



YP Connections

Volume 10 Issue 1: January - April 2016

NATIONAL WEF SYPC HIGHLIGHTS

SPRINGBOARD TO MIDYEAR AND BEYOND

Submitted By: Bruce L. Cooley - Indianapolis, IN

In late January, water professionals from around the world traveled to Coral Gables, Florida, for the 2016 WEF Midyear Meeting with the purpose of developing the 2016 WEFTEC® program. WEF's SYPC selected water professionals to attend the Midyear Meeting as part of the Springboard Program, a WEF-sponsored program with the stated goal of increasing young professional opportunities for active involvement in WEF Committees.

Being selected as a participant in the Springboard Program was an absolute delight. Not only were we afforded the opportunity to meet outstanding peers that co-participated in the program, we were offered front-row seats to the interworkings of WEF committees. Initially, our group was somewhat unclear of our place at Midyear; we were unsure what we could offer to committees whose members have written books on various topics within the industry. However, as Midyear progressed, committee members quickly dispelled misgivings and were elated to have us involved. In fact, many Springboard participants were asked to give impromptu



2016 WEF Springboard Participants: (L to R) Back: Matthew Scarborough, Kristen Buell, Tiffany Chai, Mel Butcher; Middle: Bruce Cooley, Michelle Hatcher, Annie Blissit, Xuan (Katie) Zheng; Front: Paul Bowen (WEF President), Alvin Pilobello, Andrew Dow, Jennifer Walsh, Kristen Andre, Pono Hanson. (Azam Hossain not pictured)

presentations about themselves or a topic mentioned during committee discussion; to serve as co-moderators at WEFTEC technical presentations; or to be involved in a multitude of opportunities within the committee. That latter point is perhaps the most important take away from Midyear the need and opportunity for young professionals to offer their talents towards the betterment of the water environment.

Members in committee after committee discussed the need for assistance in executing the work that makes meeting our organization's mission possible.

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SPRINGBOARD TO MIDYEAR AND BEYOND (CONT.)

These needs were not just concepts; rather, they were actionable items that can be executed by professionals who are willing to offer their talents toward such work.

With this in mind, the 2016 Springboard participants challenge you to determine which committee you would like to be involved with in WEF. Once you've made the selection, reach out to the committee chair person. Perhaps those actionable opportunities mentioned at Midyear are just what you need to take your career to the next level.

Please feel free to reach out to the Springboard participants noted above via WEF.COM with whatever questions you may have about the Springboard Program and volunteering opportunities within WEF.

YP SUMMIT: THE BRILLIANCE OF UNITY

Submitted By: Ben Anderson - Cassopolis, MI

The warm, sunny weather in San Diego at this year's AWWA/WEF Young Professional (YP) Summit and Chair Training was an enlightening experience where the spirit of unity among the water industry's youth shined. The importance of unity and the direction we need to go was made abundantly clear by the value of information from the presenters. The water industries leading luminaries like David LaFrance, CEO of AWWA; Paul Bowen President of WEF, and Gene Koontz President of AWWA, chose to take time from their busy schedules to present important information to the Young Professionals attending the conference. After their presentations were delivered, they stayed and got to know as many of the YP's as they could, even taking pictures and having meaningful conversations with us. We were encouraged to perfect our "elevator speech," which is the ability to quickly tell a stranger who we are, what we do, and why we do it. As I networked with other Young Professionals I found many similarities that united us and left me with the impression that the reason we work in the water industry is not only our strongest bond, but it can elevate each of us to leadership roles in our career in the water industry.

AWWA President Gene Koontz welcomed us to San Diego at the AWWA YP Chair Training by discussing how his 34 years of experience as an active member of AWWA lifted him to a leadership role in the Association and how those experiences; combined with hard work made him better in his career. The most important point made by Gene was to stay involved with our associations by bringing together fresh ideas that will give each of us the potential to brighten the future of our success in our own careers. His encouraging words assured us that as our way is shown to us in our personal growth, our colleagues will be by our side helping to light the path. The



One of Many Speakers at the 2016 YP Summit



2016 YP Summit - San Diego, CA

structure of how the AWWA standards work was highlighted by Meredith Quinn, AWWA YP Committee Chair, who then introduced David Wilkes, AWWA Standards Council Chair from the Georgia section. David described his move from one side of the continental US to the other, and how his love of volunteering for the Association kept him involved while his career moved him one from place to the other.

