



News from the Florida Association of County Engineers & Road Superintendents

2019 Fall Meeting Overview Broward County



FACERS members mix and mingle in between presentations during breaks.



It was a packed room for the 2019 FACERS Fall Meeting!



So much to learn! Attendees pay close attention to the presentations.



FACERS President, Brian Singleton (Alachua), Anh Ton (Broward County), and Stephen Lander (The Kercher Group) smile for the camera.



Want to see more? All photos from the FACERS Fall Meeting have been uploaded to the FACERS Facebook Page (@facers.net) and the [FAC Member Portal](#).

Fall Meeting Sponsors

Thank you to our 2019 Fall Meeting Sponsors!

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Fall Meeting Presentations

Presentations from the Fall Meeting Online!

Want a copy of the presentations from the 2019 FACERS Fall Meeting? To find the presentations, visit the [FACERS website](#), navigate to the Events tab and the subsection titled "[Fall Meeting](#)." Presentations are posted on the bottom of that page.

Transportation Related Legislation Filed for 2020 Session

FACERS continues to recommend legislation to index the local gas tax to the Consumer Price Index to reduce the loss of buying power caused by inflation. This method was adopted by the Florida Legislature for State gas taxes and the State share of gas tax collections is automatically adjusted annually.

For the rest of the bills discussed at the November meeting, click [here](#).

President's Message

Brian Singleton

Greetings on behalf of the FACERS Board!

I hope that everyone enjoyed the Fall meeting last month in Fort Lauderdale; I took away a wealth of new information and I am excited about trying the 'rock burrito.' I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone that made the conference a success.



Special thanks to: Vice President, Tracy Straub, for putting a diverse, informative meeting agenda together; Sustaining Member Director, Amy Blaida, for coordinating the sponsors & arranging the FACERS Social at another awesome venue; all of our Gold, Silver and Bronze Sponsors who enable us to meet, network and share information in a relaxing setting; and to Jennifer Laxner and Milan Clayton with FAC who are always behind the scenes enabling our organization to run smoothly.

Please mark your calendars for our summer conference which is scheduled for June 9 - 12, 2020 at the Hyatt Regency in Orlando. If you have any topic ideas, would like to give a presentation, or if there is any information you would like to hear about, please contact Tracy Straub at tracy.straub@marioncountyfl.org.

Check out our website at facers.net and review our awards page; we have several categories and would like to recognize exceptional engineers, public works employees or projects during the summer conference. Please submit any nominations you may have.

I hope everyone is taking some time off for their busy work schedule to enjoy time with family, friends and loved ones for the holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

Sincerely,

Brian

Member Spotlight

Clinton "Gator" Howerton Jr.

Professional Bio

My family has been in Sebring/Highlands County since the 1930's, hence this is where I grew up and began my

career. I worked several jobs through high school running equipment, sod business, and window cleaning. In 1994, I began working for Polston Engineering Inc. in Sebring. I graduated South Florida Community College then attended the University of Florida from 1996-2000, earning a Bachelors of Science in Civil Engineering in '98 and Masters in Civil Engineering in '99/'00.

I returned to full time employment with Polston Engineering in Jan 2000 where I was responsible for several types of projects and clients. My experience included utility system design and operation, hydrology studies, site design, water use permitting, and roadway design to name a few. In 2016, I was hired as a County Engineer for Highlands County BOCC where I am currently.



Personal Info

I am married and have two boys, ages 14 and 11. We live in Avon Park on 50 acres where we raise cattle and enjoy being outside in our free time.

What's playing on your iPod? These days, mostly Pandora. On there is a range of Charlie Daniels, Alabama, Waylon Jennings, David Allan Coe, and many others from Hank Jr to Lynyrd Skynyrd.

What's the last book you read? The Bible mostly, but others include re-reads of "American Sniper" and "A Land Remembered."

