

**ASCE**  
FLORIDA SECTION

**E-NEWSLETTER**

**A Message from the President**  
**Kathi Ruvarac, PE**

Greetings and Happy Holidays!

I am honored to represent our almost 8,000 members of the Florida Section of ASCE. This newsletter will highlight our 2023 Annual Conference held at the JW Marriott in Orlando, Florida. This year's conference had our highest turnout to date and is growing bigger! We have a lot of people to thank for this year's successful conference beginning with Judy Nichols, our Executive Director and Rob Best, President-Elect our conference chair. It takes a village to plan and execute this event, and there are many people supporting us to bring the 75 professional development technical presentations, exhibitors, and sponsored events. So, thank you to our presenters, volunteers and sponsors. Congratulations to our award and scholarship winners! We are truly fortunate to have such talented professional and student members in Florida. I also want to thank our Board and Committee Chairs, Branch and Student Chapter Leadership who have volunteered this year. YOU are the force behind the Section.



We wanted to share recent publications distributed from ASCE which will assist you in your project planning, design and execution. First, ASCE recently held a webinar presenting its collaboration with the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices to identify actionable approaches that private industry and public sector infrastructure groups can utilize to address workforce shortages. Here is a link to the publication: [Strategies to Address Engineering Workforce Challenges \(asce.org\)](https://www.asce.org/resources/publications/strategies-to-address-engineering-workforce-challenges). Second, ASCE's Sustainable Infrastructure Standards Committee of the Committee on Sustainability has published The Standard Practice for Sustainable Infrastructure (73-23) which addresses development and implementation of sustainable infrastructure solutions. Here is a link to the publication: [Standard Practice for Sustainable Infrastructure \(ASCE/COS 73-23\)](https://www.asce.org/resources/publications/standard-practice-for-sustainable-infrastructure).

We have many exciting opportunities for networking, mentoring, learning and fun after the first of the year. Plan to attend the Multi-Region Leadership Conference in Miami, January 25-27, 2024, the Southeast Student Symposium in Orlando, March 21-23, 2024, and the Doubleheaders Professional Development Presentations planned in February 2024. I hope to see you there.

We wish you and your families Happy Holidays and best wishes for a healthy and Happy New Year.

Kathi Ruvarac, PE  
2023-2024 President

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## Structural Engineering Recognition Program



## Donna Friis, PE, Technical Activities Chair and SEA Liaison



The Florida Board of Professional Engineers (FBPE) recently launched a recognition program for structural engineers. Recognition by the program is not required for a professional engineer to practice structural engineering but allows an engineer to use the designation “Florida Board Recognized Structural Engineer” or “FRSE”.

FBPE amended Florida Administrative Code Rule 61G15-20.0011 on June 29, 2023, and established the minimum requirements for Structural Engineering Recognition Program.

Florida licensed professional engineers who specialize in structural engineering and are in good standing (i.e. with no disciplines / violations) and who have met the requirements may receive recognition through the Program. Engineers must satisfy **ONE** of the following requirements:

1. Passed one of the approved combinations of 16-hour structural or architectural engineering exams
2. Has at least 5 years of experience after licensure as a Professional Engineer in any jurisdiction(s) designing significant structural engineering projects. For purposes of this rule, “significant structural engineering projects” is defined as the design of structural components and structural systems of any of the following:
3. Buildings three stories or greater.
4. Risk Category III or IV buildings, as defined by Table 1604.5 RISK CATEGORY OF BUILDINGS AND OTHER STRUCTURES in the current Florida Building Code in effect at the time of application or equivalent classification in another jurisdiction.
5. Vehicular Bridges
6. Been certified as a Special Inspector of Threshold Buildings pursuant to section 471.015(7), F.S. prior to February, 2016, or if so certified after February, 2016, sought certification based on principal practice in the area of structural engineering as defined in Rule 61G15-35.003(1)(a) and (b), F.A.C. Certification as a Special Inspector (Limited) will not qualify an applicant for recognition.

[Click here for the application or to read more.](#)

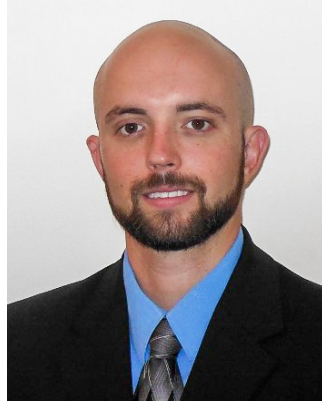
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# Welcome New Branch Presidents

Thank you for your service!



