



THE WATER INSTITUTE
OF THE GULF™

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For Immediate Release

The Water Institute of the Gulf Holds Annual Reception

NEW BOARD MEMBERS, ANNUAL REPORT, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES ANNOUNCED

BATON ROUGE, La. (March 31, 2017) – Approximately 150 people attended The Water Institute of the Gulf’s annual reception Tuesday night where President/CEO Justin Ehrenwerth unveiled Water Works, its 2016 Annual Report, and announced new board members and officers, as well as some organizational changes at the Institute.

The Annual Report, available at thewaterinstitute.org or for download [here](#), features the Institute’s year in review including a selection of highlighted projects and programs.

Ehrenwerth also announced new board officers with Ambassador James Joseph as Chair; Rick Richard III as Vice Chair, and Jacqui Vines Wyatt as Secretary/Treasurer. New board members are Jerry Jolly and Ehrenwerth who join continuing board members Kevin Reilly Jr., past Chair; Chip Groat, Past President and CEO; Maj. Gen. (retired) Thomas Sands; and Will Shafroth.

The evening also included a formal announcement of a new organizational structure for the Institute designed to strengthen the organization’s collaborative research across scientific disciplines.

“To better integrate our own scientific endeavors, I’m pleased to announce that Ehab Meselhe is now the Vice President for Science and Engineering who will be overseeing all technical teams to encourage collaboration, increase efficiency, and above all improve the Institute’s ability to provide solutions to the challenges our coastal communities face,” Ehrenwerth said.

Meselhe, formerly the Institute’s Director of Natural Systems Modeling, brings to the position a long and distinguished history in academia and business. In addition to his years of experience in academia, he has worked in the private sector and served as the State Technical Lead for the Mississippi River Hydrodynamic and Delta Management Study.

“His expertise in the technical work we do, as well as his long-standing collaboration with universities, governmental agencies, and businesses, makes Dr. Meselhe the perfect choice to head up our technical departments at the Institute while strengthening our interdisciplinary approach,” Ehrenwerth said.

Denise Reed has moved from Chief Scientist to Vice President for Strategic Initiatives. Dr. Reed’s long-standing work applying science to coastal management issues and her decades of involvement in

Louisiana's coastal restoration and protection efforts makes her uniquely qualified to guide the current and future initiatives of the Institute.

She has worked directly with state and federal agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and NOAA, to guide science-based ecosystem restoration across the country, and will be leveraging this experience of how science relates to the larger scope of community and ecosystem sustainability to expand the Institute's reach to other systems and pressing issues.

Jennifer Butler is now the Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer. She has more than 15 years of experience working in nonprofit, applied research institutes with responsibilities that included management, governance, finance, and audit accountability as well as extensive experience managing grants and contracts.

As one of the original Institute team members, Butler was instrumental in operational start up activities ranging from negotiating initial funding awards to establishing financial and administrative processes. Butler served five years as the Institute's Director of Grants and Contracts where she was responsible for negotiating and managing hundreds of grants and contracts with state, federal, private sector, non-profit and university partners.

Amy Wold, who most recently spent 16 years at The Advocate reporting on coastal restoration, protection, and sustainability, is now the Director of Communications. Her broad knowledge of coastal issues and her ability to communicate the important work the Institute does, will continue to be an asset to the Institute.

Water Works, The Water Institute of the Gulf 2016 Annual Report can be viewed [here](#) or downloaded [here](#).

About The Water Institute of the Gulf

The Water Institute of the Gulf is a not-for-profit, independent research institute dedicated to advancing the understanding of coastal, deltaic, river and water resource systems, both within the Gulf Coast and around the world. This mission supports the practical application of innovative science and engineering, providing solutions that benefit society. For more information, visit www.thewaterinstitute.org.

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