



Making Connections

The Official Publication of the Louisiana Ground Water Association
Volume 7 Issue 2 Winter 2022

From the Executive Director's Desk



The weather reports I am getting confirm that it is definitely Fall all over Louisiana! I am writing this while on a mountaintop in Tennessee. Not on "rocky top," nor am I singing "Rocky Top" after what they did to LSU in football this year. Just camping at Fall Creek Falls State Park.



So glad to get past the COVID! I am told that everything will be back to normal at The Paragon for our convention (even eating at the buffet). I missed sitting next to LGWA members and vendors and breaking bread together.

If you have not heard, there will be some increases in the registration fees this year. After many years, and the effects of COVID, price creep got to us through added costs. I hope the convenience of a local Louisiana convention/credit-hours will be worth the few extra dollars. The night before activities and the buffet makes it worthwhile for me. Then, there is the camaraderie of your fellow members and the face time with your vendors to discuss new products in a mutual surrounding.

We are planning some speakers you haven't heard in a while for the CEU's this year to make it more interesting. If you have any suggestions for speakers or topics, please let me know.



See you in January,

Joel

Joel Walton
LGWA Executive Director

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The views expressed in Making Connections do not necessarily reflect the position of the Louisiana Ground Water Association. We believe in free speech and encourage contributors to voice their opinions.

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Ground Water Resources Program ~ Environmental Division, Louisiana Office of Conservation

What we do: The staff of the Ground Water Resources Program (GWRP) receives and evaluates water well notifications, registrations, and changes to previously submitted notifications (including plug and abandonments, P&As); and responds to public requests for records and water well-related complaints, among other tasks. As an example, the following table shows the statistics from April 1, 2022 to September 1, 2022 for a few of registration-related items our staff worked on.

| | |
|--|------------|
| New Registrations | 978 |
| Updated Registrations (Transfers, P&As) | 624 |
| Evaluation of Prior Notifications | 305 |

As a special note, we ask that operators please consider having a second properly licensed water well driller within their companies in case of emergencies or other unforeseen circumstances. This process requires a relatively small investment of time and money to provide security and continuity in company operations. The Office of Conservation is reviewing options for a possible rule change in this area and will keep you advised of any decisions going forward with ample opportunity to comment.

New groundwater forms are available at: <http://www.dnr.louisiana.gov/index.cfm?md=pagebuilder&tmp=home&pid=1378>. In submitting documentation, please make sure you are using the most up-to-date forms. We are available to assist with any issues you may encounter with these new forms.

GWRP staff include Louisiana Civil Service qualified engineers, environmental scientists, and/or geologists with relevant professional experience, and we appreciate the opportunity to work with you and look forward to assisting you in the future. Our hope is to continue to support the regulated community and public while conserving and protecting the natural resources of our state. See below for a list of staff members and their primary focus areas.

GWRP Staff:

Jamie Love - Manages the Ground Water Resources Program in the Office of Conservation's Environmental Division overseeing water well notifications, evaluations, and registrations. Involved at all levels of compliance and enforcement of state rules and regulations for water wells, Ground Water Areas of Concern, and groundwater emergency response.

Nic Kien - Conducts water well prior notification evaluations and processes water well registrations and new water well driller applications.

Kristin Benoit - Evaluates surface water applications, water well prior notifications, WH-1 forms, driller renewals, and processes water well registrations.

Zack Burch - Evaluates water well prior notifications and processes water well registrations.

Andrew Whisnant - Evaluates water well prior notifications and processes water well registrations.

Jessica Brown - Processes monitoring well registrations.

| | Contact | E-mail | Phone |
|---|---|-----------------------|--|
| Notifications, Registrations, and Variance | Kristin Benoit Nic Kien Zach Burch Andrew Whisnant | gwater@la.gov | 225-342-5562 225-342-5724 225-342-8242 225-342-5528 |
| Driller Renewals | Kristin Benoit | Kristin.Benoit@la.gov | 225-342-5562 |
| New Driller Applications | Nic Kien | Nicholas.Kien@la.gov | 225-342-5724 |
| Frack Wells | Nic Kien | gwater@la.gov | 225-342-5724 |
| Groundwater Concerns (AOC) | Zach Burch | gwater@la.gov | 225-342-8242 |
| WH-1s | Kristin Benoit Nic Kien | gwater@la.gov | 225-342-8242 |
| Monitor Wells | Jessica Brown Jamie Love | gwater@la.gov | 225-342-7286 |

**Please call our office with any questions you may have.
Staff are available Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

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The Louisiana Ground Water Association:
Helping to preserve a priceless resource - the Louisiana groundwater aquifers and recharge areas.



