



[www.FLMS.net](http://www.FLMS.net) Spring 2026

**Florida Lake Management Society**  
*Managing Florida's Water Resources Since 1987*

## ***Message from the President***



FLMS President, Gloria Eby and daughter Sophia

### **Waters in Harmony: Linking Lakes to Coast**

Each year, the FLMS Symposium becomes a spark, bringing together scientists, engineers, and innovators who see the world differently but share a common purpose: to push boundaries and elevate what's possible. As we move through the year, let's challenge ourselves to grow, to broaden our perspectives, and to embrace the power of *harmony* in everything we do. We're excited to introduce new topics this year that explore the powerful connection between inland lakes and coastal waters, opening the door to fresh ideas, innovative solutions, and deeper

Make this the year you reach beyond the familiar. Connect with colleagues, share your story, and welcome voices unlike your own. Whether you attend a local FLMS Chapter meeting, mentor someone just starting their journey, or simply choose to engage with new ideas; you're helping shape a stronger, more inclusive future within our profession.

**And mark your calendar: Bonita Springs, September 1-4, 2026.** A gathering built for inspiration, collaboration, and bold new thinking. FLMS is home to extraordinary talent, and together our collective efforts continue to advance the science and stewardship of Florida's vital water resources.

Let's lift each other up, empower the next generation, and carry forward the momentum that has always defined FLMS. Can't wait to see you at the next FLMS event!

*Gloria Eby, MS*

Your FLMS President 2025-2026



## Award Recipients of 2025!



Every year, the FLMS board receives nominations for awards to distinguished members of the FLMS society and our community for their various contributions to Florida's natural resources. Congratulations to our winners!

### Category

### Recipient

#### **Marjorie Carr Award**

FLMS highest honor given for a lifetime of work on Florida's natural resources

**Dr. David Tomasko**

#### **Scott Driver Award**

Contribution to our scientific understanding of Florida's water bodies

**Ralf Brooks, Esq.**

#### **Bob Graham Award**

A person elected to office who demonstrates a commitment to lake and aquatic resource conservation

**George Nugent**

#### **Dr. Daniel E Canfield Jr Volunteerism Award**

A volunteer organization or outstanding individual for significant contributions to the research, restoration, or preservation of our water resources.

**Joseph Dunn**

#### **Ernesto Lasso de la Vega Award**

Given to a professional who has worked to restore, protect and/or advance our understanding of Florida's aquatic resources.

**Dr. Rachel Silverstein**

#### **Marjory Stoneman Douglass Award**

Individuals in the media who report on aquatic resource issues

**Tim O'Hara**

#### **Marissa L. Williams Young Professional Award**

exemplary professional accomplishments and a commitment to water resource protection and management of our watersheds

**Daniel Barber**

*Check out the next page to read more on our awardees!*



**Dr. David Tomasko** holds a Ph.D. in biology from the University of South Florida, a Master of Science in marine biology from the Florida Institute of Technology, and a Bachelor of Science in biology from Old Dominion University. His academic foundation has fueled a career rich in impact, innovation, and leadership. Some of his accomplishments include developing the Sarasota Bay Restoration Plan, advocacy in several science-based policies, and international collaboration in water quality assessments. Congratulations **Dr. Tomasko** on winning this year's **Marjorie Carr award!**



[ralfbrookesattorney.com](http://ralfbrookesattorney.com)

As a board-certified attorney in City, County, and Local Government Law, **Ralf Brookes Esq** has spent over three decades representing public interest groups, homeowners' associations, and local governments in environmental and land use cases across Florida. His work has consistently placed water resource protection at the center of legal and civic action. Some of his key advocacy projects include legal defense of wetland and aquifers, opposition to environmentally harmful zoning changes, and public education and community empowerment. Congratulations, Ralf Brookes on winning this year's **Scott Driver award!**



Throughout his distinguished career, **George Neugent** has been a tireless advocate for the protection and restoration of Florida's coastal ecosystems, particularly in the Florida Keys. His leadership has helped transform water infrastructure, improve canal systems, and secure critical funding for long-overdue environmental projects. Some of his key projects and achievements include the Cudjoe Regional Wastewater System Funding Agreement, the Canal Restoration Pilot Program, and advocacy for local environmental autonomy. Congratulations, **George Neugent** on winning this year's **Bob Graham award!**

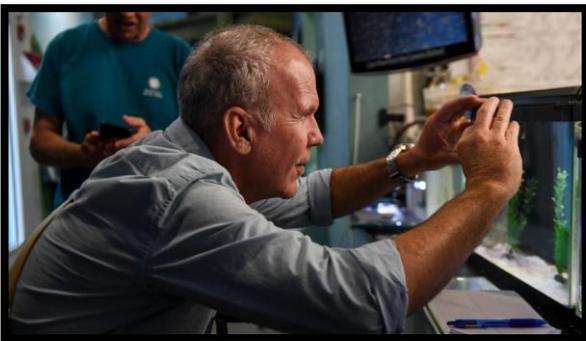


For nearly a decade, **Joseph Dunn** has served as president, executive director, and board member of Friends of Lake Apopka (FOLA), a citizen advocacy group committed to restoring Lake Apopka to its former glory. Once considered Florida's most polluted lake, Lake Apopka is now a symbol of environmental resilience—and Joseph Dunn has been at the heart of that transformation. His signature projects and achievements include a Hydrilla eradication campaign, trail connectivity and ecotourism advocacy, and community engagement and education. Congratulations, Joseph Dunn on winning this year's **Dr. Daniel E Canfield Jr award!**



