

FLORIDIANS FOR BETTER TRANSPORTATION

Summer Camp Speakers



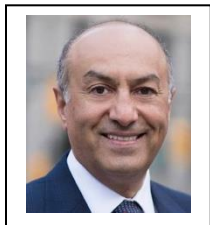
Lena Juarez

President, Floridians for Better Transportation

President, JEJ & Associates

Lena Juarez, founder of JEJ & Associates, has delivered results since 1997 for a diverse set of clients, ranging from Fortune 500 companies, to local governments, to trade associations, and to not-for-profit groups. She has built a successful government consulting practice through her tenacity, ability to collaborate and strategically solve problems on behalf of her clients.

A graduate of Sophie Newcomb Memorial College of Tulane University and the Reubin O'D. Askew School of Public Administration and Policy at the Florida State University, she has been active in politics since a very young age and has served on many local and statewide boards. Ms. Juarez has been appointed to numerous state-wide boards by current and former Senate Presidents and House Speakers. She is a graduate of Leadership Tallahassee and Leadership Florida, which are programs of the local and state Chamber of Commerce.



Sia Kusha, P.E.

Chair, Floridians for Better Transportation

Group Head, Business Development & Partnering, Plenary Americas

As Group Head, Business Development and Partnering, Sia Kusha is responsible for Plenary Americas' strategic business development, partnering and project development activities across North America.

Sia joined Plenary after more than 35 years in the engineering and construction industries, including the last five years at AECOM where he was most recently the Managing Director of Integrated Delivery Services, responsible for their opportunity pipeline and partnering across their five business lines (Transportation, Water, Power, Environment, Buildings & Places) in the Americas.

Sia is fellow of the American Council of Engineering Companies and a registered professional engineer in FL, GA, NC, AZ, MN and WI.

“The View from the Secretary”



Jared Perdue, P.E.
Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation

Jared W. Perdue, P.E. was named Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) by Governor Ron DeSantis on April 7, 2022. As Secretary, Perdue oversees the lead agency in state government with the statutory responsibility to coordinate the planning and development of a safe, viable, and balanced transportation system serving all regions of the state, and to assure the compatibility of all components, including multimodal facilities.

Secretary Perdue has devoted his entire career to the FDOT since entering public service through the Professional Engineer Training Program with FDOT District Three. The completion of this program kickstarted his FDOT career and, likewise, his passion for serving the people of Florida, as his various leadership roles within the Department have touched nearly every aspect of the state's transportation system and the communities it serves. Through the years, Perdue has played integral roles in both operations and development where he has held positions as the District Geotechnical Engineer, District Traffic Operations Engineer, as well as the District Design Engineer.

He also has a tremendous amount of experience with various modes of transportation including space, multi-use trails, and served as the CEO of SunRail. Most recently, Secretary Perdue has been charged with carrying out the bold vision of Governor DeSantis through the *Moving Florida Forward Infrastructure Initiative*. With Florida's unprecedented population growth, this historic investment to Florida's transportation network will ease congestion, improve safety, ensure the resiliency of our transportation network, and enhance Florida's supply chain across the state.



Maryam Ghyabi-White
Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
CEO/President, Ghyabi Consulting & Management

Maryam Ghyabi-White is the CEO/President of Ghyabi Consulting & Management (GCM) and serves as an adjunct professor of civil engineering at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. In her current role at GCM and as the former CEO/President of Ghyabi & Associates, Inc. Maryam provides leadership and support to position the company at the forefront of the engineering industry. Maryam also oversees finance, production, procedures and policies, resources, and revenues of the company throughout the firm and its second-generation firm's 28-year history. She is also in charge of the firms' business development and public relations initiatives. Maryam has represented the firms at the global engineering industry level and at the local level and has represented the firms at legislative sessions and government functions.

“The Writer’s Room Mindset: A Playbook for Breakthrough Ideas Under Pressure”



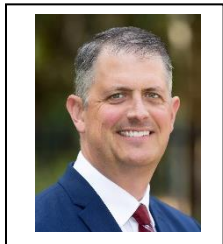
Gil Rief
Keynote Speaker

Gil Rief is a TV comedy writer, creative leadership expert, and author of the “The Writers’ Room Mindset.” He is the only person on Earth with 13 Emmys and an MBA, making him uniquely qualified to bridge the gap between creativity and business.