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YP SUMMIT: THE BRILLIANCE OF UNITY (CONT.)

David's presentation coupled with Genes' comments, made it clear that standing shoulder to shoulder with our water industry colleagues while ascending towards a united future, where the world's brightest minds solve the world's problems is the most important industry standard to which we must adhere.

Furthering the idea of unity were YP leaders like Tyler Tedcastle, YP Committee Member from the Florida section and Ashley Lessig from the Rocky Mountain section, who spoke about ways to "flush YP's out of the woodwork" during breakout sessions where we worked as groups. These sessions led to brilliant idea exchanges about events that other sections use to get YP's involved that we can carry back to our respective sections for implementation.

Rounding out the YP Section Chair Training was David LaFrance, AWWA CEO who spoke about the tragic events of Flint, MI where high lead concentrations were found in municipal water due to corroding pipes. His tone was one of perseverance where in the midst of this dark hour we become the ray of light that people look to for answers. "Every challenge is an opportunity." He remarked as he urged us to share our passions for providing safe drinking water. In doing so, we will find that we are not alone in our effort and when events like what happened in Flint occur; our reaction to those problems is our golden moment when our passions are on full display for the world. As we lead the way toward solutions for problems that arise, we can help create a better world through better water.

On the day of the Summit, the message of uniting the world of water was brought full circle in presentations given by Jim Herberg, General Manager, Orange County Sanitation District and Michael Markus, General Manager, Orange County Water District. In their presentation: Cost Effectiveness through Collaboration, they talked about how Southern California's Water and Wastewater agencies formed a one-water partnership that ultimately led to billions of dollars in capital improvements for their district. This alliance teaches us that joining forces will allow us to thrive in the water industry now and in the future.

In his presentation titled: Challenges of Advancing Potable Reuse, Lessons Learned in Pure Water San Diego, Jim Helminski, Assistant Director of Public Utilities, City of San Diego, described the challenges of communicating to the public that there is only one water and how using resource water is safe. The idea of uniting the world of water doesn't end with the people in the water industry because it is not only for our benefit. Our purpose is to efficiently provide safe drinking water to all people so they can trust that the water is being made safe by people who are competent and diligent. We must reach out to the public in an honest way to deliver a persistent, consistent message that does not come from an outside source, but directly from the workers doing the job.

As the California sun set on the 2016 YP Summit event, Rocky Craley and Alvin Pilobello, both serving as AWWA/WEF YP Summit Team Co-Chairs closing remarks reminded us that as we ride the elevator to the sunlight of our success in the water industry, we will need to use our collective experience and knowledge to be the shining examples of what the water industry has to offer. By not being afraid to be who we are, and letting our little lights shine, we prove to people how important providing safe water is and when we unite our little lights the radiance of the brilliant blaze created cascades over the rest of the world.



Young Professionals Come Together at the 2016 YP Summit

LOCAL SYPC CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEA ACTIVITIES

Submitted By: Ashley Lessig - Denver, CO

The Rocky Mountain Section of WEF has many new and exciting events on the books for 2016! When we plan our events, we strive to create an atmosphere where YP's from all facets of the water industry can make connections and expand their network, while at the same time having fun and learning something new. Here are some of the ways we've accomplished this goal so far in 2016.



RMWEA Joint Governing Board Trivia Night

Joint Governing Board Networking Night

From engineering knowledge to pop culture, Young professionals and members of the Joint Governing Board gathered to test their trivia knowledge at the first annual Trivia Networking Event. We gathered at Mccloughlin's Bar in Denver, CO where YP Jamie Langer MC'd the event. She tested attendees on questions from pumps to what RMWEA stands for to what is the name for a group of elk. Most importantly, the random assembly of teams and trivia questions promoted mingling and networking with the young professionals, new members, and Joint Governing Board attendees. The event was successful in that it was inviting for new

members and allowed young professionals to get acquainted with the joint governing board and how to become more involved with various committees. We hope to Second Annual Trivia Networking Event in 2017.

