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**Florida West Coast
Section (FWCS)**

The SunCoast SIGNAL Newsletter

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.

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PE Corner

Art Nordlinger, PE, Life Senior Member

Continuing Continuing Education

In one of my columns last year I discussed a bill that was filed in the Florida Legislature proposing to eliminate most of the regulatory boards under the Department of Professional Regulation. It should come as no surprise that a new version has been filed, House Bill 607, for the 2026 legislative session which begins in January.

One part of this proposed legislation that stood out to me is that it eliminates the continuing education requirements for most professions regulated by the DBPR. My initial reaction to this was something like, *wow, that's a really bad idea*. However, I've heard considerable debate about this and thought I'd attempt to present both sides and let you decide how you feel about it.

Florida began requiring continuing education for engineers in 2003. Attitudes about whether this is good, bad, or otherwise run the gamut. Many find continuing education a necessity in their practice. They were going to do it anyway, although the statutory requirement adds a paperwork burden. Others look at continuing education like medication; I don't want to take it but I know it's good for me. And then still others look at it as a necessary evil for licensure renewal.

Continued on Page 2

Next ExCom Meeting
Tuesday, February 3, 2026
Google Meet
Register with vTools

<https://events.vtools.ieee.org/m/532892>

IEEE FWCS ExCom Members**CHAIR:** Michael Mayor, michael.mayor@ieee.org**VICE CHAIR:** Andrew Seely,
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Joint Chapter:** Chair, Kayla Allemang,
kalleman@ieee.org**RAS Robotics & Automation Chapter:**
Chair Sean Denny, venner20@ieee.org.**SP/COMM Signal Processing / Communications
and Blockchain Group,** Chair,
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Chilakapati gowthamchila@gmail.com**SENIOR MEMBER COMMITTEE:** Hermann
Amaya, hermann.amaya.us@ieee.org**WEB MASTER:** TJ Ross, a.j.ross@ieee.org**PE Corner - Cont'd from Page 1**

Certainly laws and rules that govern the practice change and the requirement to take a course in that area, hopefully, keeps us all up-to-date. And though they were relevant to my professional practice, I probably would never have studied substation grounding requirements or the challenges of integrating solar generation into the electric grid had I not been required to do 16 hours of CE. Am I a better-informed engineer for having taken these seminars? I'd have to say that I am.

Consider how others look at engineers in terms of how we view other professions. Would your criteria for choosing a doctor include whether they completed their continuing education if it wasn't mandatory for that profession? (I would note that this proposed legislation doesn't affect the medical profession.) Would an engineer's client apply a similar criterion?

Getting back to the question of whether continuing education should be required, the argument is made that engineers who want to do it, or need to do it, are going to do it whether it's required or not. Those who don't are going to find ways to "check the box" with minimal effort. Or at least until the current requirement to submit certificates, not do it at all and hope that they don't get audited. In the background, there is also a significant effort and cost to the Board to administer and monitor the continuing education process.

Keep in mind 471.001 F.S."Purpose.—The Legislature deems it necessary in the interest of public health and safety to regulate the practice of engineering in this state." Does requiring continuing education further this purpose? I'll let you decide. In the meantime, however you feel about HB 607, consider letting your state legislators know.



Reworld Waste To Energy Facility - Pasco County

- Date:** Friday, January 30, 2026
Time: 10:00AM – 11:30PM (EST/EDT)
Location: ReWorld Facility - 14230 Hays Road Spring Hill, FL 34610
Cost: \$20 Members/\$50 Non-Members/\$10 Student & Life Members
CEH Credits: None
RSVP: Online at: <https://events.vtools.ieee.org/m/522000>
 Seats are limited to 20 attendees
Questions: Kayla Allemang - Kallemand@ieee.org
 Regan Sink – Rsink@ieee.org
 Richard Beatie – R.beatie@ieee.org
 Hermann Amaya - hermann.amaya.us@ieee.org

The IEEE Florida West Coast Section Power & Energy Society/Industry Applications Society (PES/IAS), in partnership with IEEE FWCS Life Members, IEEE FWCS student chapters, and Pasco County Reworld, invites you to an exclusive tour of the Pasco County Reworld Waste-To-Energy (WTE) Facility. Explore how Reworld's Waste-to-Energy Facility converts everyday refuse into reliable, renewable power. The program begins with a 30-minute presentation on the facility's technology, grid integration, and role in sustainable energy. Attendees will then walk the tour route to see waste intake, combustion systems, turbine operations, and emissions controls firsthand. The event concludes with an interactive Q&A, offering insights into real-world applications and the future of waste-to-energy.

Directions and parking details will be sent to attendees closer to the event.