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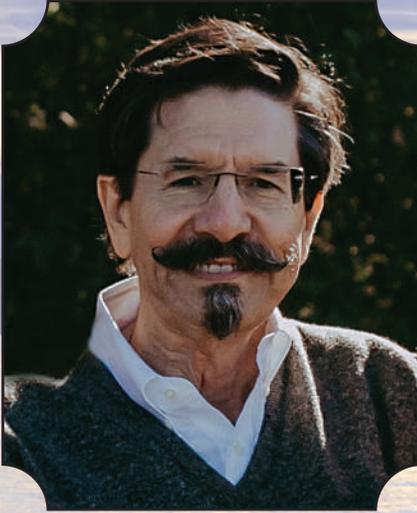
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In Memoriam

Larry Wayne LaBorde (1958~2022)

Larry Wayne LaBorde lost a 16-year battle with heart disease doing what he loved on August 30, 2022, at his office in Shreveport, Louisiana. He was born in Shreveport and graduated from First Baptist Church School in 1976. He married his best friend and love of his life, Donna "Puddy" Johnson, the next year. With her support, he went on to get his bachelor of science degree in civil engineering from Louisiana Tech University in 1979, then began his career in the family business, Continental Drilling & Service, which was founded by his father O.C. LaBorde.



His civic involvements and leadership roles were many and varied. He believed knowledge and enlightenment should be shared freely among all people. He was a founding member and president emeritus of the McNeil Street Pumping Station, member of Joppa Lodge 362, raised a master mason with all of his four brothers together, 32nd Degree Scottish Rite Mason, member of Knights of St. Andrew, lifelong member of the North Shreveport Lions Club, member of the El Karubah Shrine, founding member and first president of Fellowship United Methodist Church, member and past chairman of the Downtown Shreveport Development Corporation, past president of Louisiana Ground Water Association, member of National Ground Water Association, past president of Groundwater Institute, past commodore of Shreveport Yacht Club, and served multiple terms on the Louisiana Governor's Advisory Committee for the regulation and control of water well drilling.

Larry always enjoyed sharing stories, pondering odd topics, and above all else, helping others laugh. He and Puddy were inseparable companions in everything - racing sailboats nationally, flying airplanes, traveling the world, and making friends everywhere they went. After turning a childhood hobby of coin collecting into a successful bullion trading business, Silver Trading Company he founded in 2001, each new deal became an opportunity to develop and cultivate friendships with interesting people all over the world. As long as Puddy was with him, there was not an adventure or travel destination that was off limits.

Left to cherish his memory are Puddy; his children Christopher (Florence) and Elizabeth (Karl); grandchildren Leeda, Genevieve, Oscar, and Johnson; brothers Robert (Robin), Rick (Elizabeth), Jonathan (Colleen), Peyton (Kari); sisters-in-law Amo (Charles); Patti; and Susan; as well as many nieces and nephews.

The management and staff of *WWD* extend their sincere condolences to their family, friends, and associates.

Lest we forget . . .

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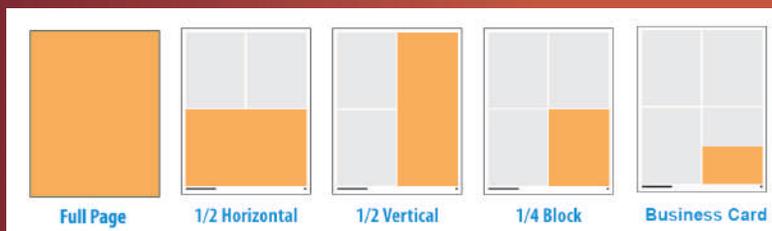
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Auditors Say Louisiana Needs a Plan to Effectively Manage Interconnected Water Resources

Over the summer, a Louisiana Legislative Auditor’s report was presented to the state’s Water Resources Commission. The audit was conducted in response to a legislative request on the regulation and valuation of surface water. Additionally, it provided an update on the implementation of recommendations from the February 2020 audit report, *Louisiana’s Management of Water Resources*.

