

Investing in the Future: ACEC Ohio's Early Career Professional Scholarship Awardee Travels to DC



We're thrilled to announce **Brandon Sopko**, Vice President/Project Manager at Euthenics, as the recipient of the **2025 ACEC Ohio Early Career Professional National Conference Scholarship!**

Brandon represented ACEC Ohio at the ACEC Annual Convention & Legislative Summit, held May 18–21 in Washington, D.C.

This year was the first time ACEC Ohio offered a scholarship that supports a rising professional by providing full funding to attend National's Spring convention.

Brandon's selection highlights both his leadership qualities and his dedication to the future of our industry. As a graduate of ACEC Ohio's Rising Leader program, he saw the scholarship as an opportunity to take his involvement with ACEC to the next level.

We asked Brandon a few questions about his experience — here's what he had to say.

Why did you apply for the Early Career Professional National Conference Scholarship?

My experience in the Rising Leaders Program has always left me with aspirations to deepen my engagement and contribute more significantly to ACEC. This scholarship was the ideal gateway. It offered a unique chance to not only learn about ACEC's strategic vision and how it functions but also to play a direct role in its activities and advocacy efforts. I saw it as a critical step in my professional journey and a chance to become a more involved participant.

How did attending the conference help you grow professionally or personally?

Attending the conference proved to be a profoundly transformative experience. Professionally, I gained invaluable insights by observing and interacting with executives and C-suite leaders from across the country, which truly refined my understanding of high-level decision-making. The various leadership development sessions offered practical tools for self-improvement and career advancement, along with actionable insights that I've already begun to apply for my personal and professional development. Beyond that, the networking opportunities were exceptional. Discussing common challenges and innovative solutions with colleagues from different firms not only expanded my knowledge but also fostered a sense of shared purpose and collaboration within the engineering community.

What was it like to participate in visits to Capitol Hill?

Participating in the visits to Capitol Hill was an incredibly impactful experience, and demonstrated the direct influence ACEC has. It was genuinely encouraging to see how attentive and engaged the politicians were in our discussions regarding key issues affecting the engineering industry. I left feeling that our advocacy efforts had truly resonated and that our perspectives were valued. To me, this underscored the importance of advocacy and gave a profound sense of contributing to a larger purpose.

What would you say to other early career professionals considering applying for this scholarship next year?

Take advantage and apply for this scholarship – it's an absolutely invaluable opportunity! This conference allowed me to gain incredible insights, expand my professional network with leaders and peers, observe high-level strategic discussions, and actively participate in advocacy that matters. It's a foundational experience for any early career professional looking to make a real impact and accelerate their personal and professional growth.

ACEC Ohio hopes to continue offering this scholarship annually to a deserving Rising Leader program graduate, helping to cultivate the next generation of industry leaders.