miamiwaterkeeper.org

As the Executive Director and Waterkeeper of Miami Waterkeeper since 2014, **Dr. Rachel Silverstein** has led transformative efforts to safeguard swimmable, drinkable, and fishable water for all. Her work is a masterclass in combining rigorous science, strategic litigation, and passionate advocacy to protect one of the most ecologically rich and vulnerable regions in the United States. Her signature projects and achievements include The Port Miami Coral Reef Protection Lawsuit, Sewage leak prevention and water quality monitoring, and coral reef restoration and advocacy. Congratulations, Dr. Silverstein on this year's



tcpalm.com

As an environment reporter for TCPalm and a veteran journalist with over two decades of experience at *The Citizen* in the Florida Keys, **Tim O'Hara** has become one of Florida's most trusted voices in environmental reporting. Some of his notable investigative projects are Everglades Rock Mine Investigation, Mangrove Destruction and Lagoon Pollution, Agricultural Pollution and Algal Blooms, and Wildlife and Habitat Displacement. Tim O'Hara, a champion of transparency, a guardian of Florida's waters, and a storyteller whose words ripple far beyond the page. Congratulations, Tim O'Hara on this year's **Marjory Stoneman Douglass** award!



Since Daniel Barber was a young kid, he worked alongside his father and long-time FLMS supporter, Dean Barber, in the field, shaping the future of volunteers and promoting community-driven restoration efforts. As a young professional with the City of Winter Park, Daniel leads various restoration efforts. He has mastered GIS via certification and is considered an expert in lake vegetation assessment and testing. Congratulations, Daniel Barber on this year's **Marissa L. Williams Young Professional Award**

Do you have anyone in mind that you'd like to have considered for an award? Visit <https://flms.net/the-society/awards/> for a list of our award categories and <https://flms.net/the-society/contacts/> to submit your nomination!

# ***What you missed at the Keys Conference 2025!***

## **Students Galore!**

We had a record number of 17 students attending the 2025 conference, many presenting posters or giving oral talks. All students were welcomed on Tuesday night with a get-to-know-you pizza dinner with board members. Oral and poster presentations are reviewed by three judges and monetary awards are given accordingly.

### ***Oral Presentation Winners***

1<sup>st</sup> place – Mary Moody

2<sup>nd</sup> place – Nathan Hewitt

3<sup>rd</sup> place – Lindsay Pegram

### ***Poster Presentation Winners***

1<sup>st</sup> place – Anthony Dues

2<sup>nd</sup> place – Kelton Maystrick



# A full house on the first day!



Keynote speaker, Dr. Evelyn Gaiser



Vendors hard at work making connections



Board member, Eesa Ali sneaking a peak at a student poster



Q&A Session



Board member Leesa Souto



Getting to know everyone during the poster social event



The last day conference survivors!

## What we have been up to...

On October 11, 2025, four of our current board members, Rob Burnes, Emily Keenan, Eesa Ali, and Ernesto Lasso de la Vega, 2 past board members, Ron Hart and Lance Lumbard and our Executive Director, Maryann Krisovitch participated in the 20<sup>th</sup> Lakeland Cardboard Boat Challenge on Lake Hollingsworth. Hosted by the City of Lakeland and the Lakes Education/Action Drive, the contest is held every year to raise lake awareness. FLMS participated in the onsite build competition. Each team is provided with a stack of cardboard, two rolls of duct tape yard stocks and box cutters. Eesa Ali and Ernesto Lasso de la Vega were volunteered to be the paddlers of the S.S. Data Bouys. (Yes Bouys not Buoy otherwise it wouldn't sounds like boys!) The FLMS Team came home with a second-place finish in the adult category. Not bad for first timers!



It starts with one sheet...



You get a bunch of friends with duct tape...



And next thing you know, you're boat is ready!



The "Data Bouys" ready to race



Ernesto & Eesa ready for the first heat



Coming around the final corner!



At the windy starting line



Racers in one of the many heats



A few of the pre-built boats

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## Notes

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Get your abstract in and your hotel reservations made! The FLMS 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Technical Symposium is September 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> at the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point in Bonita Springs. Enjoy the Labor Day weekend with your FLMS friends afterwards!  
See you there!



Did you know that FLMS sponsors innovative lake projects for up to \$5,000? The 2026 recipient will be awarded at this year's conference. The deadline for applications next year is **December 1, 2025**, but you can request an extension. Check out our Love Your Lakes application grant at <https://flms.net/grants/love-your-lake-program/>.

Check out our Career page! We update it regularly with positions from around the state. Submit yours to [Maryann@FLMS.net](mailto:Maryann@FLMS.net): <https://flms.net/announcements-2/job-openings/>

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## ***Farewell to Our Friend***

We miss our friend Dr. Dan Canfield. Dr. Canfield was the founder of Florida LAKEWATCH which has become one of the largest volunteer water quality monitoring programs in the country (some might even say the world!) He was a champion of community-based science and a long-time supporter of FLMS. Recently, Dr. Canfield's son, Daniel, held a memorial for his father with many of his FLMS family in attendance. It was amazing to hear all the stories of how Dr. Canfield touched so many of our lives. You knew when he attended a FLMS conference, there was going to be lively debate! In 2016, and with his approval!) FLMS initiated the Dr. Daniel E. Canfield, Jr. Volunteerism Award to recognize our many volunteer organizations and individual volunteer superstar without whom we couldn't do many of the things we do. He leaves behind a true legacy to the citizens of Florida.

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## ***Our Mission***

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*The mission of the Florida Lake Management Society is to promote protection, enhancement, conservation, restoration, and management of Florida's aquatic resources; provide a forum for education and information exchange; and advocate environmentally sound and economically feasible lake and aquatic resource management for the citizens of Florida.*