Message from the Chair

Mentor, mentor, mentor… and inspire! That is my message to our Region VII members today.

We are most fortunate to be part of this amazing industry. Many of us have been working for several years, and my message today is just about making sure that we pass along the knowledge and experience we’ve gained along the way, so that others can build upon it and continue with our precious mission of providing safe water for all. By doing so, you may be sparking the curiosity and desire to advance one of the many fields that our water industry encompasses. This will help with a much-needed succession plan, and with increasing awareness about the importance of what we do. Whether it’s giving a presentation to middle school kids during a “take-your-child-to-work” day or simply advising a colleague, always be willing to mentor because that is the only way to ensure fruitful progression. I am forever grateful to all my bright mentors, who continue to guide me in this water profession quest.

Last year Region VII proudly had its first ever student team participate at the FSAWWA Fall Conference Water Bowl Competition. Our volunteers are working hard to continue to engage university students in our association, and gave a presentation at FIU on June 4th. Next time you see a student or young professional at our events, take a few minutes to say hello and to offer guidance. As cliché as it may sound, they are our future.

With 2019 well underway, Region VII has had many exciting events with great attendance. You can read all about them here, in our Summer 2019 Newsletter. We still have more to come; make sure to join us at our upcoming technical seminars and bowling tournament.

A special thanks to our water utilities, sponsors, members and volunteers for ensuring our Region’s success. We look forward to your continued participation. See you at our next Region VII gathering.

For any questions regarding FSAWWA Region VII, including volunteer opportunities, email Cristina at Cristina.Ortega@jacobs.com
**FSAWWA Region VII Model Water Tower Competition**

FSAWWA Region VII and the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department jointly hosted this year’s Model Water Tower Competition on Saturday, February 9, 2019.

Middle school and high school students from around the County were encouraged to use engineering concepts to design and build model water towers based on limited specifications. Three Rockway Middle School teams entered the competition as well as 14 high school teams from St. Brendan High, North Miami Senior High, Miami Central Senior High and Miami Coral Park Senior High. This year’s competition was held at the Alexander Orr Water Treatment Plant, which participating students had the opportunity to tour.

Each model water tower was judged based on its structural integrity, hydraulic efficiency and design ingenuity. Monetary awards of $300, $200 and $100 were presented to the top three teams in both the middle and senior high school categories.

---

**Baynanza Biscayne Bay Clean-up Day**

FSAWWA Region VII participated in the Baynanza Biscayne Bay Cleanup Day on April 13, 2019 at the Vizcaya Museum & Gardens.

Baynanza is a celebration of Biscayne Bay and its significance as one of our most important ecological systems in South Florida. The purpose of the event was to promote conservation of the bays.

More than 50 volunteers from FSAWWA participated in the event with their families where they picked up trash from the Biscayne Bay shoreline. The special guest this year was the AWWA Water Monster Tank. The tank supplied fresh and safe drinking water from the Miami Dade County Water and Sewer Department system. The tank saved more than 1,000 16-ounce water bottles, which is equivalent to 3,000 paper cups or 25 five-gallon water coolers. The goal of the tank was to keep plastics out of the landfills and bays, encourage participants to bring their own sustainable refillable water bottles and promote drinking delicious tap water. It was an amazing event and had a huge success with piles of garbage collected.
2019 Drop Savers Water Conservation Poster Contest

With collaboration between utilities and their local schools, the “Drop Savers” Water Conservation Poster Contest gives students from kindergarten through high school the opportunity to design a poster about water conservation. Students from kindergarten to 12th grade are encouraged to create a poster depicting a water conservation idea, in slogan form, drawing form, or both. The contest allows students to promote water awareness and the importance of water conservation in their daily routines. In 2019, 28 utilities around the state participated with over 100 posters. The winning posters are displayed below.

