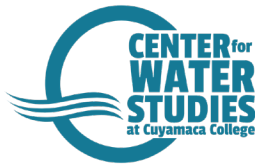


Center of Water Studies Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) Meeting
 Tuesday August 22, 2023
 3:30pm-5:00pm

I. Call to Order- Introduction of Committee Members

Committee Member	Attending
Larry Lyford, Chair, AWWA Chair Elect, Retired Industry Professional Contact: larry.lyford406@gmail.com	X
Joe Young, Lead, Center for Water Studies, Faculty, Program Coordinator	X
Don Jones, Lead, Center for Water Studies, Retired Faculty	X
Alec Mackie, CWEA, Director of Communications and Marketing	X
Andrew Jackson, Otay Water District, Director of Field Operations	X
Chris Castaing, SD County Water Authority, Operations and Maintenance Manager	X
Pedro Castenas, City of Escondido (on behalf of Chris McKinney, Dir of Utilities)	X
Craig Boyd, SD Public Utilities, Deputy Director-Wastewater Operations	X
Darwin Twanger, Viejas Tribal Government, Public Works Director	
David Dalager, SD Public Utilities, Assistant Director-Administration	
Didra Felix, San Elijo Joint Powers Authority, Lab Analyst II-CWEA	X
John Carroll, SD Public Utilities (on behalf of Doug Campbell, Dep Dir-Pure Water)	X
Eva Plajzer, SD County Water Authority, Dir of Field Operations and Maintenance	X
Gretchen Spaniol, SD County Water Authority, Acting Human Resource Manager	X
Jesse Bartlett-May, City of Poway Water Utilities Dept., Water Treatment Manager	X
Ken Morgan, SD Public Utilities, Deputy Director-Water Distribution	X
Kevin Miller, Helix Water District, Director of Operations	X
Kim Thorner, Olivenhain MWD, General Manager	X
Kyle Swanson, Padre Dam Municipal Water District, General Manager	X
Leslie Payne, Sweetwater Authority, Director of Administrative Services	X
Matt Little, City of El Cajon, Director of Public Works	
Michele Berens, Helix Water District, System Operations Manager	X
Peter Vroom, SD Public Utilities Dept., Dep Director, Env Monitoring	X
Quinn Johnze, Lakeside Water District, Operations and Maintenance Manager	
Scott McClelland, Encina Wastewater District, General Manager	X
Sue Mosburg, AWWA California-Nevada Section, Executive Director	X
Tasha Alexander, SD Public Utilities, Supervising Human Resources Analyst	X
Tom Rosales, SD Public Utilities, Dep Director-Wastewater Operations	X
Violet Renick, SD Public Utilities Dept., Ass. Dept. Direct, Env Monitoring	X
Yasmin Arellano, City of El Cajon, Director of Public Works	X



- II. State of the Center for Water Studies (Joe, Don)
- A. **Evolution of the CWS program**-The Center for Water Studies offers mid-skill training needed for 60% of the current water industry jobs. While housed at San Diego Junior College, courses were taught onsite at Alvarado Water Plant. The program relocated in 2003 to Cuyamaca College as a small but viable water and wastewater technology program.
- a. Under the direction of the pre-pandemic Industry Advisory Committee, the program expanded and revamped its entire curricula, offering 29 different courses with 7 different specializations, the most comprehensive hands-on water studies program.
 - b. Leveraging \$3 million in funds from various grant and bond sources along with industry donations, Cuyamaca College remodeled the L building, provided for the construction of the Field Operations System Yard, Backflow Training Lab, and Water Quality and Control Lab to promote active hands-on training and technical skills attainment.
 - c. Currently, HY-FLEX technology has been introduced to expand options for students (combination of both remote and face-to-face instruction). There are 4 HY-FLEX courses for FA2023 semester; the modality will be expanded to more courses in upcoming semesters.
 - d. The new AWTO certificate/degree program has been recently approved through our Curriculum Committee.
- B. **Effect of the Pandemic**-The Center for Water Studies had experienced a significant drop in enrollments during the pandemic and is still struggling with enrollments. The highest yearly enrollment has been in the 400s (when unemployment rate was high) but typically yearly enrollments are usually in the mid to high 200s pre-pandemic. The Center for Water Studies enrollment has improved to almost 200; still not meeting the number of new technicians needed to enter the industry.
- C. **Step to Restore Enrollments**-The Center for Water Studies has been active over the years to recruit targeted populations: women and veterans/transitioning military. Marketing materials have been developed (see sample in provided folders) to promote such recruitment and outreach through the following initiatives:
- a. Warriors2WaterWorks-actively attending veteran events, open to hosting future military career events, supporter of the SkillBridge program-San Diego County Water Authority
 - b. Recruitment of the future workforce (K-12)-CWS tours, high school visits, partnering with the San Diego County Board of Education (SDCOE) to develop a plan to introduce water technology careers to Grades 6-12 student populations.