Louisiana’s surface water serves a variety of uses including drinking water, agriculture, and industrial purposes such as hydraulic fracturing. According to the audit, groundwater must also be considered in discussions about surface water, because these resources are closely connected. The report pointed out if surface water becomes less available to areas affected by droughts, then reliance on groundwater increases.

The February 2020 performance audit found multiple studies since 1956 have advised the state to develop a comprehensive water management plan; however, one has not been established to date. Main reasons for the delay stem from the lack of a water code in state law, along with inconsistent data on water use. Multiple entities are involved with collecting water-related data in Louisiana; however, each one collects information differently and does not always make their data available to others. As a result, it is difficult to determine whether the state has enough data to create a plan as directed.



Surface water pumps on Lake Bistineau. Photo courtesy of the Louisiana Legislative Auditor.

The audit also noted Louisiana caps fair market value for surface water at 15 cents per 1000 gallons. Act 556 of the 2014 Regular

Legislative Session created the cap based on the rate charged by the Sabine River Authority at the time. Since then, the authority has increased this rate to 18 cents per 1000 gallons for Toledo Bend water for long-term contracts and \$1.80 per 1000 gallons for short-term contracts, which may include hydraulic fracturing. In contrast, on the other side of Toledo Bend, Texas charged \$4.50

same water in July 2021 for hydraulic fracturing use. Auditors recommended Louisiana legislation remove the current cap to allow for market demand and inflation.

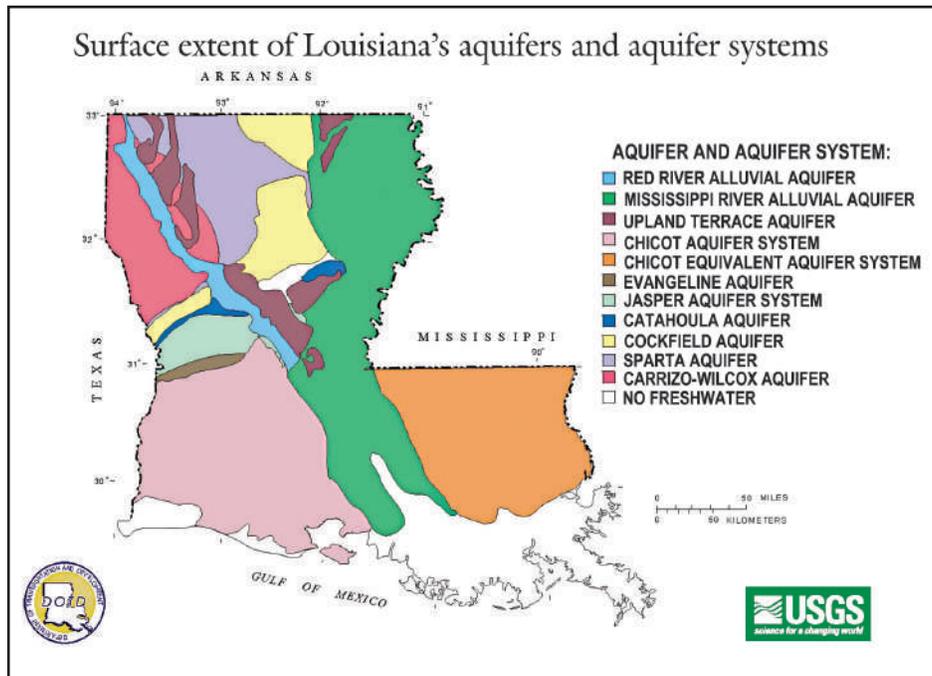
During fiscal years 2020-2021, the state Department of Natural Resources had 87 cooperative endeavor agreements (CEAs) in place for surface water withdrawals requesting a total of 1.54 trillion gallons. This figure only accounts for companies

voluntarily paying for and reporting their water usage. For 56 of the CEAs, cash payment was required for withdrawals. The other 31 CEAs submitted economic impact statements showing their business added value to the state in lieu of cash payments.