2016 Denver Science Fair

Middle and High School Students from all across Colorado came to present their science projects at the 2016 Denver Science Fair. The Young Professionals volunteered to judge the event being tasked to honor students with the RMWEA/RMSAWWA awards. The young professionals awarded 8th graders, Annie Oberlies and Paige Miles with the RMSAWWA/RMWEA Association Certificate of Excellence for their project, "Turning water into... more water", and their investigation on drought and water supply for the region. Also awarded the RMSAWWA/RMWEA Certificate of Excellence was 8th grader Arnav Joshi and his research on developing a biofilter to remove dissolved organic carbon for the prevention of disinfection byproducts. There were countless impressive water based projects which is an exciting trend for the future water profession.

Denver Aquarium Tour

Forget the fish, ever wonder how the Aquarium handles all that water? The YP's discovered the answer to that question and many more during a behind the scenes tour of the Denver Aquarium. We got up close and personal with biofiltration, so much salt, and more than a few under the sea creatures. We had attendees come all the way from Fort Collins and Colorado Springs to attend this special tour. After, YP's were able to mix and mingle at the Aquarium's Dive Lounge and catch up on what's happening in the industry across the state.

There are many more fun events and opportunities like these coming up in 2016! If you're interested in learning more about the Rocky Mountain Section, email Ashley.Lessig@hdrinc.com.



Young Professionals at Denver Aquarium

NYWEA METROPOLITAN CHAPTER YP COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Submitted By: Tara Saber-Khiabani - New York, NY

The NYWEA Metropolitan Chapter YP Committee started off 2016 with a great turn out at the statewide Annual Meeting in New York City, including over 200 people at the YP reception.

A committee goal is to strengthen the connection between YPs and local student chapters. Several YPs attended University Night at the City College of New York in early March to network with students and hear them present their research. At the event, students filled out surveys on how they want to connect with NYWEA YPs: plans are in the works for future YP/student events.



Curb Your Litter: Greenpoint, April 2016



Engineering Expo, April 2016

The winter social event was held in February at Barcade. Over 30 people came out to network, play vintage arcade games, and have a good time.

In April, to help keep our city clean and celebrate Earth Day, the Met Chapter YPs partnered with the volunteer organization Curb Your Litter: Greenpoint to clean up trash in Brooklyn. 600 lbs of trash were removed from the neighborhood's streets. Besides improving the local environment, the data from the litter audit afterwards will be used to prioritize locations in need of trashcans.

In April, Met Chapter YPs also represented NYWEA at the annual Lower Hudson Valley Engineering Expo, which is geared to engage students of all ages who are interested in the engineering field. Our YPs spoke to dozens of interested students about educational and career opportunities in water/environment as well as shared the mission of NYWEA.

Upcoming spring and summer events include a YP technical session, mini-golf charity event, and the popular annual summer social.

AWWA-NWEA SYPC SPRING FOOTBALL TAILGATE

Submitted By: Andrew Synhorst, PE - Omaha, NE

On April 16th, the AWWA and NWEA Young Professional Committees, along with corporate sponsors JEO Consulting Group, JCI Industries Inc., Engineered Equipment Solutions, and WinWater hosted a tailgate at the Husker Spring Game. Members of AWWA and NWEA, and their families, friends, and coworkers were invited to join in a pregame meal of brats, hot dogs, snacks, and of course, adult beverages. The event was held in the parking lot of Haymarket Park Baseball Stadium and was attended by approximately forty happy Husker fans. The event provided an excellent opportunity to network with professionals from all facets of our industry in a setting outside the workplace.

Thank you to everyone that was instrumental in planning, execution, and teardown of the event. A special note of appreciation is due to Lincoln WinWater who provided the tailgate trailer with all the essentials. The YP Committees look forward to seeing everyone and their families at next year's 2nd Annual Spring Tailgate.



AWWA-NWEA YP Spring Football Tailgate

FLORIDA WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION SYPC

Submitted By: Tyler Smith - FL

The Florida Water Environment Association (FWEA) SYPC hosted the 20th Annual Student Design Competition (SDC) on April 24th, 2016 at the Florida Water Resources Conference in Orlando, FL. The competition is intended to promote "real world" design experience for students interested in pursuing a career in water/wastewater engineering and sciences.



