

S&YP NEWS



FWEA Students and Young Professionals Committee Newsletter

Winter 2017

Message from the Chair

[Tyler Smith Semago](#), [Carollo Engineers](#)

Welcome to the 4th issue of the semi-annual FWEA Students and Young Professionals Committee (SYPC) Newsletter! I am proud to introduce the Winter 2017 S&YP Newsletter which contains all things S&YP!

The Committee would like to share a number of articles covering WEFTEC, university reach out, transitioning from student to professional life and more. The goal of this newsletter is to recognize our sponsors (without whom we would not exist) and to showcase all of the hard work put on by the outstanding students, S&YP Committee members, and volunteers throughout the year.

I'd also like to share that I will be moving into the Past Chair position and David Hernandez will be the new Chair for the SYPC after FWRC 2018! We are now accepting nominations for Vice Chair and any SYPC Member is eligible.

The mission of the SYPC is to support students and young professionals in the environmental engineering field. We accomplish this by providing scholarships, hosting the Student Design Competition and Poster competitions at the Florida Water Resources Conference (FWRC), and offering a variety of networking opportunities. We also provide opportunities for resume review and panel sessions with seasoned professionals. Students have the chance to receive feedback from multiple industry professionals and had the opportunity to speak with volunteers and judges about their careers. Additionally, the Committee hosts a YP Social (open for all to attend) and Social Media Scavenger Hunt to help students, young professionals, and seasoned professionals mingle and connect.

If you're attending FWRC this year, please be sure to stop by and support our S&YP Committee Events!

Looking to get involved?

Interested in Sponsoring?

Are you new to the industry or to Florida? The SYPC is a great way to get involved and get connected with others in your field.

If you're looking to get involved or become a sponsor, please reach out to:

Tyler Smith, Chair SYPC

Carollo Engineers

tsmith@carollo.com

David Hernandez, Vice Chair SYPC

Hazen & Sawyer

dhernandez@hazenandsawyer.com

Nandita Ahuja, Poster Competition

Chair

Hazen & Sawyer

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Thank you to our Sponsors!

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Meet the S&YP Committee

Tyler Smith Semago	(Carollo Engineers)	George Dick	(Gresham Smith & Partners)
David Hernandez	(Hazen & Sawyer)	Weizhi Cheng	(CDM Smith)
Danielle Bertini	(Carollo Engineers)	Suzanne Mechler	(CDM Smith)
Nandita Ahuja	(Hazen & Sawyer)	Mike Semago	(Kimley-Horn & Associates)
Sam Hanzel	(Jacobs)	Fernando Pleitez	(Calvin, Giordano & Associates)
Kristen Waksman	(Carollo Engineers)	Lindsey Short	(Gresham Smith & Partners)
Lauren DaCunha	(Arcadis)	Krystin Kadonsky	(Arcadis)
Yanni Polematidis	(CDM Smith)	Maria Reed	(Brown and Caldwell)
Alex Maas	(Heyward)		

WEFTEC—Perspective & Advice From a Competing Team

FAMU/FSU —Phenol Team

by [Simeng Li](#)

Our project for the Student Design Competition (SDC) was titled Designing a Facility to Treat Industrial Wastewater Containing Phenol. It all started in February 2017 when we formed our team of six students upon knowing about the opportunity to compete at the 2017 FWRC SDC held in late April 2017. We were not left as much time as most other teams. What's worse, our brand-new team barely knew each other and half of us never heard of "phenol" at that time. Winning the first place in the Environmental category at the SDC against all those talented teams sounded quite impossible for us, especially since no FAMU-FSU teams had achieved this before. Nevertheless, making impossible possible has been the best message I have learned from this experience at FWRC and WEFTEC!