Matters for legislative consideration included the following recommendations by auditors:

- Designating a person or entity to develop a comprehensive water resource management plan that ensures water resources are protected, conserved, and replenished for the health, safety, and welfare of the people, as stated in Louisiana’s Constitution.
- Directing a person or entity to develop a valuation model for determining the fair market value of Louisiana’s water resources and reevaluations over time.
- Amending Louisiana Revised Statute 30:961 to require a person or entity to enter into a CEA to withdraw surface water.

In addition to private industries, other states are expressing interest in purchasing water from Louisiana; but many of its aquifers, and associated surface resources are experiencing water level declines. A solid management plan is important for Louisiana to know how much water is available for sustaining its own residential and industrial purposes before determining how much could be made available for purchase.





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| Late Registration Fee if Paid after December 1, 2022: \$20 | |
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Did You Know?

Our local aquifers are "recharged" through rain, melting snow, and surface water from rivers, lakes, and bayous seeping into the ground in large "recharge" areas. The recharge area for the Southern Hills Aquifer system includes most of southwest Mississippi and the upper portions of the Florida Parishes. Some of the water in the system's deepest aquifers has taken a thousand years or more to filter in from the surface.

How fast does this groundwater move? Groundwater in the Southern Hills Aquifer System moves at a fast rate which varies by "sand" from 20 feet or so per year, to several hundred feet per year. The recharge rate is relatively rapid, meaning the East Baton Rouge Parish has a plentiful supply of groundwater for use.



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from LGWA



Funding to Cleanup Orphaned Gas and Oil Wells Across the State

Adapted from Information by the U.S. Department of the Interior and build.gov

The Department of the Interior announced Louisiana has been awarded an initial grant of \$25 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to begin work to plug, cap, and reclaim orphaned gas and oil wells across the state.

The state indicated it will use this funding to plug between 250-900 documented wells known to be near low-income communities, providing an opportunity for displaced energy workers from disadvantaged communities to be trained and employed in the plugging of orphaned wells. Funds will also be used to develop procedures to measure and track contamination of groundwater and surface water associated with orphaned wells, as well as purchase equipment to measure methane for the purpose of locating additional well locations to be plugged with Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding in upcoming years. Additionally, the state will contract for an academic study of methane emissions from Louisiana's gas and oil wells to assist in predicting those most likely to leak methane.



Orphan well location prior to plugging and abandonment activities. Image courtesy of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources.

Millions of Americans across the country live within a mile of an orphaned well which could be located in a backyard, recreation area, or community space. Methane leaking from many of these unplugged wells is a serious safety hazard.

Secretary Deb Haaland said the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law "is enabling us to confront long-standing environmental injustices by making an historic investment to plug orphaned wells throughout the country. At the Department of the Interior, we are working on multiple fronts to cleanup these sites as quick as we can by investing in efforts on federal lands and partnering with states and Tribes to leave no community behind. Today's announcement is exciting progress toward what we will accomplish together through this historic law."

Plugging orphaned wells will help advance the goals of the U.S. Methane Emissions Reduction Action Plan, as well as the Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization, which focuses on spurring economic revitalization in hard-hit energy communities.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is the largest investment in tackling legacy pollution in American history, including a \$4.7 billion investment to plug orphaned wells. These sites jeopardize public health and safety by contaminating groundwater, emitting noxious gases and methane, littering the landscape with rusted and dangerous equipment, and harming wildlife.

The investment in Louisiana is part of an overall \$1.15 billion in fiscal year 2022 funding announced in January for states to plug and remediate orphaned wells. States will receive additional formula funding dollars in the coming months. In addition, an initial \$33 million was recently allocated to plug 277 wells on federal public lands. The Tribal orphan well grant program is being informed by ongoing Tribal consultations and listening sessions.

To date, more than \$47 million has been allocated to Louisiana in 2022 for legacy pollution cleanup, which includes capping orphaned gas and oil wells, along with reclaiming abandoned mine lands.

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For more information about Editorial insertion,
call Bonnie at 850-547-0102.

City of Gonzales Receives Funding to Relocate Water Lines

The city of Gonzales received a \$2.4 million loan from the Louisiana Department of Health's (LDH) Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund (DWRLF) Program to relocate over two miles of water lines.