Participants are required to wear Long pants, Long sleeved shirt, Closed-toe shoes (preferably boots), No free-flowing garment, Long hair must be worn "up"

Required PPE: Hard hats, eye protection, gloves, and hearing protection. Reworld will provide the required PPE if you are unable to bring your own.



Substation Connectivity: Practical Guidelines for Reliable IT-OT-Telecom Integration

Date: Friday, February 20, 2026
Time: 10:00AM – 3:00PM (EST/EDT)
Speaker: Adrian Zvarych, PE – Qualus, Supervisor
Location: Seminole Electric Cooperative, Inc.
 16313 N Dale Mabry Hwy Tampa, FL 33618
Cost: Members: \$100; Non-Members: \$250; Students: \$20
CEH: Four (4) CEH Credits
RSVP: Online at: <https://events.vtools.ieee.org/m/516195>
Questions: Kayla Allemang - Kalleman@ieee.org

Abstract: The need for IT-OT-Telecom connection connectivity at electric utility substations has only increased over the past 15 years. In certain cases, a communication circuit dropping out of service may trigger cyber security or Grid Operations processes, lead to an inter-utility transmission tie line circuit being opened, or trigger other more time and resource consuming efforts. It is therefore necessary for Relay and Substation design engineers and installers to understand critical success factors needed to develop and install highly reliable connectivity. It's not 'Rocket Science', however, basic industry guidelines, once understood and applied, can lead to a more appropriate level of equipment communication circuit reliability.

Adrian Zvarych, PE, is a Field Services Supervisor who has spent the last four decades making electricity behave itself, usually by threatening it with protective relays, fiber optics, and the occasional strongly-worded spreadsheet. A 1982 Carnegie Mellon BSEE grad and a registered PE in the State of Florida, Adrian made his first notable industry impact in 1988 by developing Florida Power & Light's still-in-use Dual Transmission Substation Bus de-

sign, then kept the innovation train rolling in 1999 as the guy who dreamed up the relay and fiber network for Duke Energy's groundbreaking International Drive Distribution Automation project—the one that made other utilities go “wait, we can do THAT?” He's also a presenter. IEEE Working Group Chair and a Senior Life Member of the IEEE. Just means he's old... (his words)

In between, he's worn every hat from hands-on relay geek to IT/Telecom wrangler to manager of teams up to 50 engineers, techs, and electricians while keeping a cool \$14M revenue stream flowing with one of the highest department retention rates in the company. Creative, mildly rebellious, and allergic to the phrase “but we've always done it this way,” Adrian sees his real job as clearing the runway so smarter people than him (again, his words) can take off and look brilliant. When he's not busy dragging the industry into the future, he's a loving and supportive husband and father, and also keeps his musical talents flowing in various jazz combos or the Pieces of 8 Chicago Tribute Band.



TAMPA BAY E-WEEK BANQUET

This premier event celebrates excellence in STEM across our community. Local leaders and engineering professionals come together to honor outstanding Engineers, Science and Math Teachers, Students, and Young Professionals. The banquet also features the Lignell Awards, presented to exceptional high school educators advancing STEM education and inspiring future engineers. Hosted through the combined efforts of the Engineering Societies of West Central Florida, this event unites professionals from across Tampa and Florida's west coast to recognize achievement and promote the next generation of innovators.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2026

4:30 - 6:30 PM Networking & Exhibition

6:30 - 9:00 PM Dinner Program & Awards



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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Carissa Gudenkauf
E-Week chair, USF EAS and SWE
carissa@mvp-results.com

John "Jay" B. Rogers, Jr.
CEO & CO-FOUNDER

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- Display Table in Reception Area

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- Company logo displayed on signage at the event
- Receives up to 10 tickets to the awards banquet
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- Recognition and link to website on the TBEWB website. Information about company and special acknowledgement will be made on the website
- Display Table in Reception Area

GOLD LEVEL SPONSORSHIP \$1200

- Company logo displayed on signage at the event
- Receives up to 5 tickets to the awards banquet
- Has company logo displayed at Gold Sponsor level on event slideshow & program
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- Display Table in Reception Area, (if space available)

SILVER LEVEL SPONSORSHIP \$900

- Company logo displayed on signage at the event
- Receives up to 2 tickets to the awards banquet
- Has company logo displayed at Silver Sponsor level on event slideshow & program
- Recognition and link to website on the TBEWB website

BRONZE LEVEL SPONSORSHIP \$750

- Receives display table to present company products during the Pre-Dinner Social
- Recognition at the Bronze level in program and on the TBEWB website
- receives up to 1 ticket to the awards banquet