For the participating teams in the future, I would love to share five tips. First, know your group members. Engineering is never a lone-ranger game. But before we can truly work efficiently as a team, we have to know what each person is good at and how he or she could contribute to the project. Secondly, make detailed and achievable plans. As the project manager, I assigned specific tasks to each person based on his or her strong point(s) right after our first meeting. I also divided those assignments into small weekly tasks with clear deadlines declared. In addition, the progress was reviewed at the beginning of every meeting to ensure the project was steadily moving forward. Thirdly, maintain good communication. Our team had regular weekly in-person and Skype meetings, small discussions, and countless emails. One of our teammates was a student in FSU's Panama City campus, and therefore, although challenging it was especially important to keep everyone on the right track to arrive at the good finish of the project. One thing I did was sending an email summarizing the content of every meeting which also worked as a reminder of deadlines. Fourthly, ideas matter but don't underestimate the importance of writing these ideas out. When compared with some teams that had excellent speaking, impressive presentation slides, or both, we were surely not the best presenters on that competition day. The judges' comments explained it all as our report followed well the professional writing norms and provided a great amount of technical details. Last but not least, relax and enjoy the conference! You will meet friendly faces and lots of encouragement from the organizers, judges, as well as the other teams. Nothing can be more exciting than to learn the innovative approaches brought by the other teams' projects with topics on a wide range of real-life water issues, seeing how the challenges that used to be considered impossible were being solved by groups of enthusiastic engineering students like you and me!

2017 WEFTEC Quick Bits

- WEFTEC was held September 30th—October 4th in Chicago, Illinois
- There were over 22,800 registrants, 1,000 exhibitors using 305,000 square feet of conference center space, with 138 technical sessions and 27 workshops!
- The S&YP Community service project included the construction of bioswales and an outdoor classroom with the help of dozens of volunteers at Manierre Elementary School in Chicago
- Teams competing from FWEA have placed in EVERY WEFTEC SDC with 8 first place finishes in 15 years!

2017 WEFTEC SDC Winners

Environmental

1st Place: University of Guelph
2nd Place: University of Tennessee
3rd Place: Johns Hopkins University
4th Place: University of South Florida

Wastewater

1st Place: University of Colorado, Boulder
2nd Place: University of British Columbia
3rd Place: Northeastern University
4th Place: North Dakota State University

**For more information on
WEFTEC and the national
SYPC, visit:**

<http://www.weftec.org/>

[http://www.wef.org/
membership/students-and-
young-professionals2/](http://www.wef.org/membership/students-and-young-professionals2/)



FAMU/FSU Team at WEFTEC

WEFTEC—Cont'd

Earning the first place at the FWRC SDC gave us the opportunity to present our project at the WEFTEC SDC in Chicago, which was a truly exciting bonus! WEFTEC was an exhibition of technological possibilities. In the enormous exhibition hall, hundreds of companies, universities, and government agencies were showcasing their most cutting-edge technologies and products. I cannot remember how many times I stopped to talk with the representatives and be surprised by the creativity of their exhibits. The WEFTEC was also a place where finding a job could be more than possible. There were many representatives from leading engineering firms and organizations hunting for passionate young professionals at the career fair. Two of my senior-year teammates received job invitations in the same afternoon. How amazing! Moreover, getting connected with people could never be easier than at WEFTEC. Conversations between strangers could start at any corner -- in the exhibition hall, on the escalators, at the food bars, and even in the restroom!

Looking back, participating the SDCs at FWRC and WEFTEC is one of my best memories in 2017. I truly appreciate all the people who kindly provided their help, especially Ms. Tyler Smith and Mr. David Hernandez for their consistent support, Dr. Youneng Tang for his excellent mentorship, and of course my awesome teammates Cale Madden, Ryan Hill, Jacob Prout, Emma Rivers Baird, and Kadeem Rowe! Lastly, many thanks to FWEA because you made this incredible experience possible for us. THANK YOU!

College to Career—View from a New YP

by [Maria Reed](#)

As it is expected, transitioning from college to the working world can be challenging. Coming from long library sessions, papers, exams and even a more relaxed social life to a full-time job can result somewhat overwhelming. It is certainly a new environment, and it is reasonable to feel one is not fully prepared. Nowadays it seems to be a bit tougher even. According to a Forbes Magazine article published in Dec 2016, “despite being an up-and-coming, in-demand generation, and one that’s consistently shaping how we think about work, millennials are still having a hard

time finding reasonable jobs. The millennial unemployment rate stands at an unfortunate 12.8 percent, compared to the national average of 4.9 percent.” Why? Different factors, of course.

Undoubtedly, there are many ways we can go through this transition successfully and beat numbers like Forbes’s. Unfortunately, I cannot answer that complex process, nevertheless, I will share my personal experience and what I have learned so far on this ceaselessly growing path.