Photo courtesy of the City of Gonzales.

Ascension Parish has several projects in store on Roddy Road, including widening the road and installing roundabouts. Water lines had to be moved before those projects could begin.

Work to place new 16-inch lines started in April 2022 and wrapped up in September. Gonzales Mayor Barney Arceneaux said moving the water lines will help expedite widening of the road and make

sure there are no interruptions to water service during construction.

According to Gonzales City Engineer Jackie Baumann, the lines running between Black Bayou Road and Airline Highway were moved. Along with installing lines in a new right-of-way, the city contacted customers on the route confirming they had smart meters to ensure accurate readings. The line serves approximately 120 customers, and due to the DWRLF loan's low interest rate of 1.95%, they will not see any associated increases to their water bill.

The State DWRLF Program was established in 1996 as part of amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act. It receives 80% of funding through an annual grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and participating states cover the other 20%. In Louisiana, the program is managed by LDH's Office of Public Health.

"We are very appreciative of the help we have received from officials within LDH and the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund Program to secure the funding needed for this project," said Mayor Arceneaux.

Public and privately-owned community water systems, as well as nonprofit, noncommunity operations can apply for loans through the DWRLF Program. Loans have a maximum repayment period of 20 years.

"Once a loan is approved, water systems can use the funds to make their improvements. As water systems pay back the loans, the principal and interest are used to make more money available for other communities that have drinking water needs," said DWRLF Program Manager Joel McKenzie. He explained all loan projects receive approval based on a ranking system determining their urgency. Along with other considerations, projects dealing with the most significant threats to a population's health receive first priority.

"Safe drinking water is fundamental to community health, and this program helps communities throughout Louisiana keep their water as safe as possible without placing an undue burden in the form of expensive financing," said LDH Chief Engineer Amanda Ames.



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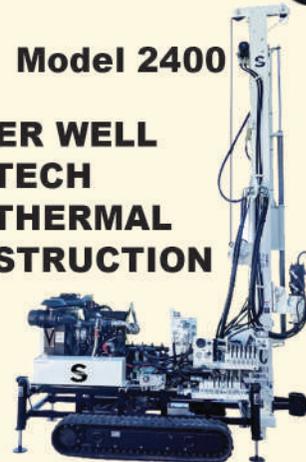
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Governor Edwards Gets Firsthand Look at Flood Control Infrastructure in the Netherlands

Adapted from Information by Governor John Bel Edwards and Deltares

In the Summer edition of *Making Connections*, we learned about Louisiana State University student Kelli Moran who received a grant to study water management and resiliency in the Netherlands.

As it turns out, Moran isn't the only one exchanging ideas with the Dutch. Governor John Bel Edwards and more than a dozen Louisiana economic, coastal, and business leaders recently visited the Netherlands' capital city of Amsterdam to gain insights about water management.

The weeklong mission to Europe included a daylong factfinding tour of flood control sites in three different areas of the Netherlands. It began 50 miles south of Amsterdam with a tour of the massive Noorwaard depoldering project in Werkendam. Polders are low-lying coastal or riverfront areas formerly underwater but turned to dry land after the construction of dikes. The depoldering of Noorwaard was a key component of the Room for the River water management project which began in 2006, to protect coastal communities along the Rhine River.

"This mission is a powerful reminder that Louisiana residents are kindred spirits with the Dutch, who have embraced creative solutions for living with, rather than fighting against, water for generations," said Governor Edwards. "The Noorwaard depoldering resembles similar projects within Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan. To view in person the positive impact of this yearslong undertaking reaffirms our state's visionary, long-term approach to the water challenges we face. How to apply the lessons of Room for the River to our own coastal programs will be a focus of follow-up discussions today and in the days to come."

Dr. Franz Klijn, a Dutch specialist in flood risk and water resources management, briefed the delegation on Room for the River, which has created nearly 20 miles of new dikes, 33 new bridges, 60 new hydraulic structures, and 12 new pumping stations at 34 different locations around the country.

"This is a unique opportunity for us to learn from a group of people fighting some of the same challenges we face every day, but it's also a chance for other countries to learn from the significant progress we have made over the last several years," said Chip Kline, Chairman of Louisiana's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority. "While the Dutch are known internationally for living with and managing water, Louisiana is being looked at more and more as a global leader in addressing and reacting to a changing climate."