VENDOR LEVEL SPONSORSHIP \$500

- Receives display table to present company products during the Pre-Dinner Social.
- Recognition at Vendor level in program and on the TBEWB website

COMPANY SPONSOR TABLE \$1000

- Receives up to 10 tickets to the awards banquet

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FOR MORE INFORMATION
Carissa Gudenkauf
E-Week Chair, USFEAS and SWE
carissa@mvp-results.com

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IEEE FWCS
 PO Box 176
 Land O Lakes, FL 34639

NOTE:

All donations may be tax deductible.
 FIN #13-1656633



GE Vernova / ITI Instrument Transformer & Capacitor Facility

- Date:** Friday, April 17, 2026
Time: 9:00AM – 1:30PM (EST/EDT)
Speaker: Ryan Alkire – GE Vernova
Location: GE Vernova - ITI Clearwater Factory - 1925 Calumet St, Clearwater, FL 33765
Cost: \$20 Members/\$50 Non-Members/\$10 Student & Life Members
CEH Credits: Two (2) CEHs
RSVP: Online at: <https://events.vtools.ieee.org/m/521344>
 Seats are limited to 30 attendees
Questions: Kayla Allemang - Kallemand@ieee.org
 Regan Sink – Rsink@ieee.org
 Richard Beatie – R.beatie@ieee.org
 Hermann Amaya - hermann.amaya.us@ieee.org

The IEEE Florida West Coast Section Power & Energy Society/Industry Applications Society (PES/IAS), in partnership with GE Vernova / ITI, invites you to an exclusive tour of the Clearwater Instrument Transformer Facility. This facility is GE Vernova's primary manufacturing site for instrument transformers rated below 69 kV, producing over 500,000 dry-type transformers annually for utility and industrial applications. This event will feature two key components:

Classroom Session (2 hours):

Gain a deeper understanding of instrument transformers, including what sets them apart, their various types, applications, and how to interpret nameplate data. The session will also explore their role in the industry's future and include an introduction to capacitors.

Factory Tour (1.5 hours):

Experience a guided walk-through of the factory floor, observing key processes such as component production, core manufacturing, transformer winding, casting, and final testing. As a special addition, the tour will include a brief visit to the capacitor production area, located in the same facility.

A complimentary lunch will be provided following the tour.

Participants are required to wear safety shoes and safety glasses. The facility does have safety shoe covers available, but supplies are limited, please include during registration if you will need a shoe cover + shoe size. Hearing protection will be provided at the necessary locations. Additional information regarding parking and other instructions will be provided ahead of the event via email to those registered.

Ryan Alkire is a Senior Engineering Manager for GE Vernova. In this role, he manages a team of engineers whose key responsibilities are designing, maintaining existing designs, and supporting production for the instrument transformers manufactured in Clearwater. Prior to his current role, Ryan obtained his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from the University of South Florida and holds a Master of Science in Engineering Management from USF. Ryan has been an IEEE member for over 10 years.



IEEE Rural Electric Power Conference

Date: April 1-3, 2026 (Wednesday – Friday)

Location: Hilton Tampa Downtown - 211 North Tampa Street, Tampa, FL 33602, US

CEH Credits: Provided for select sessions

Registration: <https://ieeerepc.org/>

Cost: Rates increase on March 1st – Register today!

IEEE Student/IAS Student/Life Member \$375.00

Student (Non Member) \$425.00

IEEE/IAS Member \$850.00

Non Member \$970.00

Companion/Guest \$400.00

Questions: Brian Lassiter, Conference Chairperson - brian.lassiter@milsoft.com

Kayla Allemang - Kalleman@ieee.org,

Regan Sink – rjsink@ieee.org

Join Engineers, Utility Leaders, and Industry Experts to exchange practical insights and explore solutions that shape the future of rural electric power.

The conference offers peer-driven learning, meaningful connections, and real-world applications designed to strengthen reliability, resilience, and innovation across every system.

The **IEEE Rural Electric Power Conference (REPC)** advances reliable and innovative electric power solutions for rural and municipal systems across America. As a trusted forum for engineers, operators, manufacturers, and educators, REPC emphasizes practical applications, field-proven techniques, and peer learning that drive results in reliability, maintainability, and safety.

IEEE Computer Society at the University of South Florida

IEEE-CS at USF has conducted events and meetings in the Fall 2025 school semester with attendance of 1049+ people, all represented on vTools. Below are some highlights of the semester.



“Social Event” with 160+ attendees

The most attended event, besides the TechX Florida 2025 AI Conference, was the “Social Event”, where 160 of the club members came together to eat and hang out in a relaxed atmosphere in September. It was the first time that the club did a non-technical event and it even brought people from majors outside of engineering and computing.



