



August 7, 2014

Dear _____,

On behalf of the American Water Resources Association, Southwest Florida Chapter (AWRA) and the American Society of Civil Engineers, I am cordially inviting you to participate in our “Meet the Professionals” networking event at the Florida Gulf Coast University, Holmes Hall on Thursday, September 11, 2014 from 5:00pm to 7:00pm. If you are interested in participating in “Meet the Professionals” please RSVP to Karen Bickford by email or phone by Thursday, September 4, 2014. Karen can be reached at 239-533-8706 or Karen.bickford@gmail.com.

Our “Meet the Professionals” Networking event is a great opportunity for you to connect with students in the Colleges of Engineering and Environmental Studies to develop mentoring relationships, internships, volunteer opportunities for service learning hours, and potentially future employees. We are inviting all of our partner organizations and previous conference sponsors to participate including the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Florida Engineering Society, Florida Association of Environmental Professionals, Audubon of Southwest Florida, Caloosahatchee Riverwatch, Southwest Florida Watershed Council, and the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program.

We will be offering students not only the benefit of networking with our conference partner organizations and sponsors to discuss internships, but providing them valuable information about scholarship programs, statewide research poster publication opportunities, and volunteer opportunities to help them gain the service learning credits and professional experience they will need to launch their careers. The goal of the AWRA is to provide these educational and career development opportunities for students as well as continuing education for our professional community.

In addition to our September 2014 “Meet the Professionals” networking session, we are planning the 24th Annual Southwest Florida Water Resources Conference for Friday, February 6, 2015. We will be holding the conference at the Florida Gulf Coast University Cohen Center Ballroom. Please mark your calendar!

The 23rd Annual Conference drew more than 200 students and professionals (16 speakers, 67 professionals and 74 students: FGCU 55, Oxbridge Academy 9, USF 5, Intelligentsia International 4, and UF 1); record breaking student attendance for our 23-year history! The Conference provided an excellent opportunity for students to publish their scientific work in an accessible and affordable manner. This year’s poster contest had excellent participation with 24 entries with on-the-spot scholarship awards for winning student poster submittals (1st prize - \$400, 2nd prize - \$300, 3rd prize - \$200, 4th prize – \$100). Photos of the poster contest entries are posted at: <http://awra.caloosahatchee.org/2014/index.php?page=posters>.

We hope that you will consider participating in the upcoming Student-Professional Networking event on September 11, 2014 and we hope to see you at the next conference in February 2015!

Regards,

Karen Bickford, SWFL Chair
AWRA Florida Chapter