- c. Women in Water Initiative-yearly conference and support for San Diego Women in Water group.
- d. Invest in Yourself (incumbent workers)-recruiting current employees to obtain advanced training offered by the Center for Water Studies working in connection with established CIP programs
- e. Credit by Examination and Credit by Experience options are now being explored by our newly assigned Credit for Prior Learning Committee.
- f. Recruitment of our 2nd full time instructor. *This will be the 3^d attempt to add a new faculty member to our program.*

D. **Regional Internship Program** (8 week program) - There are only 8 regional interns from a smaller than normal pool of applicants. It is anticipated that there will be a need for more agencies to participate as the applicant pool increases.

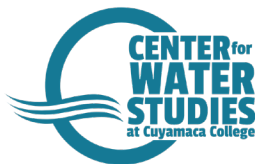
III. Roundtable Discussion (All- Led by Larry)

Prior to the roundtable discussion, the following are in-house reminders per Chair:

- Both college programs (Cuyamaca and Palomar) and their respective AWWA student chapters will continue to need industry support.
- The Fall AWWA Conference is scheduled to take place October 23rd-26th.
- A proposed statewide apprenticeship grant will also allow for on-the-job training leading to employment (grant to pay benefits and 60% of the salary while participating agencies to pay 40% of the salary). More information to come.

Roundtable Responses to "How are we doing? What could we do better?"

- **Regional Internship Program**- interns are well-educated, employable (Olivenhain MWD has hired at least 4 interns); Regional Internship program is very solid; agencies to explore the possibility of getting more than 1 intern at a time; the logistics of "who" will be training and supporting these interns is a concern for some agencies
 - Challenges- \$17 per hour wage is comparably low (entry-level starts at \$25); internship hours during prime working hours in direct competition with other employment obligations, program is only offered once a year (maybe twice a year instead)
- **Lower Cost of Education as Marketing Tool**- Address the lower cost of education to promote interest in the industry, market to those who are concerned with the expensive cost of education (flyers, etc.).
- **Electrical & Instrumentation Process** -Address emerging instrumentation advancements in water and wastewater (calibration, electrical); industry cannot rely on general contractors due to competing wages, skills need to be in-housed.



- Recruit those with translatable skills to enter the industry (former submariners, other Navy personnel skill sets)
- ENI tech recruitment
- Review current course CWS 106 Electrical & Instrumentation Processes
- **Operator Moving into other areas (Maintenance) or out of the industry**
 - Shift work or O/T options no longer appealing
 - Loss of skills investment if operator leaves
 - Emphasizing translatable skills
- **Current Blockages in the Pipeline**
 - Operator Certification Meeting to address modalities and certification delays (August 29th from 1pm-4pm)
 - Online Application for T1-T2 tentatively available December, T-3 TBD
 - Professional Development Credit- It was reiterated that faculty and trainers can receive 50% PD credit for developing courses.
 - Requirement of experience or type of experience to enter the industry
 - The importance of soft skills (desire to learn, etc.); program and agency can teach technical skills but need to look for those soft skills
 - Lower pools of new applicants
 - Need to increase HR staff and address hiring delays
 - Operators not taking courses to upgrading their credentials to earn additional pay increases
- **Continue to Donate Surplus Equipment to Water Studies Programs**
- **High School Outreach**
 - Explore the possibility of dual enrollment (9th-12th grades)
 - Continue building awareness of the water industry through the various partnerships (WEEA, SDCOE, etc.)
 - Acknowledging the Hydro Station, more efforts for 6th-12th grade outreach when career decisions are beginning to be shaped.
- **Marketing to the Next Generation**
 - Review marketing materials to ensure it appeals to the younger population
 - Research contributing set of values that will appeal to the next generation (sustaining the environment, etc.)
 - Become more tech savvy, using social media
 - Develop a speaker pool to go to the high schools/more agency tour accessibility

Action Items Timeline to Follow
Next Meeting to Be Announced