
Southeast Section

**WATER
ENVIRONMENT
ASSOCIATION OF
TEXAS
NEWSLETTER**

December 2020 | WEAT SOUTHEAST SECTION



WEAT
Southeast Texas Section



President's Message

End of the year note is typically filled with merriment and wishes for the holidays. While we may find it difficult to feel the same levels of joy this year for all that we have been through, I would like to take this opportunity and remind everyone of the incredible sense of community you have shown this year. WEAT Southeast Section has shown resilience and come together to continue to grow, learn and support each other. We have faced challenges and lost some of our beloved events like the Clay Shoot yet came up with plans to keep the efforts going. We awarded scholarships, raised funds for scholarships through Section Meetings, donated to Water for People and added new organization- Operators without Borders- under our PCOC committee. All of this would not have been possible without the wonderful officers at WEAT SE who stepped up to plate, our partners who sponsored events or presented at the events and of course the members! So, **THANK YOU** to each one of you. A special **THANK YOU** to all the water and wastewater facility operators. I wish you all safe and happy holidays!



Pavani Silaparasetty



WEAT EVENTS (SE Section)

COVID 19

Due to COVID 19 the WEAT SE section is still observing social distancing and as such not hosting any in person section meetings or events. We will continue to monitor public health guidelines and consider in-person meetings on a case by case basis.

This has impacted several beloved events such as the Clay Shoot and Water for People Beer for Us. Please review the rest of the newsletter for updates and alternatives on those events. We are still working diligently to put together webinars to continue professional development and encourage participation. We are moving towards a format that will facilitate continuing education credits as well as bring value to your professional development.

Past Events

OCTOBER SECTION MEETING

Lessons Learned - Safety at Water and Wastewater Facilities

On October 20, 2020 WEAT's Southeast Chapter convened for its section meeting via webinar: *2020 Lessons Learned– Safety at Water/Wastewater Facilities*. Approximately 40 attendees were joined by three knowledgeable speakers from various backgrounds to share experiences in the following areas:

- Disaster Preparedness during Pandemic (Susie Blake)
- Water/Wastewater Operations – General & Pandemic Operator Safety (Mike Harris)
- Safety Best Practices for Engineers (Patrick Walz)

Attendees were able to ask the speakers questions and have access to documents the speakers have prepared to help keep their employees safe and prepare for disasters, as well as earn PDH and TCEQ credits. Thank you to our section meeting title sponsor,



Thank you to our section meeting section sponsor, AECOM, Pape- Dawson and Garver!



Susana Blake
City of League City, Texas
Wastewater Superintendent
Masters in Environmental
Science with Chemistry
Texas A&M Engineering
Extension Service (TEEX),
Water/Wastewater Instructor



Michael Harris
City of Beaumont, Texas
*Director of Water/Wastewater
Operations*
Texas Water Utilities
Association Instructor



Patrick Walz, PE, CSP, STS
AECOM's *Senior Safety Manager*
Certified Safety Professional
Safety Trained Supervisor
American Society of Safety
Engineers Member



DECEMBER SECTION MEETING

Operators Without Borders – Aiding Water Utilities in Developing Countries in Disaster and Beyond

On December 8, 2020 WEAT's Southeast Chapter convened for its section meeting via webinar. The webinar had 48 attendees who joined to learn more about this non-profit organization and the work it is doing around the world.

Speakers Aisha Niang, Valerie Jenkinson and Jason Mank introduced the non-profit organization "Operator Without Border" to the WEAT members. They discussed their involvement with the organization, past projects and shared their humbling experience in helping communities in Haiti, Bahamas, etc. rebuild their water/wastewater operations after natural disasters like Hurricanes and Storms. The speakers introduced their program and shared information on how volunteers can help the program. At this time, operators without border is looking for steady source of funds to help more communities.

GUEST SPEAKERS



Aisha Niang, P.E. ENV SP
Assistant Director – Water
Wastewater Operations
City of Houston Public Works



Valerie Jenkinson
Founder & Chair – Operators
Without Border (OPW)
CEO – Word Water and Wastewater
Solutions LTD.



Jason Mank
Operation and Maintenance Team
Lead
Waterloo Hub
Ontario Clean Water Agency

Thank you to our section meeting section sponsors,
**AECOM, Black and Veatch, Garver, HDR,
Houston Public Works, Kimley-Horn, Stantec**
and attendees we were able to raise **\$1,000** to help Operators Without Borders on their continuing mission.

