Rowland for her contributions to advancing academic programs in civil engineering and construction and other department initiatives as a member of the Civil Engineering & Construction Advisory Board for nearly 15 years.

In addition, Vazquez Rowland was acknowledged for her work as co-founder of A Safe Haven Foundation, a not-for-profit social services enterprise that helps people aspire, transform and sustain their lives as they transition from homelessness to self-sufficiency with pride and purpose.

“Neli Vazquez Rowland is a leader who demonstrates great vision, an amazing ability to communicate and an untiring commitment to make a difference in the lives that she touches,” said Dr. Al-Khafaji. “The Civil Engineering & Construction Advisory Board is pleased to recognize Vazquez Rowland for being a champion for diversity and inclusion on the Tollway Board, an advocate for academic excellence at Bradley and an inspiration in her work at A Safe Haven.”

Now in its seventh year, the *Move Illinois* Program provides construction and engineering contract opportunities for firms of all sizes and types to work on major Tollway projects. To ensure the success

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of *Move Illinois*, the Tollway remains committed to diversity and inclusion by supporting access, participation and advancement for a wide range of workers and businesses in the heavy highway construction industry.

To date, the Tollway has paid nearly \$1.2 billion to small, diverse and veteran-owned firms for construction and professional engineering services, or nearly one-quarter of the total payments of \$4.8 billion since *Move Illinois* began in 2012. In addition, the capital program has created or sustained an estimated 58,300 total jobs as of March 2018.

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 six years of *Move Illinois* are on schedule and within budget, delivering the new Illinois Route 390 Tollway and a rebuilt and widened Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) with its new SmartRoad corridor, as well as 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 new I-490 Tollway Project and reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) and planning for emerging projects.

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 294 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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