With over 20 years in top TV writers’ rooms—including as head writer for *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* and *The Jennifer Hudson Show*—Gil teaches the tools comedy writers use to generate breakthrough ideas under pressure.

He’s shared his signature framework with leading universities, Fortune 500 companies, and teams looking to unlock bold ideas fast.

“Evolving Spaceports: Centerpiece of Space Commerce”



Colonel Robert Long
CEO/President, Space Florida
United States Space Force, Retired

Colonel Robert Long most recently served as Commander at Space Launch Delta 30 and Western Launch and Test Range at Vandenberg Space Force Base. Colonel Long has held numerous operational, staff, and command assignments in ICBM, satellite, and launch operations, including duties in the National Reconnaissance Office, Department of Defense Executive Agent for Space Staff, and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research & Engineering. He earned a master’s degree in aerospace engineering and is a graduate of the College of Naval Command and Staff, the School for Advanced Air and Space Studies, and the Eisenhower School.

Long received his bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from the University of Washington, earned a master’s degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs and has master’s degree from the College of Naval Command and Staff, the School for Advanced Air and Space Studies and the Eisenhower School. He retired as a colonel from the United States Space Force in July 2023.

2025-2026 Legislative Roundtable



The Honorable Danny Alvarez
Moderator
Florida House of Representatives, District 69

Daniel Antonio Alvarez, a resident of Hillsborough County, is a lawyer and retired United States Army serviceman. He was elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2022.

Born in Miami, Florida, he holds a Bachelor of Science in Communications from the University of Florida, a Master of Science in Education from Troy State University, a Juris Doctor from Stetson College of Law, and a Master of Laws (LLM) from the University of Miami School of Law.

A Christian, Alvarez enjoys exercise, spending time with family, hunting, and reading. He is the father of Tony, Emery, Lincoln, and Elle.



The Honorable Shane Abbott
Panelist
Florida House of Representatives, District 5

Shane grew up in DeFuniak Springs and graduated from Pensacola Junior College and the University of Florida, where he received a Bachelor's degree in Pharmacy. After completing his education, Shane returned home to DeFuniak Springs, where he worked at a local independent pharmacy for seven years before he and a business partner opened their own pharmacy, The Prescription Place, in 2006 and second location in 2015. Shane and his family also own and operate the Firestone Tire Service Center in DeFuniak Springs.

In addition to being a successful business owner and committed family man, Shane is actively involved in his community. He served on the Northwest Florida State College Board of Trustees since 2016 and was vice-chair. He is a member of the Institutional Advisory Committee for Emerald Coast Technical College and the Florida Pharmacy Association. Shane is a board member of the Emerald Coast Fellowship of Christian Athletes and a member of Gideons. Shane and his family attend Destiny Worship Center in Freeport.



The Honorable Bill Conerly
Panelist
Florida House of Representatives, District 72

Bill Conerly was born in Miami, Florida. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1984 to 1989. He graduated from Arcadia Christian School. He earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida in 1997. His career experience includes working as a civil engineer and electrician with the U.S. Navy.

He assumed office on November 5, 2024. His current term ends on November 3, 2026.



The Honorable Chip LaMarca
Panelist
Florida House of Representatives, District 100

Chip LaMarca is a lifelong resident of Broward County and he is honored to serve the coastal communities in the Florida State House of Representatives. He has earned a reputation for being a citizens' advocate and a respected voice for the taxpayers, veterans, first responders and pets in our community.

Chip is proud to tell his American story of hard work and success. After attending Boston University, Broward College and Florida Atlantic University, Chip came home to follow in the footsteps of his late father by helping to bring jobs to Broward County in the construction industry. After establishing himself as a knowledgeable, trusted manager with over 20 years of experience in the construction industry, Chip opened LaMarca Construction in 2006, a firm that specializes in power generation. Chip and his wife of twenty-three years Eileen reside in Lighthouse Point with District 100's doggie mascot, Rocco.

Floridians for Better Transportation Reception
Eagles Edge Golf Event



The Honorable Jay Collins
Special Guest
Florida Senate, District 14

Senator Collins is a highly decorated Army Special Forces combat veteran; he received a number of debilitating injuries causing him to lose his leg. He served five additional years as a Green Beret post-amputation, retiring after completing over 23 years of service.

