



Southeast People: January 2023

Jacksonville, Fla.-based design, engineering, construction and mechanical services firm Stellar has named **Brian Kappel** CEO. Beginning at Stellar as an intern in 1997, he has worked in various company positions, most recently as president and COO under CEO **Mike Santarone**, who will transition to executive chairman on Stellar's board of directors.

Nancy de la Vega is joining Florida-based SchenkelShultz Architecture as a designer in the firm's Estero office. A LEED Green associate, she has five years of experience in architectural and interior design with a focus on corporate, health care, commercial, educational, senior living and master planning projects. De la Vega is an active member of AIA Florida Southwest and currently serves as secretary for the organization. She also had received the local chapter's President's Award in 2021.

Architecture, engineering and consulting firm RS&H has chosen 10 new vice presidents to join the company's team of officers. . They include: **Bob Jones, Carson Lange, Alexandra (Alex) Manning, Brett Metcalf, Elliot Neph, Keith Nix, Cris Pena Jr., Corey Rogers, Erich Thiel** and **Lisa Thoele Dugan**. CEO **David Sweeney** notes the impact each has had on the company, including several who have more than 20 years of experience.



R&H has also has hired **Julio Ramirez** in Jacksonville, Fla., as senior vice president of financial planning and analysis and **Bryan Nicol** as chief strategy officer. Ramirez has more than 20 years of experience in finance, and Nicol has 17 years of private-sector business operations experience.



Lauren Morgan has been chosen as executive vice president for the Tampa Bay Builders Association, leading the 1,000-plus member organization that covers Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco counties. Her priorities will include regional membership development, business and trade group outreach and community education.

Laura Kelley, executive director of the Central Florida Expressway Authority, has announced her intent to retire, effective on March 1. She served in the position since 2014, when the Florida Legislature expanded the transportation agency's jurisdiction from Orange County to include Orlando, Seminole County, Lake County and Osceola County.

Construction firm Impetus has expanded its Nashville team with four new staff members: **Chad Fisher** as preconstruction team leader, **Kendall Lee Jr.** as Nashville infrastructure team leader, **Michael Gay** as project manager and **Tyler Maidlow** as project manager.

JK2 Construction has announced a new leadership team for its Apopka, Fla.-based operation, ushering in the next generation of leadership for the family company. **Rick Admundson** is now president and CEO following the retirement of **Paul Holmes**. **Tucker Holmes** will serve as vice president and chief operating officer; **Brian Colville** is named as director of project management and **Dan Shaffer** becomes director of preconstruction.



Orlando-based engineering and consulting company Universal Engineering Services has appointed **Benjamin P. Butterfield** to the role of general counsel. He has expertise in legal issues connected to commercial transactions, corporate governance and mergers and acquisitions.

Mechanical engineer **Maria Baez** has joined engineering, planning and allied services consulting firm Hanson Professional Services in Orlando. She will help design mechanical and plumbing systems for a variety of facilities. Baez brings 10 years of experience in computer-aided design to the role.



STV, the engineering, architectural planning and program and construction management firm, has hired **Jacqueline Peduzzi** as vice president and business unit leader in central Florida. Based in Tampa, she will focus on the firm's existing transportation and infrastructure relationships in the state. Peduzzi brings more than 20 years of experience in providing project controls, operations and management for transportation and infrastructure projects.

General construction and construction management firm LeChase Construction Services has promoted **Chad Beasley** to senior superintendent based in the company's Southeast region. He will direct the work of subcontractors, suppliers and tradespeople working on the preconstruction, construction and post-construction phases of projects with a focus on safety, quality, productivity and



scheduling. Beasley began his career in 2005 and has worked on many multimillion-dollar projects across North Carolina.



Real estate and construction firm Suffolk has hired **Jay Fayette** as president of its Florida East Coast unit, based in West Palm Beach, leveraging his long relationships and experience in Florida and the Southeast to help the Boston-based firm grow operations in the state, it says. **Pete Tuffo**, in addition to his continued role as president of Florida Gulf Coast, will take on the additional position of director of national gaming and entertainment.



Bill Wenner has joined West Palm Beach, Fla.-based real estate firm Shoreham Capital as vice president of development, overseeing the entire development process for the firm from entitlements to construction and lease and through project completion. Wenner was previously at Vanke US, where he served as vice president.



Roswell, Ga.-based Catamount Constructors has promoted **Mitch Brown** to vice president, operations manager. He has more than 25 years of construction experience in industrial, commercial office, multifamily government and municipal markets to lead all field operations and support the company's growth and staff education.

Paul Holloway has joined Hanson Professional Services Inc. in Raleigh, N.C. as associate mechanical discipline manager, bringing 10 years of experience in mechanical engineering to the role across several states, including North Carolina, according to the firm.



Engineering and professional services firm WSP USA has hired **Davin Ruohomaki** as deputy aviation national business line leader, based in Orlando. A former senior director of the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority, he leads key aviation programs for WSP and acts as principal-in-charge on relevant projects, develops technical concepts and approaches and serves as an aviation representative at industry events. He brings more than 30 years of executive and program management experience to the firm.

Infrastructure contractor Superior Construction has hired **Richard Kirkman** as its new division manager for the Carolina region, developing and pursuing large-scale transportation projects across North and South Carolina and helping expand the

company's portfolio of heavy-civil work. He brings almost three decades of experience to Superior, with a focus on design-build and value engineering. Most recently, he served as division manager for Blythe Development Co.



Mario Nuevo has been named vice president and South Florida leader for HNTB Corp., based in Miami. He will help to address South Florida's growing mobility needs and bring decades of engineering, construction and infrastructure consulting experience to the firm, it says. The move represents a return to the company. Nuevo previously served as transportation group director from 2010 to 2011. He also has held progressively advanced positions at several major engineering firms over the course of his career, from civil and engineering departments manager to most recently serving as Florida business development director at one firm, which HNTB did not identify.