**Ali Bittle**  
Suncoast



**Kyle McLemore**  
West Coast



**Stacy Johnson**  
Tallahassee



**Chris Carrino**  
Space Coast



**Daniel Schroeder**  
Southwest



**Noah Reinhard**  
Ridge



**Julian Poole**  
Pensacola



**Justin Tagle**  
Palm Beach



**Miguel Lockward**



**Miami Branch**



**Kyle Eikenberry**  
Jacksonville



**Randy Olney**  
Gainesville



**Corey Bloxam**  
East Central



**Charmaine Emanuels**  
Broward

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MARCH 21-23, 2024

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

19 UNIVERSITIES | 600+ COMPETITORS

# ARE YOU READY?



## Breaking News!

**ASCE Florida Section Hosts the 2024 ASCE Southeast Student Symposium on March 21-23, 2024 in Orlando**

ASCE's premier event in Region 5 almost didn't happen until a very dedicated group of Section members asked the Section Board for approval to host the 2024 ASCE Southeast Student Symposium and were met with a resounding **YES**. Within one week, the dates and venue were set along with the sponsorship opportunities. We are expecting 600 students from Florida, Georgia and Puerto Rico to compete in 17 competitions over the 3-day event, with day one and two taking place on campus at UCF and day 3 taking place at Bill Frederick Park at Turkey Lake. Help is needed by way of sponsorship, judging and volunteering to put on this monumental event.

[Click Here to Volunteer or Judge](#)



[Click Here to Sponsor this Incredible Event](#)

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# Scholarship Winner Update: Where Are They Now?

**E. Bruce Lawson, PE,  
Chair - Scholarship Committee**

The ASCE Florida Section presented 9 endowed scholarships in our 2nd Annual Scholarship Reception that took place during the summer annual conference at the JW Marriott Grande Lakes Resort in July. The Section will be highlighting each of the recipients - three at a time - in the Communique moving forward this year.

For more information on the Section's scholarship program, please contact [E. Bruce Lawson](#), Scholarship Chair, or [Judy Nichols](#), Executive Director.

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## **Macey Hatton, University of Central Florida 2023 Past Presidents Undergraduate Scholarship Recipient**

**Why did you join ASCE?** I joined ASCE my freshman year at UCF because I wanted to gain civil engineering experience while making connections and friends. I have made so many unforgettable memories while I have been a part of it, which ranges from designing the concrete canoe and attending the Southeast Student Conference to networking and meeting new people in the civil industry.

**What ASCE student leadership roles have you been involved with as a member?** During my sophomore year I was on the Marketing Committee and in my junior year I became the Marketing Officer for the club. My senior year I was the social chair. I have also been heavily involved in conference competitions!

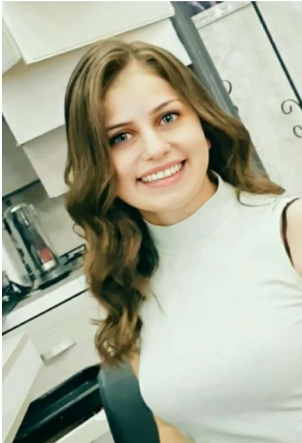
**What area of civil engineering are you specializing in and why did you choose this area?** I am specializing in transportation and I was able to discover my passion for it while working an internship over the summer. I focused on Traffic Operations and Transportation Planning and I really enjoy it.



**How has winning the scholarship benefitted you as a student?** The scholarship has been a tremendous help for me, especially because I pay for college, rent, and other expenses myself. It has allowed me to focus more on my courses and clubs without having to worry about how to pay for things which is a great relief! I greatly appreciate ASCE for giving students such a great opportunity.

***The Past Presidents Undergraduate Scholarship is open to any Florida undergraduate student pursuing a degree in civil engineering.***

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## **Yasmine Al Mograbi, Florida International University 2023 Past Presidents Graduate Scholarship Recipient**

**Why did you join ASCE?** My passion for development and my quest to be part of a group of engineers striving to create safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility is what led me to join ASCE. The support and belief in my passion from the ASCE FIU student chapter, ASCE Miami Dade branch, ASCE Broward Branch, and ASCE Florida Section have been invaluable. ASCE is undoubtedly an excellent and meaningful place to connect with other professionals, obtain fruitful opportunities to succeed, expand my knowledge, and participate in various activities that benefit me both professionally and personally. I have had the honor of experiencing friendship and happiness in every event I have attended for ASCE. One of my most unforgettable moments was during the Southeast ASCE Student Symposium in March 2023. I still vividly remember the motivation and teamwork I experienced while participating in a competition, as well as the pleasure and pride of the student chapter when the results were announced.

**What ASCE student leadership roles have you been involved with as a member?** I was the captain of the ASCE FIU team for the temporary traffic control competition that took place during the Southeast ASCE Student Symposium in March 2023. It was a wonderful experience working with hardworking students and I felt extremely happy seeing these young people get involved in transportation. My amazing team won first place. I was also interested in being an e-board member, where I could make a more meaningful and significant impact to benefit ASCE, which played a huge role in developing my leadership skills. I have volunteered for several ASCE events and look forward to future opportunities.