From Noorwaard, representatives traveled to a world heritage site in Kinderdijk, considered by many to be the birthplace of modern water management due to the 19th century windmill and steam-powered pumping station innovations that originated there.

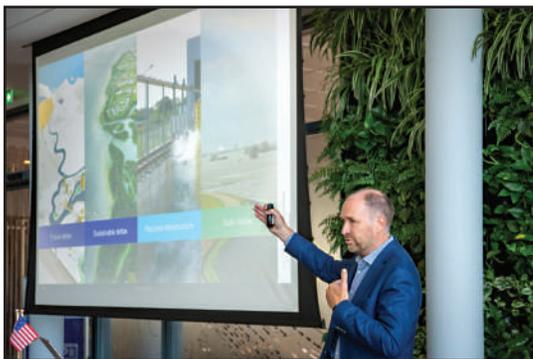
The exploratory journey continued in Delft, home to Deltares, a leading not-for-profit water management consultancy and research institute whose sprawling complex served as a model for Louisiana's Water Campus in Baton Rouge. At Deltares, the delegation also saw a demonstration of the Delta Flume, the most advanced wave test facility in the world, able to simulate at full scale the effect of extreme waves on dikes, levees, dunes, breakwaters, and offshore structures.

"Governor Edwards' visit was inspiring and timely. We had a frank exchange of ideas and discussed the challenges facing both Louisiana and the Netherlands," said Deltares Director of Hydraulic Engineering Dirk-Jan Walstra. "As low-lying deltas, climate change and sea level rise have a huge impact on our regions. We were also proud to show Governor Edwards and the delegation . . . the Deltares experimental facilities, including the Delta Flume, and stressed the importance of using these facilities alongside our software to provide sound knowledge-based advice for policy makers. We hope that we can continue to share knowledge and expertise together, learning from each other as we deepen our collaboration with The Water Institute."

The trip is the result of an invitation from Ambassador Henk Ovink of the Netherlands Special Envoy for International Water Affairs, who accompanied Governor Edwards and the delegation on their journey. "Working together on water starts with understanding and valuing water better. Louisiana and the Netherlands share similar challenges and opportunities, and importantly have a shared ambition to step up to the water, climate, and sustainability needs," said Ovink.



Governor John Bel Edwards and First Lady Donna Edwards with former Deltares employee and miller Wijnand Westerveld at Kinderdijk. Photos courtesy of Deltares.



Dirk-Jan Walstra, Deltares Director of Hydraulic Engineering, gives a presentation.



LOUISIANA HONORED FOR NATION'S BEST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Adapted from Information by Louisiana Economic Development (LED)

The Water Campus in Baton Rouge was recognized as the top Resiliency, Recovery, and Mitigation economic development initiative and the best economic development project in the country overall at the 2022 International Economic Development Council (IEDC) Awards ceremony in Oklahoma City.

The Gold and Best in Show honors for the Water Campus were among five awards for Louisiana, the most the state has received since becoming the only IEDC accredited state economic development agency in the U.S. in 2018. The state's rural revitalization program, including LED's Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative, won a Silver Award for Equity and Inclusion programs; and "Louisiana: Building for Tomorrow, Today," LED's multi-platform annual report, won Gold in the Specialty Purpose Website and Bronze in the Annual Report categories.

"Congratulations to the team at LED and the many state, regional, and local partners who have worked so hard to confront some of our state's biggest challenges in ways that create economic opportunities," said Governor John Bel Edwards. "Receiving this national recognition for Louisiana's economic growth and diversification is truly an honor, especially given the importance of our coastal restoration and rural revitalization efforts. Our commitment remains steadfast."

IEDC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization supporting economic developers' efforts to promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities. Its members work for local, regional, state, provincial, and federal government agencies, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities, and a variety of other institutions. With more than 4800 members, it is the largest organization of its kind in the world, and its annual awards are considered among the profession's highest honors.



Tedra Cheatham, LED executive director of state economic competitiveness, displays LED's 2022 IEDC Best in Show Award, with IEDC Chairman of the Board Todd Greene, at the organization's annual conference. Photo courtesy of Matt Wolfe.