What's your favorite thing to do on the weekends? Long list here, starting with spending time with family, of course, but also includes hunting coyotes or hogs at night with thermal/night vision, maintain our ranch/cows, wood working projects, mechanical projects, and working on the hunting buggy.

What's your favorite part of FACERS? I have really appreciated the ability to learn from others who have similar experiences and who have the same responsibilities and concerns. The connections and friendships gained through FACERS are wonderful and truly are a great resource!

Project Spotlight

The Sebring Parkway Phase III

The Sebring Parkway Phase III, now known as The Panther Parkway project is a 4.3 mile 4-lane roadway project which runs between Sebring and Avon Park in Highlands County.

The project started with ROW acquisition around 2000 and was funded many years later as a joint Highlands County/FDOT CIGP project to construct 2 lanes. The project was let out as a design-build project in 2013 with construction slated for 2015. In 2017, with the project stalled due to cost overruns due to the design, the project seemed doomed to be shelved.

In a last-ditch effort, county staff worked together with a second consultant and was able to come up with a design that could be constructed near budget. Concerns were still expressed with respect to constructing 4 miles of a 2-lane roadway with limited passing opportunities. The Highlands Engineering Department suggested a few more changes that would cost slightly more but were much more economical in consideration of scale of construction. In February 2018, the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners were faced with 2 options, shelf the project and repay \$1.7 M in expenditures to FDOT, or proceed with an \$12 M project to construct 4 lanes and 2 roundabouts. The Board voted to move forward with the project and construction started the next day using county forces and equipment.

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Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for? (Audience) Why should they care? (Benefit) What do I want them to do here? (Call-to-Action)

Create a great offer by adding words like "free" "personalized" "complimentary" or "customized." A sense of urgency often helps readers take an action, so think about inserting phrases like "for a limited time only" or "only 7 remaining!"

Equipment and operators were pieced together from several departments including the Road and Bridge Department, Solid Waste Department, Traffic Operations Department, Parks and Rec Dept, and Engineering Department to work as much as 6 days per week. Twenty-one months later, on December 7, 2019, the project was fully opened to the public with all four lanes and 2 new reconstructed roundabout intersections. The project is not finalized yet, but at the time of this writing, the project is tracking to be on or slightly below budget.



Figure 2 AFTER - Sebring Parkway Phase III after opening 2019. Same area of previous photo

U.S. Department of Transportation Funding Opportunity

We are pleased to announce that the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) released a Safety Data Initiative Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) titled [Conducting Innovative, Applied Research to Gain New Roadway Safety Insights and Tools, Phase I](#).

The BAA seeks to understand how new data sources or data sources that USDOT currently does not have access to can be used to answer the most pressing and persistent surface transportation safety problems. USDOT is interested in approaches that use new data sources and/or data unavailable to the USDOT to gain novel, useable, and actionable insights to improve safety outcomes.

For more information about the BAA, please visit the [Safety Data Initiative webpages](#), including a [pre-solicitation webinar](#) and [slides](#) from that presentation.

Engineers 2020 Annual Meeting

[Registration is now open!](#)



Join Us Next Year
for NACE 2020

**NACE
2020**
ALABAMA

**Baldwin County,
Alabama
April 19-23**

**THE LARGEST
EVENT OF COUNTY
INFRASTRUCTURE
PROFESSIONALS**

Hosted By

 **Voice of County
Road Officials**
www.countyengineers.org



The poster features a rustic wood-grain background. On the left, a blue shield-shaped sign with yellow text reads 'NACE 2020 ALABAMA'. Below it, yellow text says 'Baldwin County, Alabama April 19-23'. On the right, large bold text says 'THE LARGEST EVENT OF COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE PROFESSIONALS'. Below this is a photograph of a road winding through a wooded area, flanked by a large orange starfish on the left and a large white and orange striped seashell on the right. At the bottom, logos for the National Association of County Engineers (NACE) and the Alabama County Engineers Association (ACEA) are shown, along with the text 'Hosted By Voice of County Road Officials' and the website 'www.countyengineers.org'.