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Safety harness for
the fieldwork

02
Inspecting
Brooklyn Bridge

03
Plan 1&2
Fort Lauderdale



PHIL THOMPSON TRANSPORTATION

Name
Phil Thompson
Job Title
Junior Structural Engineer
Location
New York, USA
Degree
BSCivil Engineering, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Phil will complete his Masters Degree in Structural Engineering in May 2009 (using company tuition reimbursement) and he plans to do an MBA. Joined AECOM **2006** (Internship in 2005)



Q1. What's your role at AECOM?
My work has two strands: analysis, design and inspection of structural components and systems for highways and bridges; and construction support and monitoring for a major freight contract.

Q2. How is your typical working day structured?
As a general rule, I work half the week on bridge design contracts and the other half on the railroad program. So my days vary according to which part of my job I'm engaged on.

Bridge/highway design: I'm part of a diverse design team working on a range of highway/bridge projects. I use finite element-modeling software to analyze and design structural components and systems, develop specifically tailored spreadsheets for structural engineering applications, quantify construction costs, and provide structural engineering support for other departments working on the project.

Construction monitoring: I act as the Construction Monitoring Representative for a freight program in the city and suburbs of New York. This involves coordinating railroad flagging protection, verifying the contractor's performance, conducting pre-construction/project close-out meetings, and submitting inspection reports for outside party construction projects that affect railroad operations and infrastructure.

Q3. What's the most challenging aspect of your role?

I've been encouraged to take on some of the responsibilities of a more experienced engineer. While they've definitely challenged me, they've provided me with valuable skills that I could not have developed through any other means. On a more practical level, I got the chance to do something few people do: walk up the cables of Brooklyn Bridge. I had to inspect the cables as part of my job. It was breathtaking. I guess it also showed me that the sky's the limit!

Q4. Do you feel you have learned a lot since joining AECOM and if so, what?

AECOM has set up a new career development initiative, which gives me the chance to see the many directions my career can potentially take, along with clear timelines to compare my progress. It's reassuring to know the management is supportive, and that there are enthusiastic mentors who are eager to teach me the ins and outs of our very complex industry.

One of the toughest things to learn as a young engineer is to have confidence in your education. You've learned the theory at college, but it's not real until you see a project constructed and components you've designed actually safely carrying loads as intended. Experience cannot be taught.