WATER FOR PEOPLE BEER FOR US

On Wednesday, November 18, 2020, the Southeast-WEAT team, with the help of the SE-TAWWA, hosted their annual "Water For People, Beer For Us" virtual event. More than 40 people attended the event with a total of 20 sponsors. Although the event was virtual **the event raised more than \$6,500 in donations for Water For People**, a global non-profit organization with a revolutionary mission of providing water and sanitation for every family, school, and clinic in which it works.

On behalf of everyone with the WEAT Southeast Section, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all of our sponsors for your generous donation to Water For People (WFP). This was a tough year, but your continued support and contribution, allows the event to be successful in raising funds to support the WFP initiative. Your donation is paramount in executing WFP's mission to provide clean water and sanitation solutions to everyone.

Additionally, thank you to our special guests **Andrew Molly, Shannon Dunne, Clarence Wittwer,** and **Jeff Masek** for taking the time out of their busy schedule to attend the event. Your presence promoted interest in the event which in turn helps spread awareness of WFP's mission.

We look forward to Water For People, Beer For Us 2021 and hope to see you there! Contact Jose Mendiola (MendiolaJG@bv.com) or Corey Evans (EvansCC@bv.com) for any inquiries.



Upcoming Events

Collection System Condition Assessment and Rehabilitation Workshop

January 21, 2021 8:00 AM – 11:00 Am

Free registration for individuals, Sponsorship opportunities available

For more details Contact Raghu Nednur (Raghavender.nednur@houston.com) or Kristin O'Neill (Kristin.oneill@stantec.com)

Half Day Seminar Save the Date

February 9, 2021

Sponsorship opportunities available. For more details contact Pavani Silaparasetty (pavani.silaparasetty@aecom.com)

E-Week

February 21-27, 2021

More information to follow. For more details contact Tara Payne (tpayne@mcmanusjohnson.com)

WEAT EVENTS (State)

WEF/WEAT Awards Nomination Deadline

Please submit your nomination online via the weat.org website by **January 8, 2020**. After you submit your nomination, you will receive a confirmation follow-up email. The Awards Committee will get back to you with results by January 25. Email awards@weat.org with any questions. Happy nominating!

To see a short list of awards, WEAT/WEF awards criteria, and past award winners, please visit weat.org website.

Texas Water 2021

Please save the date for this year's Texas Water Conference March 29 through April 1st.



IDWW Calendar Sales

Ready to put 2020 behind you? We have the perfect stocking stuffer for members, friends, and family who are looking forward to brighter days ahead! Our **2021 Imagine a Day Without Water Art Calendars** are full of water-inspired images from Texas elementary students who participated in WEAT/TAWWA's annual art contest. Purchases help support our combined educational programs and Water For People. **Only \$13 or 2 for \$20 (plus tax and shipping), available while supplies last!**

For additional information contact WEAT State PCOC Chair, Nyla Langford (nblangford@sig-auto.com)



YEOY 2021

Young Engineer of the year

Southeast Section of WEAT is happy announce that that **Pavani Silaparasetty, PE** has been selected as our YEOY 2021 Thank you to all the nominators and nominees that submitted applications for this award.



Volunteer Opportunities



Volunteering Opportunities

If you're interested in volunteering with the Southeast Section of WEAT email us at weatsoutheast@gmail.com or Contact a Section Committee Chair



Water Environment
Association of Texas

2,900 Members
32 Committees
20 Sections

**Become a
Member Today!**
<https://www.weat.org/>



Scholarships

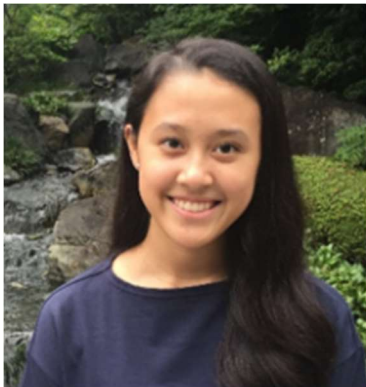
The mission of the WEAT Scholarship Committee is to support, promote, and encourage the educational pursuits and goals of active members, or their college bound dependents, with scholarships and educational grants. WEAT members and their dependents are eligible to apply for available scholarship awards.