1st Place Wastewater Competition - USF

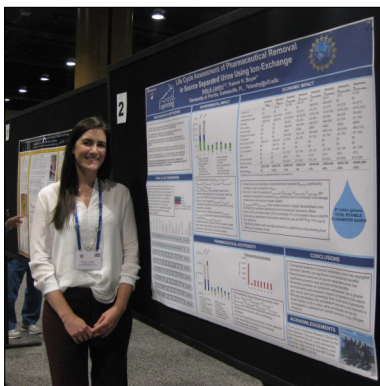
City Water Reclamation Facility to Handle Increased Septage Loads Due to the Ban from FL SB 550," with team members Monica Resto, Dillon Forsyth, Wainella Isaacs, Madeline Kender, Jonathan Knudsen, Vittoria Zucchini.

1st Place Environmental Competition: University of South Florida, for their design, "Supplementary Sludge Management Process for City of Plant City Water Reclamation Facility," with team members Rebecca Braz, Kyrstin Kadonsky, Christin Gentz, Maria Reed, Poe Poe Min Hlaing.

In addition to the SDC, 11 participants competed in a poster competition for 1st and 2nd prizes of \$300 and \$200, respectively. Congratulations to 1st Place Winner, Kelly Landry, from the University of Florida for her poster on "Environmental and Economic Assessment of Urine Source Separation and Pharmaceutical Removal by Ion-Exchange" and 2nd Place Winner, Kevin Orner, from the University of South Florida for his poster on "Nutrient Removal and Energy Recovery from Digester Effluent Using a Microbial Fuel Cell".



1st Place Environmental Competition - USF



1st Place Poster Competition - Kelly Landry (University of Florida)

The SYPC would like to recognize the students, faculty advisors, professional mentors, and SDC planning committee and volunteers (Danielle Bertini, Tim Ware, George Dick, Samantha Hanzel, Weizhi Cheng, Kristen Andre, Tyler Smith, Lauren Davis, Kristiana Dragash, David Hernandez, Yanni Polematidis, and Holly Hansen) for all their hard work and dedication. A special thank you to the judges, who read and reviewed design reports and judged presentations.

We would also like to thank our Utility, Silver and Gold sponsors including: City of Tallahassee, St. Johns County, City of Tavares, Stantec, Arcadis, Moss Kelly, JEA, Jacobs, GHD, and the Florida Water Resources Conference.

For more information about the FWEA SYPC, please contact Tyler Smith (tsmith@carollo.com) or visit our website at http://www.fwea.org/students_young_professionals.php.

SOUTH TEXAS AWWA/WEAT FALL FORUM

Submitted By: Kendall NeSmith, PE - San Antonio, TX

The South Texas AWWA/WEAT Fall Forum at the San Antonio River Authority offered more than 20 young professionals an opportunity to question and interact with influential leaders from San Antonio's Engineering and Development Community. The Forum's panel consisted of: Big Red Dog Engineering's Vice President – Russel Yeager, Hemisfair Park Area Redevelopment Corporation's (HPARC) Director of Operations, Planning & Development – Omar Gonzalez, City of San Antonio's Sustainability Planning Manager – Eloisa Portillo-Morales, and Integrity RSM's Stephanie Bocanegra Suarez (former San Antonio Water System (SAWS) Chief of Staff).

AWWA/WEAT YP Representative Adam Conner moderated the event, kicking it off with a brief introduction of each panelist and a background of the AWWA/WEAT Young Professionals group. The Forum focused on rapid growth and development in and around San Antonio, specifically related to how YPs can be part of shaping the future of South Texas. The YPs asked a broad spectrum of questions, allowing panelists to provide valuable feedback on how to get involved.

Omar Gonzalez explained his involvement in the redevelopment of Hemisfair Park as well as how to assist with the growing needs of San Antonio. When asked how San Antonio got the nickname "City on the Rise", Mr. Gonzalez touched on the redevelopment of Hemisfair Park, expansion of Toyota Field, the Missions becoming a World Heritage Site, and other key events. As for ways to shape the future, Mr. Gonzalez championed getting involved in organizations and local government.

