

COLLEGIATE PARTNERSHIPS

Indiana is the best place for college...

Indiana is 1st in the Midwest, 5th in the nation, for the amount of need-based financial aid provided to full-time students. Student loans are often a barrier for obtaining a great education, but there is ample state financial aid to those students who qualify. Indiana institutions have also maintained average tuition costs at or below the rate of inflation, making Indiana one of the 'best deals' for a college education.

In addition, Indiana is 1 of 8 states that requires the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to be completed as a high school graduation requirement. This means more students than ever will have financial access to an Indiana college education.



...but we must get better at recruitment!

Our public and private universities, some of the best engineering schools in the country, attract students from across the globe. Indiana is 9th in the nation in attracting students to Indiana for college, but 36th in retaining college graduates.

The good news is, our colleges and universities are ready to build lasting partnerships with ACEC Indiana member firms to ensure their top students stay in Indiana.



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● Student Engagement Beyond Career Fairs

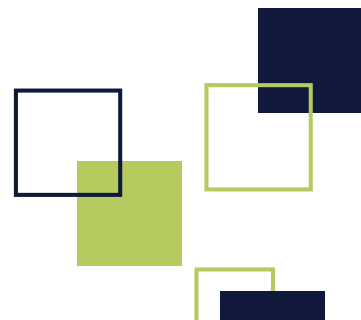
While college career fairs offer a straightforward approach to connect with interested students, building lasting engagement requires a more frequent and strategic effort.

- **Capstone projects and industry-centered curriculum** are pivotal in preparing college students for the workforce. Serving as a semester-long mentor or providing content/case studies for these programs, tailored to address firm-specific challenges or community issues, provides students with valuable problem-solving experience. It also provides a direct recruitment opportunity in a comfortable, supportive environment.
- **Participating as a guest speaker** helps students understand the practical applications of their academic studies while providing your firm an opportunity to promote your work and your brand. Many times, however, these opportunities are limited to upper-level classes, after students have already chosen their engineering discipline.
- Many colleges offer **industry-specific networking events** to provide companies an opportunity to connect with students in an informal setting. These can range from “employer days” in the building lobby, networking dinners to virtual roundtables. Connect with the civil engineering department directly to discuss how to build or participate in industry-focused events.
- Establish **connections with relevant clubs and organizations** on campus. ASCE student chapters are active on nearly every campus; get involved by volunteering as an advisor or hosting a competition with a prize. Considering using this opportunity to host the students at your office or job site, as an informal job shadowing.
- Consider **creating an ambassador role within your firm** to manage internships and entry-level positions. Empower this person to build connections with colleges and universities, understand college and university policies, spend time on campus building relationships and source potential candidates and help interns and college students navigate the hiring process.

REMINDER!

When talking with college students, do not forget to mention the importance of completing the **Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) Exam at the time of graduation!** Some institutions provide financial incentives or built-in study sessions to help encourage participation.

ACEC Indiana is working to build stronger partnerships with Indiana’s colleges and universities. Check out our [University Partnerships Overview](#) to learn more!



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● Institution & Academic Support

Building strong and enduring connections with colleges and universities is essential for establishing a steady flow of recent graduates into your firm. By engaging in regular communication and collaboration with academic institutions, you can tap into a pool of talented and motivated students. This not only ensures a consistent influx of new talent but also allows your firm to influence the training and education of future professionals to better align with industry needs.

- **Creating partnerships with academic institutions** involves more than occasional interactions; it requires a strategic and sustained effort. These partnerships can take various forms, such as sponsoring research, offering technical assistance in the classroom and supporting curriculum development.
- Campuses often rely on industry partners to **supply expertise and up-to-date content** that students can use for their capstone projects. Collaborating on industry projects gives students the opportunity to tackle actual engineering challenges, enhancing their practical skills and making them more attractive to potential firms, or yours!
- Many institutions have established **co-developing courses, or internships and co-op programs**, with certain firms. Such collaborations not only benefit students by offering them real-world experience but also allow firms to shape the skills and knowledge of future employees while being a great source of recruitment.
- Encouraging alumni to **join advisory boards** is a strategic way to strengthen ties between your firm and academic institutions. Alumni can provide valuable insights and feedback based on their experiences and bridge the gap between academia and industry. Their involvement ensures that educational programs remain relevant and aligned with the evolving needs of the industry, while also fostering a sense of community and continuity.