Following his military service, Senator Collins took a position with Operation BBQ Relief, overseeing the distribution of millions of meals to Americans following natural disasters and helping veterans and their families by creating culinary delights together.

A committed family man, Senator Collins is married to his wife of 23 years Layla, a retired veteran with 20 years of service in her own right, and a father to two young sons, Gabe and Colt. As a family they rescued their pup Tucker, attend Grace Family Church, and strive to leave things better than they got it.

“Update by the United States Department of Transportation”



Ben Siegrist
Director of Public Liaison and Senior Advisor
Office of the Secretary of Transportation, USDOT

Prior to rejoining USDOT, Ben served as Senior Professional Staff in the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. He previously served in the Office of the Secretary of Transportation from 2017 – 2018. Ben has worked in federal policy, politics and public affairs over the last two decades, holding positions with national business associations in the automobile and commercial trucking industries, as a federal advocate on behalf of manufacturers and as staff in both Houses of Congress.

Ben was raised in South Carolina and earned a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Tennessee. He resides in Alexandria, VA with his wife and two children.



Will Watts
Assistant Secretary for Engineering and Operations
Florida Department of Transportation

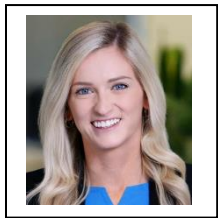
Will Watts has broad public agency and consulting firm experience in delivery and leadership positions. He has a progressive career path in both production and operations from design through program management. He has spent good part of his career, last as the Director of Operations, in northwest Florida. Will relocated to Tallahassee when he was appointed as the Chief Engineer before being appointed as the Assistant Secretary of Engineering and Operations for the Agency. This background includes hands on delivery, field execution in communities, completing complex projects under accelerated schedules, and statewide strategic program leadership. His whole career has been serving FDOT and working for the residents of Florida with a priority for a target of zero for safety, expanding workforce development, advancing technology, ensuring a robust supply chain, and implementing resiliency strategies for our local communities.

“Moving Florida Forward Infrastructure Initiative - Moving I-4 Forward Project”



Morgan County, P.E.
Moderator
MI-4 Program Director of Controls
Florida Department of Transportation

Morgan County serves as the Program Director of Controls for the Moving I-4 Forward Program. Morgan is a University of Florida graduate, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. He's a registered professional engineer in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina. He has 24 years of experience working in the transportation industry and has been serving as a consultant to the Florida Department of Transportation throughout his career, managing a variety of projects that range from early-stage Planning/PD&E, to the delivery of complex contractor-partnered Design-Build jobs. For the past year, Morgan has served the Moving I-4 Forward Program, helping to advance this multi-billion dollar program into construction.

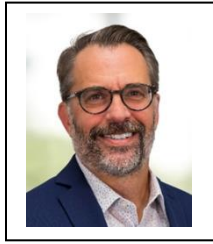


Courtney Hance, P.E.
Panelist
MI-4 Senior Program Director
Florida Department of Transportation

Courtney serves as the Senior Program Director for the Moving I-4 Forward Program.

As the Senior Program Director for the program, she is responsible for leading and managing the continuous planning, coordination, communication, workforce development initiatives, controls and the overall delivery of all necessary components of the program.

Courtney holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering Degree from Clemson University and is a licensed Professional Engineer in Florida. Courtney began her career in Construction Management and then transitioned into the Transportation field at RS&H in 2017. Prior to taking her current role, she served as the North Florida Program Management Lead for RS&H's Infrastructure Business Unit and oversaw the program management of contracts for Owner's Representative, Continuing Services, and General Engineering Consultant services.



Marc Hustad, P.E.
Panelist
MI-4 Program Director of Delivery
Florida Department of Transportation

In this role, Marc is responsible for providing management, oversight, and continuity for the delivery of the program and its projects. Marc holds a Master of Science in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M University, a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and is a licensed Professional Engineer in Florida and Wisconsin. Prior to taking his current role, he served as a leader on several large transportation work programs and mega projects across the US and Florida, including Tampa's Westshore Interchange, the Southwest-Central Florida Connector study, program and design management at Florida's Turnpike Enterprise general engineering consultant, and the Marquette Interchange.