I vividly remember my first day of class in my last semester of college. It was my CASPTONE lecture, Water Resources and Treatment offered by the College of Engineering. The course is intended to give students practice in solving real

world problems that increases their learning experience. An added benefit to this class was the opportunity for students to undertake projects and two of them are selected to compete at FWEA’s annual conference. It was obvious to me that it would not be an easy commitment, but being aware of these great intangible benefits made me feel compelled to take it. Consequently, participating in this competition introduced me to my first professional association directly related to the water industry, FWEA. Personally, public speaking was the biggest challenge of all. Talking to other professionals seemed to be frightening, and at times it was, however, I was not alone. The more I got myself involved, the easiest it became. The help and camaraderie of other young professionals within FWEA got me through it, and still does.

Every career development event underlines how important networking is. But “networking is so much more than exchanging business cards over hors d’oeuvres.” Networking entails being active in professional organizations, or meeting one-on-one with a new colleague. A basic sociology principle will tell us that we develop real relationships with people only when personal interactions are made.

It creates solid and durable connections, allowing us to opening doors to reach out to for information and guidance.

Logically, that same principle goes at the workplace. Stepping out of my comfort zone has allowed me to learn and participate on projects where my technical skills have been challenged. It has been a somewhat painful process but has brought much improvement of my skills. As a new young professional, it is vital to recognize our individual talents and identify how to mount them for an industry application. I invite everyone to get out there and get active in a professional association. Go network, shake hands and pick the brains of the professionals. Your interest and vigor will not go unnoticed. These tactics have certainly made my first year as professional exciting and fulfilling. Exitos!



Maria & team Competing at WEFTEC SDC 2016



Maria volunteering at WEFTEC 17 Community Service Event

2018 FWRC Details

The 2018 Florida Water Resources Conference will be held April 15th—18th at the Ocean Center in Daytona Beach, Florida.

Conference Registration:

<http://fwrc.org/attendees/online-registration/>

Student Design Competition:

The SDC will be held on Sunday, April 15th from 12:00 PM to 6:00 PM, and strives to promote real world design experience for students interested in water and wastewater engineering and sciences. The winning teams compete at WEFTEC 2018 in New Orleans, LA.

To review the guidelines, visit:

http://www.fwea.org/student_design_competition.php

Entry forms are due electronically by February 2nd, 2018 to the SYPC Chair. The written report and participation forms are due April 4h. If a topic or design idea is needed, FWEA will gladly help, simply email the [SYPC Chair](#) for more details.

Student & Young Professional Poster Competition:

The poster competition will be held on Monday, April 16th and is open to students and young professionals.

This year we will, partnered with FSAWWA, we will be **accepting water topics!** Therefore poster topics related to the field of water engineering, wastewater engineering, water resources, and other environmental topics will be accepted!

For more information, visit:

http://www.fwea.org/docs/2017_FWEA_Poster_Guidelines.pdf

Participation forms are due March 23rd to the S&YPC Poster Competition Coordinator, [Nandita Ahuja](#).

S&YP Social:

The S&YP Social will be held Sunday, April 15th in the evening. The exact time and location is to be determined but keep an eye out for details.. You won't want to miss it! All seasoned and young professionals welcome.



Call for SDC and Poster Competition Judges!

The SYPC is looking for seasoned professional to judge the student design competition and judges for the poster competition! Judges will not need to register for FWRC in order to participate. For more information on the responsibilities and duties for judging, please email the [S&YPC Chair](#).

Interested in Sponsoring?

Every year the S&YP events and competitions are made possible by our sponsors. Your sponsorship helps send student to WEFTEC, provides prizes for the poster competition winners and send the YP of the Year to the WEF/AWWA YP Summit.

