Merry Christmas!

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Greetings! As we reach the halfway point of the 2019/2020 LWEA year, I’m happy to report that we’ve had a very active few months!

First and foremost, we’ve added new faces to the LWEA board. It’s encouraging that we’re gaining more engagement and willingness from our members to be involved. I’m confident that the fresh faces will contribute great things to our organization.

WEFTEC took place in Chicago this fall, and saw the Water Dogz from the Sewerage and Water Board put up a very strong showing in their new uniforms provided by LWEA. I’m not sure many realize the time and effort that goes into preparing for this competition. We should all be extremely proud of the way the Water Dogz have and will continue to represent this organization and our state.

LWEA also had its inaugural semi-annual workshop which was held in Shreveport. The goal of the semi-annual workshop is to create an event that puts individuals from all walks of our industry in one space for a day of learning and networking. I hope all who attended were able to gain value and a sense of comradery. The LWEA board is busy preparing for the spring workshop, and you should see details for this event released after the first of the year.

In closing, I’d like to encourage each of you reading this message to consider furthering your involvement in LWEA. Please feel free to reach out to any member of the board to discuss how you may become more involved. We’re always open to new ideas!

May you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! ——TJ

MEMBERS: JEROME MARSHALL (COACH), RICO WEBB (CAPTAIN), MARK FAIRCHILD (CO-CAPTAIN), EDERICK TRASK, BRADLEY CHAPMAN

SAVE THE DATE

Louisiana Conference on Water and Wastewater
MARCH 16-19 2020 in Shreveport

www.louisianaconference.org
Two letters after a name can have a big effect on a career — just look at the R.N. or P.E. Those designations add a level of credibility to the professional, affect the pay scale, and indicate the knowledge necessary to perform to the best of one’s ability.

With the support of the American Water Works Association (AWWA; Denver) and the Water Environment Federation (WEF; Alexandria, Va.), the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC; Ankeny, Iowa) recognized the need for a similar designation that gives water and wastewater operators credit where credit is due.
Operators are front line protectors of human health, either through ensuring safe drinking water or the safety of waterways through effective wastewater management. They are the lifeblood of every community and deserve a way to be showcased as professionals.

And so — built by operators for operators — the Professional Operator (PO) program was born.

JOIN A COMMUNITY
POs are an elite group of like-minded individuals, deeply committed to serving the public and growing in the water sector. Having a supportive community for sharing professional knowledge is absolutely invaluable. The designation opens doors for international networking, connects operators with opportunities to be water sector advocates, and qualifies operators to attend events along the way.

GROW AS A PROFESSIONAL
Becoming a certified PO signals to employers that the operator is an achiever — committed to their profession long-term and ready to go above and beyond.

“I became a Professional Operator because of the chance to test my knowledge and accelerate my career,” said Brian Faist, Professional Operator in Rivergrove, Ore. “The PO designation has made me a more appealing candidate for promotion.”

Whether looking to grow within a company or trying to find a job, being a PO makes an operator stand out in a crowd.

ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY
The PO program is the first internationally recognized professional designation for water and wastewater operators. With the designation, peers, customers, and the public can feel confident that a PO has mastered the most rigorous standards.

“I wanted a challenge and I tackled it,” said Georginna Lockett, PO in Atlanta. “Being a PO certifies me in the industry as a top-level operator and that has been my goal since I started in the field.”

All POs must also adhere to a code of conduct, which bolsters an operator’s reputation and builds additional community trust.

INCREASE MOBILITY
Water sector adopters of the PO program are continuing to grow and it’s helping to mold an expansive future for operators.

“Broad acceptance of a standard certification can make water professional credentials portable across state or country lines,” said Paul Bishop, President and CEO of ABC. “With many
benefits and potential solutions also come some challenges, but industry leaders at WEF, AWWA, and ABC are up to the task."

The PO program is a great leap toward an industry credential standard. It includes uniform and transparent credentialing that is recognizable by any employer or certification body.

BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY

PO certification is offered to operators in four levels (from Class I through Class IV) for water treatment, water distribution, wastewater collection, and wastewater treatment. Joining the PO movement is simple and the entire process can take as little as a few weeks.

Step 1: Create an Online Profile. The path to becoming a PO starts by creating a profile online at portal.abccert.org. An operator will be asked to provide such information as work and education history.

Step 2: Submit an Application. The operator applies and ABC reviews the operator’s profile to ensure basic criteria have been met. Applications are accepted from anywhere in the world, any day of the year.

Step 3: Take the Exam. In some cases, operators may have already passed a certification exam that ABC will accept. If not, the operator will schedule a time to take an ABC certification exam. Once the exam is passed, the operator will receive a certificate, be invited to a POWER event to be formally recognized, and join the PO community.

