Governor Announces $147.6 Million Project to Connect Welch with Coalfields Expressway

Governor Jim Justice hosted an event on May 13 near the site where the state’s newest major highway (through his Roads To Prosperity program) will connect the Town of Welch with the Coalfields Expressway, according to a news release.

“This announcement today means we are one step closer to bringing this area of West Virginia to the world once and for all,” said Justice. “We have waited and waited in southern West Virginia for way too long. From what I understand, this section right here is a linchpin section and then the sections beyond that will move even faster.”

Justice joined officials with the West Virginia Division of Highways to announce that he has approved the bid award for this $147.6 million project to Bizzack Construction of Lexington, Kentucky.

Roadwork will involve building a 5.12-mile section of highway from Welch to WV 16, connecting the southern West Virginia town with the Coalfields Expressway.

The project includes the construction of two ramps, two bridges, and will require more than 16 million yards of excavation. More than 10,000 feet of large diameter drainage pipe will also be put in place for the project.
WV to Get $54 Million for Bridge Repair and Appalachian Development Highway System

US Senators Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) and Joe Manchin (D-WV) announced that West Virginia will receive $54,790,795 from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as part of Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations. Of that funding, $40,000,000 will go towards bridge replacement rehabilitation and the remaining $14,790,795 will go towards the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS). Read more.

Proposed AV Research and Testing Facility Gaining Regional

The Marion Regional Development Corporation was named master developer of the old Coke Works Site in East Side by Fairmont City Council. This means the economic development agency will begin working to develop the Fairmont Transportation Research Campus, an autonomous vehicle testing and research site, the Times West Virginian reports.

According to MRDC President Nick Fantasia, the goal is to complete water and sewer funding this year and dirt funding completed the following year to allow black top to be laid sometime in 2024. “So if all the dominoes lined up right, we could potentially have a significant piece of this done in 60 months,” Fantasia said.

Many details of the build have been planned out, but MRDC does not have all of the estimated $32.7 million they need for the project that is gaining interest in the
sector. Fantasia said several big names in autonomous research and vehicle development have been in contact with the MRDC since the project was made public.

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the NSPE Advocacy Center.

Register Now for NSPECon 2022 Reimagined

Engineers from all disciplines are invited to register for the 2022 NSPE Professional Engineers Conference (NSPECon 2022) in Philadelphia, August 1-3. Invited speakers will address sustainability, emerging technology, the post-covid workplace and even, construction on the moon. Whether you are a licensed professional engineer, aspire to be one or, would like to learn more about a career as a qualified and ethically accountable professional, you are invited to join this multi-discipline community to engage with colleagues and hear more about relevant engineering topics.

Prospective conference sponsors and exhibitors will see newly created opportunities to highlight their companies and organizations throughout the conference. Sponsors can welcome attendees to the “Feel the Philly Love” opening reception, support a conference education track featuring seven unique sessions, or demonstrate how their solutions help clients overcome specific challenges by exhibiting.

On the final day of the conference, attendees can celebrate PE Day in person and raise awareness about the importance of PEs as qualified and ethical professionals. Before you go, make certain you are geared up with PE Day logo wear to show your pride on-site.

2022 QBS Award Nominations Open
ACEC and NSPE are seeking nominations for the QBS Awards program, which recognizes public and private entities that make exemplary use of the qualifications-based selection process at the federal, state, and local levels.

Award winners serve as examples of how well the QBS process works, and they help ACEC and NSPE promote the practice of QBS in jurisdictions that do not use, or underuse, QBS to procure engineering services. A maximum of one QBS Award may be presented to the federal government sector, the state government sector (includes all governmental units under the state level), and nongovernment sector.

Nominations may originate from an ACEC member organization, an NSPE state society, a public or private entity, or an individual in the public or private sector. Self-nomination is not permitted.

Nominations and supporting materials are due by Friday, June 17 (COB). Access the nomination form and instructions.

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**Scholarships Open for Applications**

The Swadesh and Om P. Popli, P.E., P.L.S. Scholarship and the William R. Kimel, P.E., Engineering Scholarship are accepting applications from students pursuing engineering degrees in the fall. The application deadline is June 15.

The Swadesh and Om P. Popli, P.E., P.L.S. Scholarship is a multi-year scholarship that will provide $5,000 each year of the recipient’s four-year education. Applicants must be a female high school senior from an underrepresented ethnic minority (African American, Hispanic, Native American, or Pacific Islander) pursuing a degree in civil, electrical, or mechanical engineering at an ABET-accredited program.

The William R. Kimel, P.E., Engineering Scholarship is a $2,500 scholarship awarded annually to an undergraduate student who is a resident of either Kansas or Missouri and enrolled as a junior in an ABET-accredited engineering program in a college or university in either Kansas or Missouri.