Eloisa Portillo-Morales, described how she charted her path from the City of El Paso to San Antonio and what she learned throughout her journey. She admitted that water is not her area of expertise but added great value to the panel with points on sustainable development and downtown revitalization through multi-family living and mixed-use development. Echoing Mr. Gonzalez, she pointed out that what we do now plays a very important role in what occurs later. She described how early involvement with local government in El Paso led to her involvement in many decisions that shaped that City.

Russel Yeager, a Professional Engineer focused on Land Development and Water, also took the opportunity to discuss downtown revitalization. He spoke first-hand of the benefits of projects he has worked on or is involved in that are adding mixed-use development to the downtown area. When asked about public-private partnership (P3) projects and if we should expect to see more or them, Mr. Yeager discussed Hemisfair Park and other P3 projects requiring the City to reach out to private development for the "Decade of Downtown" initiative.

As former Chief of Staff for SAWS, Stephanie Bocanegra Suarez saw the importance of infrastructure in providing opportunities for development. Understanding that SAWS must play a huge role in development and redevelopment, she spoke to the importance of a close relationship between the City and SAWS as well as making sure that infrastructure is available where growth is occurring. She explained her professional growth during her time at SAWS and how her knowledge came from working directly with their Engineers to solve problems getting water to developments and providing reliable water sources for future growth.

The four panelists provided great insight for our South Texas AWWA/WEAT YPs. The Fall Forum occurs every year in mid-to-late October, providing YPs from South Texas an opportunity to network and learn about the



South Texas AWWA/WEAT Fall Forum

industry. For more information on the South Texas AWWA/WEAT SYPC, please contact Kendall NeSmith at ken-dall.nesmith@kimley-horn.com or Josh Milks at jmilks@cpyi.com.

YP SPOTLIGHT

SYPC CHAIR - MICHELLE HATCHER

On top of her role as our SYPC chair, Michelle Hatcher is Assistant Director for the City of Franklin Water Management Department. The City of Franklin is located approximately 20 miles south of Nashville and has a population of about 70,000 people. Her journey with WEF began in 2003 when she participated as a college student in the Student Design Competition. Since then she has become an integral part of the WEF Community, now actively participating in two committees: SYPC and Plant Operations & Maintenance Committee (POMC). Michelle was happy to share a few thoughts and experiences from her journey, providing valuable insight for new or veteran YPs looking to get involved and grow with WEF and the water community.



Michelle Hard at Work

What is your motivation to belong to other committees within WEF?

I love that the wastewater treatment process is a natural process, and what we do helps the bugs work a little faster. I like the POMC because it's a technical committee that gets into the nitty gritty of how a plant operates and how to make things better, either through improving efficiency or innovative processes, with real-language that can be interpreted and used by operators in their job. For me, it was a committee where I felt welcomed to jump in and learn, not having years of experience but having a passion to learn and bring back to the utility I work for.

What is your funniest experience in working with water?

As a younger engineer I performed a visual stream assessment consisting of canoeing down a river and taking qualitative measurements of the stream. It was hot and hard, long work days, but I got to canoe outside and get paid for it...What beats that?

What is the one misconception you think students today have about the water industry?

That once you graduate engineering school you have to go into a consulting job. I have learned so much practical knowledge working for a utility about how our service division works to get projects done and the operations of our WWTP. One of the things I love most about my job is that when a problem arises, the solutions that are considered come from a variety of diverse backgrounds, education levels, and experiences. It's such a true learning environment when folks who have been doing sewer repair for 20 years feel they can contribute the same as the engineers in our office, who contribute the same as management, who contribute the same as our service repair workers - it's a forum for learning from each other and creating a great team.

Have you presented any papers at a WEF event? How did you decide what to submit?

I've presented a paper at WEFTEC and also participated in several workshops. All of the presentations have been projects I've worked on in both my consulting career and work at a utility. I think presenting on a topic you are very familiar with eases some of the anticipation about presenting. When I know something inside and out I feel more confident presenting and answering questions, but it's also okay to say when you don't know the answer (I've done that several times). It's far better than someone in the audience knowing you're making stuff up!

(Continued on next page...)

SYPC CHAIR - MICHELLE HATCHER (CONT.)