“Internet of Things (IoT) workshop: become a Spy” with 120+ attendees

The second most attended event was the Internet of Things (IoT) workshop, where we gave away 120 IoT circuits to 120 attendees. Nadezhda Korostyleva, a biomedical engineering masters student from Russia, centered the workshop around what she called “being a spy.” Participants were split up in pairs and had to make circuits transmitting morse code to each other. The unique project building lasted for almost 3 hours with help from executive board members as “teaching assistants” with Nadia.



“General Body Meeting” with 101 attendees

Continued on Page 11

The third most attended event was the General Body Meeting, where around 101 people gathered to learn about IEEE-CS membership and semester events. The event featured free cat t-shirts with our cat mascot, Nybbles, and Kahoot quiz about IEEE for additional IEEE-branded prizes. The event included Andrew Seely, the Vice President of Geographic Activities and Membership of the IEEE-CS, who spoke about IEEE-CS membership, and Anne Ferrando-Klemet, the treasurer of the IEEE Florida West Coast Section, who spoke about the professional chapter activities.



“How to Draw Nybbles the Cat workshop” with 26 attendees

Other unique events during fall was TechX After Dark, which was a post-TechX Florida 2025 networking after-party free for IEEE-CS members (paid for non-members). Appetizers and cash bar drinks were available for attendees to snack and sip on while talking with fellow TechX conference attendees.

Another interesting event was the “How to Draw Nybbles the Cat workshop”, our second ever non-technical event where our former (recent graduate!) graphics chair, Amber Nguyen, demonstrated multiple ways to draw Nybbles and took sticker suggestions from attendees. These non-technical events were very successful in connecting club members through different, fun ways, so more will happen in the future. We also held technical events about “Git”, “Backend Development”, “Building Computers”, “Cloud Certifications”, and more.

Regarding our social media, our Instagram broke the 1092+ followers mark by gaining over 400 followers in the past semester. Our LinkedIn reached 626+ followers with 285 new followers just from the Fall semester. Our incoming marketing chair Cesar Calderon and marketing assistant Kimberly Bahena got invited to contribute to the IEEE Region 3 marketing team because of their great work marketing the student branch chapter.

We recruited 9 new executive board members over the Fall semester to support TechX, marketing, and technical events. They will continue with us going into Spring semester.

Speaking of other accomplishments, the student branch chapter at USF received “For Being a National Leader for Total Events and Hosting TechX Conference for 2 years” at the Annual IEEE FWCS Gala Banquet.

We want to thank our executive board members Anzhelika Kurnikova, Vama Shah, Elan Berezovskiy, Egor Kharitonov, Sofia Mitsuyuki, Caio Bahlis, Amber Nguyen, Doung (Eric) Mai, Bernardo Beligolli, Sara Perez-Soto, Kimberly Bahena, Cesar Calderon, Leonardo Henriques, Zarina Zatildayeva, Rodrigo Molero, Akmal Kurbanov, Boburjon Usmonov, Sebastian Pulgar, Nadia Korostyleva and our alum volunteer Liam Osman.

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STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Student Activities Chair: ron.ambrosio@ieee.org

University of South Florida Chairs

Student Branch - Joshua Basso, bassoj@usf.edu
 CS - Anzhelika Kurnikova, akurnikova@usf.edu
 EDS - Luis Quevedo, lquevedo@ieee.org
 MTT - Fineus Reilly, freilly@usf.edu
 PES - Suhib Abu Romanah sa18@usf.edu
 HKN - Roberto Montero, roberto.montero@ieee.org

Florida Polytechnic University Chairs

Student Branch - Colby Bradford,
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 CS - Cyler Gabel, cgabel3645@floridapoly.edu
 PES - Will Carroll, wcarroll14993@floridapoly.edu
 RAS - Sahil Talwalkar, tsahil@outlook.com
 HKN - Jacob Brescia, jbrescia4902@floridapoly.edu

USF STUDENT BRANCH ADVISORS:

Dr. Andrew Hoff, Co-Advisor, hoff@usf.edu

Dr. Chung Seop Jeong, Co-Advisor, jeong@usf.edu

Colby Bradford

Here at IEEE Florida Poly we are starting the Spring 2026 semester off strong getting ready for the IEEE Region 3 SoutheastCon!

