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ACEC-CANADA HONOURS CATHERINE KARAKATSANIS, ONE OF CONSULTING ENGINEERING'S LEADING LIGHTS, WITH THE 2025 CHAIR'S AWARD

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The Association of Consulting Engineering Companies-Canada (ACEC) is delighted to announce Catherine Karakatsanis as the 2025 recipient of its prestigious Chair's Award. Ms. Karakatsanis is a Senior Vice-President at Stantec and immediate Past President of FIDIC.

Every year, the Chair of ACEC's Board of Directors presents the Chair's Award to an individual, individuals, or organizations who have had an indelible impact on the consulting engineering industry.

At the inaugural ACEC National Awards gala on October 23, 2025, ACEC's outgoing Chair, Jérôme Pelletier, P.Eng., presented the award to Ms. Karakatsanis for her exceptional work as an engineer and for her important contributions to the industry as a leader. She is not only a trailblazer, but she is also a connector, a mentor, and a strong ambassador for Canada and the consulting engineering profession.

Ms. Karakatsanis is the first woman to be elected president of the Fédération internationale des ingénieurs-conseil in its 110-year history and only the third Canadian to be elected to the role. FIDIC represents more than 1.4 million engineers and 40,000 firms in 100-plus countries, and she took on the presidency for two years (until this fall), overseeing what was perhaps the greatest transformation of the association in its history. She did so with aplomb, using her principled, consensus-building approach.

Her career is also global in scope. As a structural engineer, Ms. Karakatsanis has worked on high-profile projects across Canada and the U.S. She rose through several technical and project management roles at Morrison Hershfield (now Stantec) to become Chief Operating Officer, a role she held for 13 years, overseeing all operations across Canada, the US, and internationally. She was the first woman to be an executive and a board member of the firm. A consummate listener and devoted advocate, she has championed policies that promote diversity in the profession and strives to make the profession even more welcoming to women and young engineers.

Her skilled leadership has extended to many volunteer governance positions. She has served on the boards or foundations of, among others, Engineers Without Borders Canada, the Canadian Engineering Memorial Foundation, the Hellenic Heritage Foundation, and Hydro One Inc. She has also served as president of Engineers Canada, working closely with the provincial regulators to deliver national programs that continue to have a positive impact on the profession and its public profile.

The list of honours Ms. Karakatsanis has received is a long one. She has been inducted as a fellow into the Canadian Academy of Engineering, earned the Gold Medal from Engineers Canada; received the Governor General of Canada "Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers"; and now, she has been bestowed with one of the industry's highest honours, the ACEC Chair's Award. ■

About ACEC: ACEC represents companies in Canada that provide professional engineering services to both public and private sector clients. These services include the planning, design and execution of all types of engineering projects, as well as providing independent advice and expertise in a wide range of engineering and engineering-related fields. For more information, please visit acec.ca.

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