Division 1:
Town of Davie Utilities
Valeria Miranda

Division 2:
City of Oldsmar
Isabella Jackson

Division 3:
City of Hollywood
Adam Fliestra

Division 4:
Town of Davie Utilities
Sophia Fermin

Division 5:
St. Johns County Utility
Caitlyn Oravetz

America’s Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 Lunch & Learn Technical Seminar


The speakers, Stacey Black and Ken Thompson discussed the risk and resilience assessment and emergency response plan requirements of the act. It proved to be very interesting to several local utilities who will need to comply with these with a relatively tight schedule. Approximately 50 professionals attended this event which was held at the 94th Aero Squadron Restaurant.
**Best of the Best Drinking Water Taste Test**

Miami Dade Water and Sewer Department celebrated winning the FSAWWA Region VII’s “Best of the Best” Drinking Water Taste Test. On April 4th, five water utilities from Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties participated in this year’s FSAWWA Region VII “Best of the Best” Drinking Water Taste Test. Participating utilities included the following:

- City of Homestead Public Works & Engineering Department
- City of North Miami Public Works
- Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority
- Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department
- NMB Water

This year’s event, which took place at Jungle Island, had over 200 attendees and was sponsored by 33 Annual Sponsors and 18 Event Sponsors. Luis Aguiar, past Florida Section AWWA Chair and current Hazen and Sawyer employee, served as the Master of ceremonies for the event. Each participating utility selected one representative to blindly judge the water samples. Each water sample was given a score between 1 and 10 by each judge.

The Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department received the highest score in the final round – the Department went on to represent Region VII at the state-level competition which took place on April 16th at the Florida Water Resources Conference in Tampa. City of North Miami Public Works was this year’s runner-up.

As is the case every year, FSAWWA sponsors the Drinking Water Contest in an effort to highlight each Utility’s success in producing safe drinking water for its consumers and to raise awareness about water conservation. A portion of the proceeds from this event benefit Water for People as well as the Roy Likins Scholarship.
1. What is your current position?
I am currently an Assistant Engineer with Hazen and Sawyer. I am part of a team that oversees the construction of multiple construction projects at Broward County’s North Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (NRWWTP).

2. How did you get involved with FSAWWA?
While interning at Hazen, a few of my coworkers were preparing material for the 2015 Region VII Taste Test. I was asked to help and have been involved in FSAWWA ever since.

3. What advice do you have for young professionals entering the industry?
Get involved as soon as you enter the industry, whether it be with professional development associations such as FSAWWA or within your company. Building relationships with people in the industry can only help advance your knowledge and the sooner you start, the better.

4. How did you get into the Engineering industry?
My favorite subject through school was math so I knew I wanted to pursue a career that was math heavy. There are a few engineers in my family, including my father and grandfather, so I decided to look into Engineering. I enrolled in the college of Engineering at the University of Florida and never looked back.

Young Professional (YP) Network Event

The Region VII YP Networking Event was held on March 14, 2019 at The Bar in Coral Gables.

This event was well attended, with over 60 young professionals and students who had a chance to network with other water industry professionals.
2019 ANNUAL SPONSORS
THANK YOU TO OUR
2019 REGION VII SPONSORS

Region VII Officers
Region VII Chair
Cristina Ortega-Castineiras, P.E
Vice Chair
Josenrique Cueto, P.E.
Secretary
Austin P’Pool, P.E.
Treasurer
Andres Gomez
Young Professionals Chair
Veronica Llaneza PhD & Catalina Lopez
Membership Chair
Nelson Perez-Jacome, P.E. & Bill Rathbun, P.E.
Communications Chair
Elizabeth Fernandez-Cuervo & Heidy Amigot
Public Affairs Committee Chair
Adriana Lamar
Operator Committee Chair
John Hansen
Events Chair
Beth Waters, P.E.
Utility Committee Chair
Jeffrey Thompson, P.E.
Technical/Education Committee Chair
Fred Tinsberg & Diana Merisier, P.E.
Manufacturers/Associates Committee Chair
Eric Corey & Tyler Tedcastle
Contractors Committee Chair
Jorge Valdes
Water for People Chair
Robert Regalado & Carla Sanchez
Water Conservation Chair
Melissa Velez, P.E.
Florida Section AWWA Chair
Mike Bailey

UPCOMING EVENTS

LUNCH & LEARN TECHNICAL SEMINAR
Date: August 1, 2019
Time: 11:30 - 1:00 pm
Location: 94th Aero Squadron Restaurant
395 NW 57th Avenue, Miami, FL 33126

YP SUMMER SEMINAR - LEARNING FOR TOMORROW
Date: August 15, 2019
Time: 1:00 - 4:00 pm
Location: MDWASD Douglas Building
3071 SW 38 Avenue, Miami, FL 33146

YP SUMMER SEMINAR - BOWLING TOURNAMENT - TBD