Did you experience any roadblocks or obstacles in trying to serve on other committees?

I joined a couple technical committees early on that were intimidating for a YP to get involved in until I finally settled into membership with the POMC. It's hard to convey to new YPs that the best way to get involved is to jump in, to volunteer to serve as a co-author or workshop moderator or other volunteer position when they sound so intimidating and folks with years of experience volunteer for those opportunities. The one thing I have learned is that most of the seasoned professionals will give guidance to a YP if asked, all you have to do is ask!

What has helped you become more involved WEF committees beyond the SYPC?

The SYPC has been a great start toward building the confidence I needed to step into other technical committees. I volunteered for several subcommittee chair roles in the SYPC before becoming chair which helped to increase my confidence in leadership qualities, organization, team building, and a host of other traits. Those qualities help in other committees when I work within a team that is spread across the country, or I'm working on a workshop and need to identify a technical person who could contribute, or working with others in our own committee who have diverse backgrounds on special projects. WEF is such a great environment to learn in; most folks who are active members in WEF want to learn and help others to learn.

How has WEF helped you grow/advance in your career?

The SYPC liaison Dianne Crilley has been a great mentor since my beginnings in the SYPC. I remember my first SYPC call as a professional and the committee was looking for a new Student Design Competition subcommittee chair, and I listened but didn't say anything on the call. Afterwards I called Dianne and talked to her personally, asking her what the "job" requirements entailed, and she guided me through the process and my first year's as the subcommittee chair. She has a gift of mentoring each one of us, of finding out what we're interested in and how we can grow, and then helping to make that happen. She's been great at building confidence also, and even though she's recently been promoted and we have a new liaison, I'm equally as excited to work with her as she helps our committee grow through mentoring of our members.



YP CONNECTIONS — IT'S TIME FOR A MAKEOVER!



We're upgrading to a web-based newsletter, making it easier to share local SYPC Activities and connect with other chapters. Starting next edition, you will be emailed a link to the latest YP Connections. That means no more scrolling through a clunky pdf...the content YOU want to read is just a click away!

Some of the cool new features:

- Links to each article, so you can quickly view what interests you most
- Access to archived newsletters
- Opportunity to be published in multiple WEF publications
- Direct links to information on upcoming events and Webcasts



YP CONNECTIONS

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The SYPC has several subcommittees that are always looking for help and new ideas. If interested please contact the Chair.

YP Summit Subcommittee

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WEFTEC Career Fair

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Tyler Smith - Corollo
Kendall NeSmith, PE - Kimley-Horn
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WEF WEBCASTS:

Webcasts offered through WEF are a **GREAT** way to learn about a topic and earn Professional Development Hours (PDHs). All past and future webcasts are offered at **no cost!!** Check out these webcasts at:

www.wef.org/webcasts/

Sponsor eShowcase: CheckMate Inline Check Valve for CSO — 2016-07-27

Coliphages: What You Need To Know and How Will Laboratories, The Regulatory Community
And The Public Be Impacted? — 2016-08-03

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For more about Student & Young Professional activities taking place at WEFTEC 2016, contact Caroline Pakenham, WEF Staff Liaison: cpakenham@wef.org



Visit www.weftec.org/syp for more program information.

SPEND THE WEEKEND AT WEFTEC

Highlights include:

Friday, September 23

- Water Palooza, event designed to increase public awareness about water related subjects

Saturday, September 24

- WEF Annual Community Service Project: New Orleans City Hall - building bioswales and bioretention cells
- Jammin' 4 Water*, an open-mic amateur performance benefitting water charities

Sunday, September 25

- Student Design Competition

Monday, September 26

- WEF Students & Young Professionals Committee Meeting
- Students & Young Professionals Networking & Career Fair
- Black & Veatch Student Appreciation Night
- Water for People Bash*
- WEF Young Professionals Reception

*Note: These events require an entry fee.

DON'T FORGET TO STOP BY THE UNIVERSITY STUDENT LOUNGE!

September 25 – 27
9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Complimentary light lunch and refreshments are provided Sunday and Monday
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Bring business cards and resumes.



Special Student Housing Block Available at La Quinta Inn & Suites Downtown! Visit www.weftec.org/syp for more details.

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