For questions or additional information, visit www.Professional-Operator.org or send your questions to Info@ProfessionalOperator.org.

The PO program is administered by the Certification Commission for Environmental Professionals (C2EP), an organization of volunteer water environment operations subject matter experts created by the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC).
Did you know one of the primary responsibilities of the WEF Delegate is to be a conduit between WEF and the Member Association (state or regional organization) communication? But, that’s not their only responsibility. WEF Delegates from each Member Association (MA) make up the House of Delegates, and each year have specific initiatives that are carried out in working groups. The three working groups are designed for participation from all Delegates.

I’ve been involved in the Public Education/Brave Blue World Working Group. This workgroup will have responsibility for screenings of the documentary film “Brave Blue World.” As an ambassador for the documentary, billed as an optimistic look at solving the world’s water challenges through innovation and technology, Brave Blue World is a feature-length film that premiered in Los Angeles this week.

The Water Environment Federation (WEF) is a production partner for Brave Blue World and will use the film to raise public awareness about the solutions to water challenges.

“It is important to convey a sense of hope and spirit of optimism for water and that is why WEF is thrilled to be a production partner for Brave Blue World,” said Walt Marlowe, WEF Executive Director. “By showing a path to a sustainable water future Brave Blue World can help us to influence leaders, increase resources, change policies, and improve stewardship of water.”

The film is narrated by Liam Neeson and includes interviews with a variety of water experts, as well as high-profile advocates Matt Damon and Jaden Smith. It features compelling stories, beautiful scenery, and examples from across five continents to show novel ways of tackling water problems. The film explores developments in areas such as water reuse, nutrient recovery, energy generation, decentralized treatment, and the digitization of water.

“From a NASA research center, where we learned how water is recycled in space, and a textile plant in India that is meeting 90 percent of its water needs from recycled water, to the world’s largest algae-powered wastewater treatment plant in Spain and a children’s home in Kenya, where 50 litres of water a day is being provided from humidity in the air, we heard many inspiring stories,” said Executive Producer Paul O’Callaghan, who is also founder of BlueTech Research. “We’re tremendously excited to be able to share these with a wider audience and move water up the global agenda as an issue we can solve in our lifetime.”

Brave Blue World also includes a segment with Tom Kunetz, Past President of WEF, at the world’s largest nutrient recovery facility, the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant operated by the Metropolitan Water District of Greater Chicago.

WEF and its Member Associations, including Louisiana Water Environment Association plan to hold numerous screenings of the film across the country in 2020. Stay tuned for more details.
YOUR EFFORT

WATER’S WORTH IT

YOU NEED WATER. WATER NEEDS YOU.
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OPEN POSITIONS
Program • Government • Young Professionals
Community Outreach/Education • WEFTEC Advisory Chair

LWEA IMPORTANT DATES!
Save the date for the Spring 2020 scheduled LWEA activities listed below. Be sure to check the calendar https://thelwea.com/calendar.php and website for additional information

Jan 28 – Luncheon
Feb 18 – Luncheon
March 31 – Luncheon
April 21 – Spring Workshop
May – TBD
June 23 – Annual Meeting

TO ADVERTISE
Contact: Devon Keese
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Follow us on Twitter @TheLWEA
New Members
Please welcome the following new Executive (EXEC), Professional (PRO), Young Professional (YP), or PWO members, who recently joined WEF and LWEA:

Robin A. Barnes (PRO), Greater New Orleans, Inc., New Orleans, LA
Tim Beck (EXEC), Sunbelt Marketing, Mesquite, TX
Dathan Bishop (PRO), ExxonMobil, Baton Rouge, LA
Mike Catanzaro (PRO), Hoot Systems LLC, Baton Rouge, LA
Robert Edwards (PRO), IPEX North America, New Orleans, LA
Alexandra Ellis (PRO), Shreveport, LA
Leo Martinez (YP), ExxonMobil, Baton Rouge, LA
Richard Moore (PWO), Covington, LA
Bryce Schiebel (YP), ExxonMobil Chemical, Baton Rouge, LA
Megan Sledge (YP), ExxonMobil, Baton Rouge, LA
Jared Turpen (YP), ExxonMobil, Baton Rouge, LA
Cynthia Walters (PRO), Healthy Community Services, New Orleans, LA

Non-members, Expired Members
For WEF/LWEA membership information, visit wef.org/Join-WEF or contact Linda McConnell at 225.773.6478 or lmcconnell@matrixneworld.com. I can forward you a PDF of the current application form or can look up your expired member number for use in communications with WEF.