For more information and to learn the benefits of becoming a sponsor, please email the S&YP Vice Chair, [David Hernandez](#)

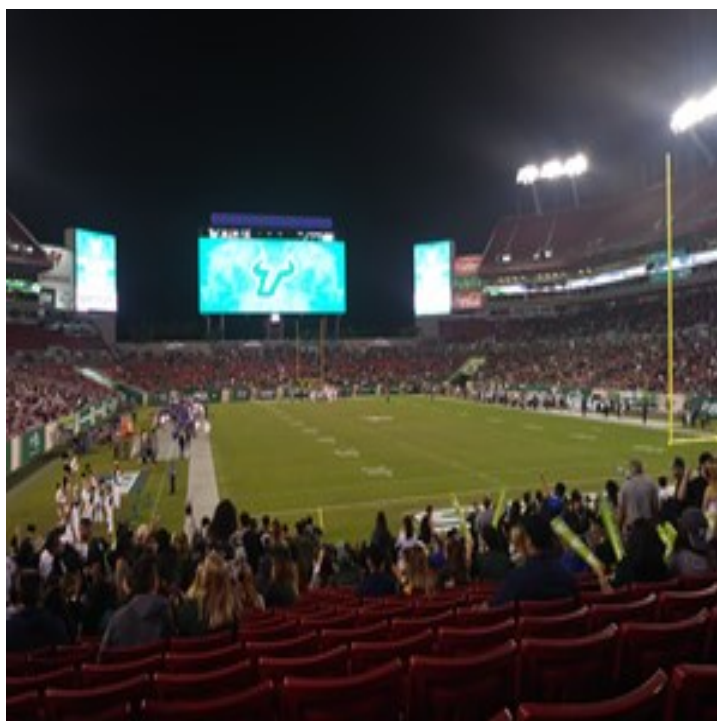
West Coast Chapter Event

USF vs Tulsa Football Game Tailgate Recap

[Kristen Kadonsky](#) (Arcadis)

On November 16th, 2017 the FWEA West Coast Chapter Young Professional Chairs collaborated with the University of South Florida student chapter to host a tailgate for the USF vs Tulsa football game at Raymond James Stadium. The event successfully gathered 35 students, young professionals, and seasoned professionals for a night of networking, cornhole, Publix subs, plenty of cold beverages, and football!

As a bonus, the FWEA student chapter was able to acquire 20 'student-guest' tickets at a discounted price of \$5 (usually \$15) for FWEA parent chapter members to purchase and attend the football game. By the way, USF won 27 to 20, Go Bulls!



Overall, attendees were happy with the event, and students mentioned it was a fun environment to network with professionals. After the event, an email was sent out to inquire about areas that needed to be improved, and how student participation could be increased for future events. Since the event fell on a Thursday evening, guests mentioned that the tailgate area was difficult to find due to poor lighting and no visible FWEA banner. Moreover, to increase student participation, it was suggested that the tailgate be hosted before a weekend game. This would allow for more students and professionals to attend as well as make it easier to find the tailgate location. We are grateful for the feedback and can't wait until next football season!

Educational Outreach—Florida International University Visit & Panel

[David Hernandez](#) (Hazen & Sawyer)

On October 19, 2017, David Hernandez (Hazen and Sawyer) and Marie Burbano (CDM Smith) met with FIU students to talk about their experiences as engineering consultants in the water/wastewater industry. David has worked in consulting for 4 years and provided his experience on being a young engineer in the industry. Marie has nearly 20 years of experience and presented her career path within the industry.



A consulting firm will typically work on a wide variety of projects for many different clients. The projects reviewed during the presentation focused on water/wastewater projects. A few project examples include studies, design-bid-build, design-build (or other alternative delivery methods), program management, on-call engineering, staff augmentation, construction, operations, and more.

One of the highlighted projects presented by David and Marie was the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (WASD) Ocean Outfall Legislation (OOL) Program. The purpose of this multi-billion-dollar program is to meet new legislation which states that wastewater utilities in the southeast Florida must move away from using ocean outfalls to dispose of treated wastewater by 2025. WASD currently has 3 large wastewater treatment plants each with an average flow over 100 MGD. Under the OOL Program, the three existing wastewater plants will be expanded to meet future flows and will be treated to high-level disinfection standards for deep well injection discharge, the conveyance system will be improved through infrastructure upgrades, and a new wastewater treatment plant will be built on the west side of the county for additional capacity and resiliency. Both David and Marie are both currently involved in this program.

For more information please contact David Hernandez at dhernandez@hazenandsawyer.com.

Accepting Nominations for YP of Year Award Now...

The SYPC is now accepting nomination packets for YP of the Year award. We are looking for outstanding young professionals that show leadership, initiative, technical knowledge and actively participate within FWEA.



