

# Garza Karhoff Engineering LLC

Brenda Garza Karhoff, S.E., P.E., President and CEO

MOVE  
ILLINOIS

The Illinois Tollway  
DRIVING  
THE FUTURE

Nobody told Brenda Garza Karhoff as she was growing up in Danville, Illinois that engineering was a traditionally male-dominated industry.

In high school, her math and science teachers were women and it was a bridge building competition in her physics class that inspired the first-generation Mexican-American to pursue an engineering career.

That self-assurance has served Brenda well, as she now successfully competes with much larger engineering firms to secure contracts with the Illinois Tollway.

The company Brenda launched in 2008 in Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood is currently involved in bridge repair and retention wall projects on the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88) and bridge construction on the Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project. The firm recently added two engineers to its staff and is planning to hire two more to work on upcoming *Move Illinois* projects.

Brenda started her career with Teng & Associates Inc. and later worked as a consultant for Primera Engineering Ltd. She credits her former employers for helping her gain experience and to develop skills as a structural engineering consultant positioned to compete for heavy highway construction projects. She adds that they have both been highly supportive of her ambitions to hang her own shingle.

Brenda credits the Tollway for promoting that same industry teamwork through the *Move Illinois* Program. She notes the Tollway's emphasis on helping small and diverse businesses to succeed and appreciates the opportunities the capital program provides to support her growing business.

*"Through Move Illinois, the Illinois Tollway has been actively promoting the message that women and minority-owned enterprises are capable, confident and can get the job done. The Tollway's determination to recruit small and diverse enterprises provides firms like mine greater opportunities to show what we can accomplish when given the chance."*



*Brenda Garza Karhoff (left) has added two engineers to her staff to work on Move Illinois with Michele Tydus (standing) and Chandari Bhagat (right, seated).*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOLLWAY'S MOVE ILLINOIS PROGRAM,  
VISIT [WWW.ILLINOISTOLLWAY.COM](http://WWW.ILLINOISTOLLWAY.COM).**