The Southeast Texas Section chooses at least one applicant annually to award a scholarship of at least \$500. All degree programs are considered; however, preference is given to students with degree programs with the intention of entering the environmental field including Biology, Chemistry, Engineering, Environmental Sciences, Computer Science, Management and Public Administration. Additional preference is given to students within close geographical proximity to the WEAT Southeast Texas Section.

2020 Scholarship Award Winners:

Clara Victorio, WEAT Member

Award amount: \$2,000



Fordham University – Chemistry

“I joined WEAT as a student when I received the Stockholm Junior Water Prize at the Science and Engineering Fair of Houston in 2019 for my project on removing microplastics from water. In 2020, I presented an additional component to this project and investigated a biodegradable flocculant. This year, I was awarded the 2nd place Texas SJWP Award by WEAT. I am currently pursuing a BS degree in Chemistry at Fordham University and I am interested in efficient and inexpensive water treatment processes. I am honored to have received this scholarship and I am grateful to WEAT for their generosity.”

Aerod Wyre, WEAT Dependent

Award amount: \$1,500



Lamar University – Mechanical Engineering

“I currently attend Lamar University as a Sophomore Mechanical Engineer Major with a minor in business administrations. I am the current President of the Epsilon Rho Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., senator of the National Society of Black Engineers, and treasurer of the National Pan Hellenic Council. I am thankful for WEAT’s financial support.”



Evan Silva, WEAT Dependent

Award amount: \$1,500



University of Texas at Austin – Aerospace Engineering

“I am currently a sophomore studying Aerospace Engineering with a minor in Material Science and Engineering at The University of Texas at Austin. I serve as a mentor for underrepresented first-year engineering students and spend most of my time outside of class involved in student projects building aircraft and rockets to compete in international competitions. This WEAT Scholarship grants me the flexibility to experiment with my ambitions in engineering, justifying my involvement in student projects where I am gaining invaluable experiences, and providing me with a financial foundation to invest in myself.”

Bradley Truong, WEAT Dependent

Award amount: \$1,000

University of Texas at Austin – Business

Photo Not Available

The Southeast Texas Section congratulates this year’s scholarship winners. For more information on scholarship awards, application timelines, and donations, please visit our website or contact the current Scholarship Committee Chair at KRegner@ehrainc.com.



2020 Event Changes

Clay Shoot

The 2020 Clay Shoot for this year was cancelled. We hope you will save the date and join us next year for our 2021 Clay Shoot on **Friday October 15, 2021**.

This event is our largest scholarship fundraiser for the year and routinely brings in close to \$10,000. If you would like to continue your support of our Scholarships, please see contact Krystal Regner at kregner@ehrainc.com

Young Professionals

The Young Professionals committee is working on socially distanced events to continue fostering connection for the Young Professionals during this time. There are several ideas that are being considered. If you have any ideas or events you would like to see please email our Young Professional Chair Carlos Gularte at Carlos.Gularte@freese.com.



2020 - 2021 Officers and Committee Chairs

Executive Chairs



Pavani Silaparsetty *President*
pavani.silaparsetty@aecom.com



Valetta Saldanha *Vice President*
valetta.saldanha@aecom.com



Dylan Christenson *President-Elect*
christensond@bv.com



Trevor Otter *Treasurer*
ottert@bv.com



Carol Serna *Secretary*
carol.serna@stantec.com



Aisha Niang (R)
Aisha.niang@houston.tx.gov



Jennie Almerico (L)
jennie@5engineering.com

*Co-WEAT State
Section Rep*



Connie Curtis *Past President*
connie.curtis@kimley-horn.com

Committee Chairs

Keval Satra *Section Meetings*
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Krystal Regner *Scholarship*
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Austin Blackwell *EIC Committee*
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Jose Mendiola/Corey Evans *Public
Communications and Outreach Committee*
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Carlos Gularte *Young Professionals Committee*
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Stephen Kelly *Communications*
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**Raghavender Nednur/
Ogadinma Onyebuchi**
Wastewater Operations Committee Co-Chairs
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Wade Parks *Sponsorship Committee*
WPParks@GarverUSA.com

Amber Batson *Membership Committee*
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**Katie Zheng
Dylan Christenson** *Workforce Development*
kzheng@swwc.com
christensond@bv.com

Event Chairs

**Pavani Silaparsetty
Stephen Kelly
Corey Evans
Tara Payne**