**What area of civil engineering are you specializing in and why did you choose this area?** I am a Ph.D. candidate and graduate research assistant in transportation engineering at FIU, under the supervision of Dr. Mohammed Hadi. During my undergraduate studies, I traveled to several cities in the USA, including Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, and New York City, to participate in international competitions for civil engineering students related to materials and structural engineering. These visits provided me with the opportunity to use the subway, metro, and bike for the first time, and I felt safe while crossing the roads. This made me reflect on the critical question of how we can establish safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility and the transformative role of civil engineers in achieving this objective. At the same time, I was terrified by the fact that we lose 1,000 young people on the world's roads every day. This is unacceptable! The number "1000" represents more than just a number; it tells a story of loss for a partner, son, sister, friend,



colleague, and more. I had a courageous desire to be a transportation engineer and unleash the field of saving lives from crashes and disasters, which would enhance my sense of accomplishment and have a beneficial impact on humanity at the same time.

**How has winning the scholarship benefitted you as a student?** Winning the scholarship was one of the greatest things that ever happened to me, and I am extremely grateful for this amazing opportunity. The scholarship helped me pay for some of the expenses that I faced as a student. Additionally, it allowed me to be more involved in advocating for road safety and sustainable mobility by covering the expenses of participating in events. Not only that, but this scholarship served as an amazing and fruitful motivation for me to continue pursuing my passion for transportation.

***The Past Presidents Graduate Scholarship is open to any Florida graduate student pursuing a degree in civil engineering.***

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## **Deigo Rey, University of Florida 2023 Hayden Family Scholarship Recipient**

**Why did you join ASCE?** I joined ASCE because it provides me with great opportunities like professional development, networking, as well as a support community for my success at the University of Florida.

**What ASCE student leadership roles have you been involved with as a member?** While not holding an officer position, I have connected more with the gator engineering community. I have shared some time and tools that have allowed me and my classmates to be prepared for a demanding future.

**What area of civil engineering are you specializing in and why did you choose this area?** I am specializing in Structural

Engineering with an emphasis on Bridges. I am currently in my 4th year and soon enough I will begin my Master's at UF. I chose this area because I find it challenging, entertaining as well as a crucial area to provide better services to the public infrastructure.

**How has winning the scholarship benefitted you as a student?** It has been a blessing. Thanks to the ASCE because it allowed me to pay for my Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) exam as well as cover some rent expenses during my stay in Gainesville.

***The Hayden Family Scholarship was established in 2020 and is open to first generation students attending college.***

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# Are you Hiring?

## Check out the 2nd Annual Student Development Conference

The Florida Section will be hosting its 2nd Annual Student Development Conference on Saturday, February 10, 2024, in Orlando. We have an exclusive opportunity for 15 companies to sponsor this at an investment of \$1,000 each. Sponsorship includes an exhibitor table during this one day event, access to the students and their resumes, as well as taking part in an interactive hiring panel. Last year's event was an unbelievable event with an attendance of 99 students representing each of our 11 student chapters. Please contact [Judy Nichols](#) for more information.







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## Student Chapters Shine

### Read how Florida Atlantic University is Helping the International Community

Senior Engineering Design I students at FAU are proud to partner with their ASCE FAU Student Chapter to undertake the design and construction of a suspension footbridge at the municipality of Nkhamba, in the Kingdom of Eswatini. This will be the fourth suspended footbridge constructed by FAU students in collaboration with ASCE and the non-profit organization Engineers In Action (EIA). The name of the bridge will be “KaBodali” and it is expected to directly serve 2,500 residents of 5 different communities in Nkhamba to cross the Komati River in safely manner, since there is no existing crossing method. Over the last three years, there have been four fatalities, out of those three have been children. During the rainy season, the high-water line of the river rises, making it difficult or impossible to cross the river for approximately 180 days. It is expected that the team will have its design finalized by January 2024 and construction will begin in the same month. The team is planning to travel to Eswatini to assist the project for its last two weeks of construction. To make this project possible, there is a group effort being made to increase awareness in the community and to raise \$40,000 to be able to account for materials, tools, protective equipment, labor, and other necessary resources. The team is excited to be part of such a meaningful project, not only from the engineering point of view, but also because of the impact that it will have on the communities in Eswatini. Want to help out?

[Click Here for Sponsorship Opportunities](#)

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# Meet our Members

## Recognizing our Outstanding Members

Every issue we focus on one of our outstanding active current members, one student member and a life member to highlight the benefits of ASCE and our profession. If there is someone you know that has made a great contribution to our field, please nominate them by emailing [Judy Nichols](#).



### Charmaine Emanuels, PE

**Project Engineer,  
CMA**

**Why did you join ASCE?** I joined ASCE as a student because they were the “cool kids” doing all the cool stuff in the FIU engineering center