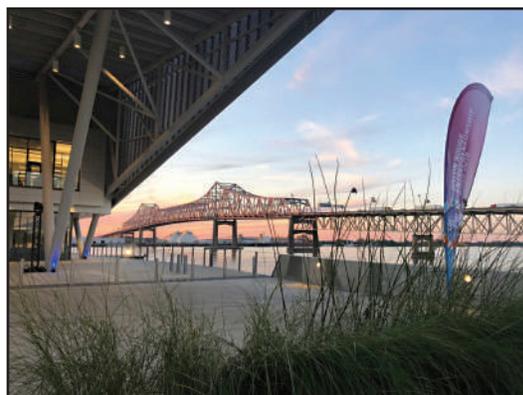


Photo courtesy of thewatercampus.org

"Communities need our profession now more than ever," said Nathan Ohle, IEDC president and CEO. "This year's awardees exemplify the ingenuity, leadership, and determination needed to meet the challenges of today and the future. The winners of IEDC's Excellence in Economic Development awards represent the best of economic development and demonstrate the level of leadership that our profession strives for every day."

The Water Campus opened in 2015; it has earned international acclaim as a hub for public, private, nonprofit, and academic sectors to collaborate and develop innovative solutions for challenges affecting coastal communities and wetlands. The 1.6 million-square-foot campus houses business, residential, government, research, and higher education entities, including the state's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, the nonprofit Water Institute of the Gulf, and the Louisiana State University Center for River Studies.

"The Water Campus was built to bring together the best minds . . . to work collaboratively on some of our most pressing challenges," said Justin Ehrenwerth, president and CEO of The Water Institute of the Gulf. "Together, we're advancing innovative water and climate resilience solutions for Louisiana and exporting that knowledge to communities across the country and around the world. We're honored that the IEDC has recognized this work with such a prestigious award as we continue to deepen collaborations and grow our region's water sector."

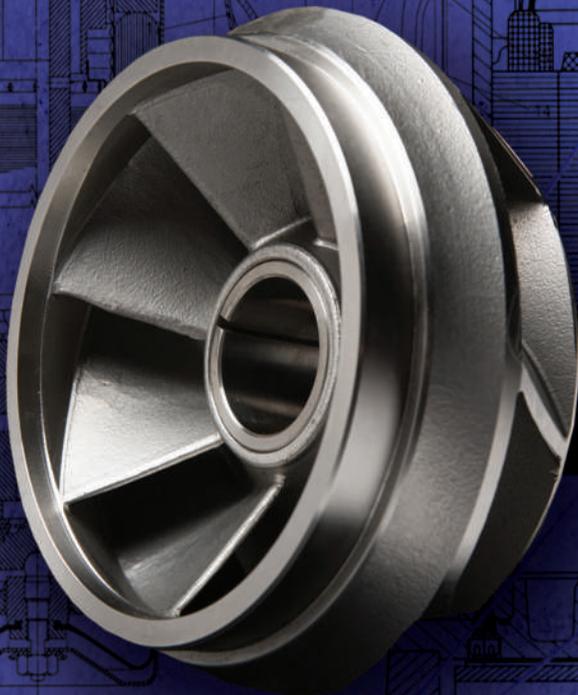
In February 2020, Governor Edwards signed an executive order creating the Governor's Advisory Council on Rural Revitalization to assist and develop communities and attract new projects. With support from LED, the council issued a strategic plan in 2021 addressing concerns to rural Louisiana communities. LED launched its Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative, targeting rural small businesses around the state for second-stage growth while prioritizing the expansion of broadband to close the digital divide faced by many businesses, schools, farms, health care providers, and others in rural parishes.

"Our team at LED is dedicated to creating economic opportunity for communities all across Louisiana," said LED Secretary Don Pierson. "Our success represents the productive partnership we share with Louisiana's business community, economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, higher ed institutions, elected officials, and others. Moreover, this recognition of our hard work is particularly gratifying, because IEDC represents the best in economic development experiences and practices, from the broadest international perspective to the local level."

Numerous other local, parish, and regional Louisiana economic development organizations were honored by IEDC, including Greater New Orleans, Inc., which was named Economic Development Organization of the Year for communities over 500,000 residents.



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