Giving Back

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As I’ve stated in previous articles, there are many positive reasons to be involved in professional organizations. With membership in FSAWWA you can increase your knowledge in our career field, expand your leadership capabilities, network with other professionals, and gain the advantages that go with all of these.

What often goes unsaid is that participation in professional groups, like FSAWWA, also greatly benefits other people, and other communities around us. In my 25 years with the section, I have participated in many functions and events that directly benefit several groups. In this month’s article, I would like to look a little closer at the organizations and programs we give to.

Roy W. Likins Scholarship Fund

Mr. Roy Likins was a lifelong member of AWWA and worked for the Palm Coast Utility Corporation for 16 years in many leadership roles. In addition to giving back to his community, he was also very involved in our Florida Section and served as section chair from 1980 to 1981. Mr. Likins died in 1991 at the very young age of 53. His service to our section, and to others less privileged, is recognized by naming the section’s scholarship program after this well-respected water leader.

Mr. Likins would surely be proud of what we have done in his name. The Roy Likins Scholarship Fund began in 1988 and, to date, it has awarded 94 scholarships to undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students, with total funding of over $350,000. Just last year, the fund gave over $40,000 in scholarships to nine deserving students in the field of water. Moreover, we currently have 25 past Likins winners serving our section in some way. As a past awardee myself (in 1993), I can tell you how rewarding it is to see others give back to the section that has meant so much to our careers. The Roy Likins Scholarship Fund is a model for all other AWWA sections, and has been our section’s primary beneficiary for decades!

The purpose of the FSAWWA Water For People Committee is to facilitate the Florida water/wastewater industry’s participation in improving the lives of people around the world with respect to access to clean water and safe sanitation. The committee has represented the fundraising, volunteering, education, and outreach efforts of Water For People in the state of Florida since 1995. The committee fosters membership in FSAWWA by providing committee members in 12 Florida Section regions with opportunities for leadership development, participation in community fundraising activities, and cultural exchange through international impact tours.

Through the efforts of the FSAWWA regions and board of governors, the section has contributed over $730,000 to Water For People since 1995. The organization has a chair or a point of contact in each of the 12 Florida Section regions where community outreach and fundraising activities are held every year, thanks to a strong base of volunteers in every region. A few of the past and future successful fundraising events in Florida include:

- Region III – Wine For Water (10th Anniversary in 2018). Annual networking and fundraising event with over 300 attendees, raising over $50,000.
- Region IV – Annual Water For People Fundraiser, July 19, 2018. Annual network-

Water For People

The Water Equation

Recently, you may have heard of AWWA’s Water Equation. This multifaceted program is the association’s “Investment in the Future of Water.” The Water Equation provides academic and operator scholarships, student memberships, and supports an amazing volunteer program, the Community Engineering Corps. Our section, with others, will partner with AWWA to invest in the future of water and our industry’s workforce through this exciting new program. I have no doubt that our section will stand out, as it always does!

Thanks again for your support of the Florida Section. As you can see, we help many others and we should all be very proud of how we give back. You truly are changing lives!