YP of the Year 2017:
Kristen Waksman
(Carollo Engineers, Inc.)

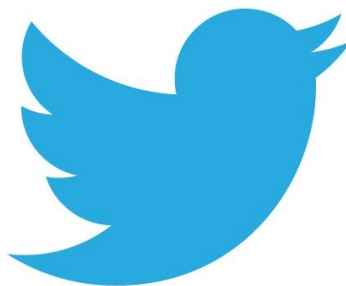
The award is presented at the FWRC Awards Luncheon every year and provides the winner with a paid trip to attend the annual AWWA/WEF YP Summit. The winner may also be recognized in the Florida Water Resources Journal, FWEA S&YP Website, social media and other publications.

Visit the [S&YP Website](#) to download the Nomination Form. Forms are due Friday, March 9th, 2018 and should be submitted to the SYPC Chair.

Note:

YPs are not allowed to nominate themselves but are encouraged to have their supervisors or colleagues submit a nomination form on their behalf. Members of the S&YP Committee are eligible.

Don't forget to follow us on Social Media!



Go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/CleanWaterFl/>

<https://twitter.com/fwea75>

<https://www.instagram.com/fwea75/>

OR just click on the logos!

Upcoming Events

Committee Events:

January 27th, 2018—[Utility Council Meeting](#)
January 29th, 2018—[FWEA Leadership Development Workshop](#)
February 1st, 2018—[Wastewater Process Seminar](#)
February 8th, 2018—[Air Quality Seminar](#)
April 15th, 2018—Florida Water Resources Conference

Chapter Events:

West Coast Chapter:

February 22nd, 2018—[Winter Luncheon](#)
February 23rd, 2018—[Annual Sporting Clays Tournament](#)

Manasota Chapter:

February 6th, 2018- Joint Luncheon with AWWA Region X

Southwest Chapter: TBD

First Coast Chapter: TBD

Southeast Chapter:

February/March, 2018—Southeast Chapter Quarterly Meeting
March 10th, 2018—FWEA Booth @ Broward Water Matters Day Festival
May, 2018—Annual Golf Tournament & Fundraiser

South Florida Chapter:

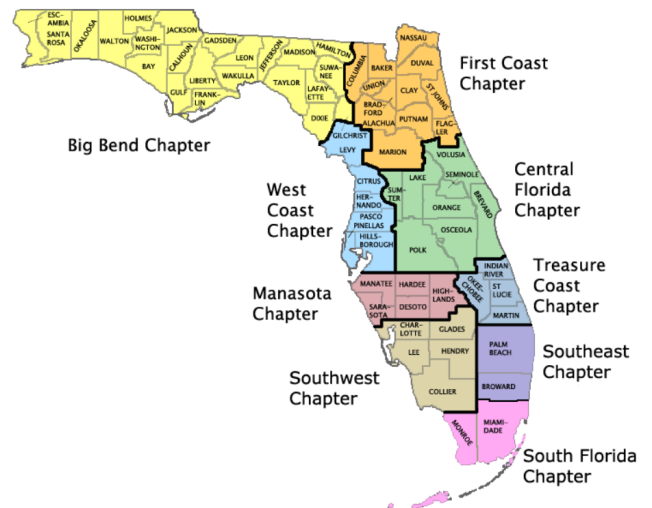
January 25-26, 2018—Resilient Utilities Coalition Summit
February, 2018—YP Event: “Lessons from Great Business Women in History You’ve Never Heard Of.”
March, 2018—South Florida Chapter Meeting
May, 2018—Golf Tournament (joint event with Southeast Chapter)

Big Bend Chapter: TBD

Central Florida Chapter:

February 15th, 2018— [1st Annual Solar Bears Social](#)
February, 2018—Technical Luncheon at Second Harvest Food Bank
February, 2018—Joint FWEA/FSAWWA Social
March 27th, 2018 – Joint FWEA/FSAWWA Drinking Water Taste Contest

For more information on FWEA Chapters visit: <https://www.fwea.org/map.php>



Contact Us

Visit our [website](#) or contact the S&YP Committee Chair for more information on FWRC, volunteering, or sponsorship opportunities.

[Tyler Smith Semago](#)

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