

THIRD QUARTERLY LUNCHEON: HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

EMBRACING AI

PRESENTERS:



GEORGES GONZALEZ, MBA
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY WATER
RESOURCES ENTERPRISE
SOLUTIONS DIRECTOR



STEVE DAWSON
FOUNDER AND CEO OF
POWERCONNECT.AI



ELIZABETH KEDDY
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
CAPITAL PROJECTS MANAGER

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For questions: email Danielle Mercer
Danielle.mercer@freese.com



Florida Water Environment Association

WEST COAST CHAPTER

Date: Thursday, Feb 5th, 2026
Registration: 11:30 am to 12:00 pm
Discussion: 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm
Location: The Columbia Restaurant
2117 E 7th Ave, Tampa

Part 1 – Modernizing Customer Service with AI
Discover how AI is transforming utility customer service by reducing wait times, enabling 24/7 support, and streamlining processes.

Key innovations include:

- AI Agent Assist for faster, accurate responses
- AI-powered chat to ease call center load
- Secure Oracle CCS integration for real-time account data

Learn practical strategies for adoption, training, and change management to boost efficiency, resilience, and customer satisfaction.

Part 2 – Leveraging AI for Integrated Capital Improvement Planning

See how AI helps group water and sewer projects into neighborhood-based initiatives, aligning with Public Works for roads and stormwater upgrades.

Benefits include:

- Identifying geographic synergies
- Minimizing community disruption
- Optimizing long-term investment

Join us for insights on using AI to deliver smarter, more efficient outcomes for utilities and communities.

Georges Gonzalez is currently serving as the Hillsborough County Water Resources Enterprise Solutions Director, based out of Tampa, FL. Though he has only been with Hillsborough County for just over a year, he brings over 27 years' experience in private and public sectors serving in senior and executive roles.



GEORGES GONZALEZ, MBA
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
WATER RESOURCES
ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS
DIRECTOR

After serving almost 6 years in the US Air Force, he joined The Coca Cola Company as a driver. He grew his career in the company, holding several roles, from IT to finance. Georges also assisted with the company's global SAP development and implementation, taking him to several countries. After 20 years, he joined the Otis Elevator organization as a special assistant to the CEO. At Otis Georges created and implemented a Shared Services Department where all finance, accounting and HR functions were centralized under one system. After a short tenure, Georges decided to pivot and join the Public Sector as Pinellas County Utility Business and Customer Services Director. There he worked alongside his team to improve the Meter to Cash processes, upgraded to a new SAP version, improved reporting and enhanced the customer experience. After 5 years with Pinellas, he moved to Minnesota as the CFO of the Metropolitan Council the policy-making body, planning agency, and provider of essential services in the seven-county Twin Cities metro area.

Georges holds a master's degree in business administration from the University of Tampa and an undergraduate degree from Eckerd College. Georges is a member of AWWA and is a veteran of the US Air Force where he served in the Gulf War. Additionally, Georges is an avid long-distance runner and has run a marathon in all 50 states.



STEVE DAWSON
FOUNDER AND CEO OF
POWERCONNECT.AI

Steve Dawson is the Founder and CEO of POWERCONNECT.AI, transforming the utility industry. With over two decades in technology and customer experience, Steve has made it his mission to make customer service more intelligent, efficient, and human through generative AI.

Steve spent 15 years in the corporate world, leading SAP and Oracle implementations and system improvements. After relocating to Florida, he experienced challenges while setting up utilities which led him to launch POWERCONNECT.AI to bridge the gap between customers and agents — creating real-time intelligence that helps utilities deliver faster, more personalized service. In February 2025, POWERCONNECT.AI was acquired by BHC Global, Steve remains the CEO and fully committed to the company's mission, continuing to help one utility at a time modernize how customer service gets done.



ELIZABETH KEDDY
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
CAPITAL PROJECTS MANAGER

Elizabeth Keddy has 18 years of experience leading the planning, design, implementation, operation and maintenance of water, wastewater, reclaimed water, energy, sustainability, and resiliency projects. She currently serves as the Capital Projects Section Manager for Hillsborough County's Water Resources Department. Previously, she held positions as Senior Associate at Hazen and Sawyer, Energy Manager of the North American business unit of SUEZ, and Environmental Engineer at CDM Smith. She is Chair of the FWEA Utility Management Committee and Chair of the FSAWWA Region IV Technical & Education Committee. She has her Bachelors and Masters in Environmental Engineering from the University of Florida.

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