HKN- IEEE HKN Mu Omega has completed 2 highway cleanups this semester, with a total of 200 lbs of trash collected off of State Road 33. IEEE HKN Mu Omega hosted a Professional Engineering Speaker Event at Florida Polytechnic University on Thursday 11/13. A professional electrical engineer from TEAMWORKnet spoke 40 of our students about transitioning from college to the workforce & gave some insights into his experiences. We will be hosting another speaker event in Spring 2026. IEEE HKN Mu Omega will be hosting our yearly Induction Ceremony early Spring 2026, along with Fundamental Engineering Exam Study Prep Sessions.

-Jacob Brescia, IEEE FL Poly HKN Chair

host projects using transformer monitors and discussing which projects would take place. Along with this, PES will host a general body meeting to help with student outreach, going over the various things students can expect from us this semester. Things such as soldering workshops and substation tours will occur in the following months.

-Will Carroll, IEEE FL Poly PES Chair

R.A.S- The month of December has been a quiet one. There hasn't been too many plans as finals and winter break is right around the corner. But we did end the year off strong by finishing the robot design for Southeast conference and attending a strawberry farm tour by CROO Robotics. Upcoming plans for January include finishing the electrical and software side of the robot for Southeast conference and planning events to stay tuned for after March!

-Sahil Talwalker, IEEE FL Poly RAS Chair

P.E.S.- This month, PES is hosting it's circuit competition in order to get a team ready for SouthEast Con! at the moment, no team has been named. More talk has been put into the ICS equipment for PES to

Continued on Page 13

Student Activities - Cont'd from Page 13

C.S.- We are hosting an event to promote and explain the upcoming SoutheastCon software competition. We will be covering the necessary skills and topics required for the competition. This meeting will include us reviewing the basics of micro-controllers and embedded Linux like Raspberry Pi. We will also cover the basics of embedded machine learning and prediction methods. Escape room building meeting whenever we get the supplies We are designing and assembling our IEEE technical escape room! Through iterative design and circuitry analysis, we created a standalone escape room for future events. We are executing our plan to construct the escape room giving our members hands on PCB design, soldering, and embedded systems programming experience.

-Cylar Gabel, IEEE FL Poly CS Chair

Watch out Southeast Con, IEEE FL Poly is coming in hot this year!

We are excited to prepare for the competitions, and we will be hosting lots of skills training for our members this semester, so even those who don't compete will be getting ahead! Look out in the next articles for updates on our Engineering and Science Student Research Symposium, as planning is underway for our second annual student-led conference!

Year 2026 - Florida West Coast Section - Upcoming Events Summary

A*

Date / Time	Organization Contact	Description email / Registration / Website / Venue	
Sat. Jan. 17, 2026	FWCS - STEM	STEM Explorer Fest	P
10:00 am - 2:00 pm	Sean Denny	venner20@ieee.org	
		https://r3.ieee.org/fwc/event/stem-explorer-fest-2026/	
Wed. Feb. 4, 2026 to	IEEE CS at USF	Campus Tabling	P
Wed. Mar. 4, 2026		https://events.vtools.ieee.org/m/531594	
		USF Marshall Student Center	
Tue. Feb. 26, 2026	Tampa Bay Engineers Week Banquet	Celebration of STEM in our Community	P
10:00 am - 2:00 pm	Carissa Gudenkauf	carissa@mvp-results.com	
		http://www.tbewb.com/	
<i>*Attendance: V: Virtual --- P: In Person --- V & P: Virtual and In Person</i>			

Florida West Coast Section - SunCoast SIGNAL Advertising Rates

Contact: Michael Mayor michael.mayor@ieee.org

Size	1 Month		6 Months		12 Months	
	Member	Non-Member	Member	Non-Member	Member	Non-Member
1/4 Page	\$50	\$75	\$250	\$450	\$350	\$450
1/2 Page	\$75	\$100	\$350	\$550	\$650	\$750
3/4 Page	\$125	\$150	\$550	\$750	\$950	\$1,250
Full Page	\$150	\$200	\$750	\$950	\$1,250	\$1,450



IEEE Florida West Coast Section (FWCS)

**IEEE FWCS
P. O. Box 65
Bradenton,
FL 34206-0065**

February 2026 - Calendar of Events (For more information see "Inside the SunCoast Signal" → Page 1)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		*FWCS ExCom →Page 1	*USF Campus Tabling - Begin →Page 15			
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	*Signal Inputs Due End of Day					
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
				*TBEWB →Page 15		

THE SUNCOAST SIGNAL, is **ELECTRONICALLY** distributed monthly to all active members of the Florida West Coast Section (FWCS) of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. (IEEE). The opinions expressed, as well as the technical accuracy of authors, advertisers or speakers published in this newsletter are those of the individual authors, advertisers, and speakers. Therefore, no endorsement by the IEEE, its officers, or its members is made or implied.

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Contact: michael.mayor@ieee.org