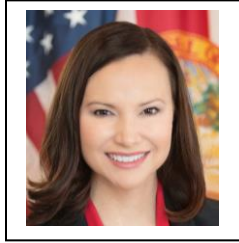
Jason Watts, P.E.
Panelist
MI-4 Program Director of Innovative Delivery
Florida Department of Transportation

Jason spearheads the development of alternative delivery methods, creation of applicable RFPs/RFQs, and oversees the execution of the innovative new concepts adopted by the Department. Jason holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from the United States Military Academy at West Point and a Juris Doctor from Florida State University. He is AICP Certified, a Certified Public Manager, and a member of the Florida Bar. Jason previously served as the Director of Environmental Management for the Florida Department of Transportation and has served as FDOT's Chief Counsel for Contracts.



Michael Gwynne, P.E.
Panelist
MI-4 Program Operations Manager
Florida Department of Transportation

Mike Gwynne has served as a contractor, design engineer and construction engineering and inspection (CEI) consultant on horizontal and vertical construction projects totaling more than \$7 billion in his 30-year career including the I-4 Ultimate project as Resident Engineer. He is currently serving as the Program Operations Manager on the Moving I-4 Forward Program. He is familiar with new construction as well as major widening and rehabilitation projects. Mike's experience includes Modified Phased Design Build, Construction Management at Risk, Design-Build, Design-Build Operate and Maintain (DBOM), and Public Private Partnership contracting methods from a CEI and program management perspective.



The Honorable Ashley Moody
United States Senate
Invited

Ashley Moody is a Senator from Florida; born in Plant City, Fla., March 28, 1975; graduated Plant City High School, 1993; B.S., accounting, University of Florida; M.A., accounting, University of Florida; J.D., University of Florida College of Law, 2000; LL.M., international law, Stetson University College of Law, Gulfport, Fla., 2010; lawyer; adjunct professor; assistant United States attorney for the Middle District of Florida; Hillsborough County, Fla., circuit court judge, 2007-2017; attorney general of Florida, 2019-2025; appointed as a Republican to the United States Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Marco Rubio for the term ending January 3, 2029; took the oath of office on January 21, 2025.

“Advanced Air Mobility, Florida Leads the Nation”



The Honorable Doug Bankson
Panelist
Florida House of Representatives (HD-39)

Doug Bankson is the Founder and Senior Pastor of Victory Church World Outreach Center located in Apopka, Florida. He has served on multiple city planning boards and committees, participating in first responders programs, producing and assisting with community wide events, and more. Doug also became involved with the Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce, where he has served as Chairman of the board of directors. He has been very involved in the rebranding and marketing of Apopka and is an active member of the chamber's economic development committee.

Doug has been honored with numerous awards and been recognized for both his personal and community contributions. He was the Valedictorian of his senior class, and, after going on to complete his master's degree through Life Christian University, Doug was also awarded an honorary doctorate based upon his years of experience and ministry both locally and abroad. He is a graduate of the inaugural class of Leadership Apopka, and has completed the first three levels of the Florida League of Cities Leadership courses. Doug is also an accomplished singer/songwriter as well as a published author and an instrument-rated pilot.

Doug and his wife, Jeri, will have been married for 37 years as of May 2024. They have 4 grown children, a son in law and 2 daughters in law and 3 wonderful grandchildren with two more on the way. Doug and Jeri also have a feisty little yorkie named Milo.



Will Watts, P.E.
Assistant Secretary for Engineering and Operations
Florida Department of Transportation

Transportation Modes Panel



Mike Rubin
Moderator
Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
President, Florida Ports Council

Since 1998, Michael Rubin has served in a leadership role at the Florida Ports Council (FPC), first as Vice President and now as President/CEO.

The FPC provides leadership, advocacy and information on seaport-related issues before the Legislative and Executive Branches of State and Federal Government.

Mr. Rubin has over twenty years of experience in the creation and development of state economic development and international trade policy – including the creation of Enterprise Florida, international export promotion programs, and seaport development financing legislation.

Prior to joining the Florida Ports Council, Mr. Rubin was on staff at the Florida House of Representatives for approximately 10 years, where he served as staff director and staff attorney for the House Commerce and Economic Development Committees.

Mr. Rubin received a Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs from Rollins College, and a Juris Doctorate with honors from the Florida State University Law School. Mr. Rubin currently resides in Tallahassee, where he and his wife Brenda raised twin boys.



Robert “Bob” Ledoux
Panelist
Board Member and Immediate Past Chair, Floridians for Better Transportation
Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary, Florida East Coast Railway

Bob has more than 25 years of legal and management experience in corporate law and business and transportation transactions.

Prior to joining FECR, Bob worked at CSX Transportation, Inc in various legal positions including Assistant General Counsel for public project initiatives, engineering, passenger services, and Intermodal.

From 1981 to 1987, he worked as a budget analyst for the Department of the Navy, and then served for five years as Corporate Counsel & Secretary for Planning Systems Inc., in McLean, Virginia. He spent the next six years as Senior Attorney and Assistant Secretary for Software AG of North America, Inc. From 1998 to 2002, he worked as Associate General Counsel and Assistant Secretary with PSINet, Inc.

He is affiliated with the Virginia State Bar, the Maryland State Bar, the Florida State Bar and the American Corporate Counsel Association.



Tiffany Homler Hawkins

Panelist

CEO, Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX)

Tiffany Homler Hawkins is the chief executive officer at LYNX. She has worked with or for the agency for more than 20 years most recently overseeing the planning, marketing, grants and government affairs teams. With more than 25 years in Central Florida, she also has held positions in the private sector and county government. A favorite project of Hawkins during her time with LYNX was overseeing the construction of the iconic LYNX Central Station.

She has served as president of the WTS Central Florida Chapter, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Orlando and the Community Hope Center Board of Directors. Hawkins has a bachelor's degree in public administration and master's degree in communications, both from the University of Central Florida.



Rudy Powell, P.E

Panelist

Chief Engineer of Operations

Florida Department of Transportation

Rudy Powell is currently the Director of the Traffic Engineering and Operations Office for the Florida Department of Transportation. He has more than 32 years of engineering experience, including 29 years in the transportation industry in both the private and public sectors, including almost 19 years with the Department, where he has held the positions of Interim Director of the state Materials Office, director of the office of Maintenance, State Construction Engineer, State Specifications Engineer, and Structures Area Engineer.

Rudy earned his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina and is a licensed Professional Engineer in Florida and South Carolina.

Rudy enjoys reading, going for long walks, learning new things, and just being outdoors.

“The Key Issues Facing the U.S. and Florida Economies”



**Sean M. Snaith, Ph.D.,
Director, Institute for Economic Forecasting
University of Central Florida**

Sean Snaith, Ph.D., is the director of the University of Central Florida's Institute for Economic Forecasting and a nationally recognized economist in the field of business and economic forecasting.

Snaith is the recipient of multiple awards for the accuracy of his forecasts, his research and his teaching. He has served as a consultant for local governments and multinational corporations such as Compaq, Dell and IBM. Before joining UCF's College of Business, he held teaching positions at Pennsylvania State University, American University in Cairo, the University of North Dakota and the University of the Pacific.

Snaith is a member of several economic organizations and national economic forecasting panels, including *The Wall Street Journal's* Economic Forecasting Survey, the *Associated Press'* Economy Survey, CNNMoney.com's Survey of Leading Economists, *USA Today's* Survey of Top Economists, Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia's Survey of Professional Forecasters, *Bloomberg* and *Reuters*.

Snaith holds a B.S. in Economics from Allegheny College and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Economics from Pennsylvania State University.

Floridians for Better Transportation Board of Directors

Sia Kusha, P.E.



Chair, Floridians for Better Transportation
Group Head, Business Development & Partnering, Plenary Americas

John Browning



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
Vice President of New Projects, The Goodman Company

Doug Callaway



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
Executive Director of TEAMFL

Kevin Cornish



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
Senior Vice President, Roads & Highways Sector Leader, TYLin

Maryam Ghyabi-White



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
CEO/President, Ghyabi Consulting & Management

Dan Hurtado



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
President, Florida Transportation Builders Association

Jarra Kaczvara



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
Senior Director, Business Development at Port of Palm Beach

Robert "Bob" Ledoux



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary, Florida East Coast
Railway

Alix Miller, PhD.



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
President and CEO, Florida Trucking Association

Jay Nagle, P.E.



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
Area Transportation Business Group Leader, HDR

Mike Rubin



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
President, Florida Ports Council

Bob Schafer



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
President, Ranger Construction Industries, Inc.

Denver Stutler. P.E.



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
Chief Executive Officer, U.S. Submergent Technologies

Lisa Bacot



Board Member, Floridians for Better Transportation
Executive Director, Florida Public Transportation Association