



water for people

KENNETH J. MILLER

— *Founders' Award* —  
CELEBRATION

HONORING OUR CHAMPIONS • JUNE 22, 2021



PRESENTED BY

**Jacobs**



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## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Water For People gratefully acknowledges our sponsors for supporting this year's Kenneth J. Miller Founders' Award Ceremony. We also appreciate the understanding, flexibility, and support of our winners, staff, and sponsors in conjunction with the virtual ceremony.

### PRESENTING SPONSOR

**Jacobs**

"Jacobs is proud to continue our legacy of supporting Water For People through our annual employee giving campaign, which launched in 2003 and since then has raised more than \$3 million. Additionally, numerous employees have volunteered countless hours supporting Water For People. By giving our time, talents and financial assistance to Water For People, we can continue making a difference—helping Water For People serve more regions and communities to bring safe, sustainable drinking water and sanitation to everyone everywhere."

**Susan Moisio**, Jacobs Global Vice President and Water Director

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*Founders' Award*  
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**David LaFrance**  
American Water Works Association

**Eleanor Allen**  
Water For People

KENNETH J. MILLER FOUNDERS'  
AWARD PRESENTATION

CLOSING REMARKS

OPTIONAL:  
AWARDEE BREAKOUT ROOMS

KENNETH J. MILLER

# Founders' Award

2021 AWARDEES



From the first day **SHASHI M. BHATTA** joined the **North Carolina AWWA-WEA Committee**, she has jumped at each opportunity to help. She immediately volunteered to help at the Raleigh 5Ks, has been instrumental in planning the Benefit Concert, has secured several corporate sponsorships for Water For People, and volunteered at the 2019 Annual Conference.

“Providing drinking water and sanitation for the citizens of developing countries is such a noble cause. I come from a country, Nepal, where so many people do not have safe drinking water and sanitation services, which are very basic human needs. I know first-hand how your life is impacted from not having safe drinking water and sanitation. Therefore, I truly believe in the service that Water For People provides and I feel very fortunate to be able to help Water For People in a very limited scale.”



**MARIA F. BRICENO**, an engineer in **EA's** Dallas office, channeled her passion and skill for baking bread into raising money for Water For People. Over a three-month period, she took orders from her co-workers for loaves of her delicious homemade breads, including sourdough, banana, pumpkin, and apple spice. Those ordering were also given the option of making a special request for their favorite homemade flavors. In all, she fulfilled 27 orders and baked 181 loaves – using 120 pounds of flour in the process. Maria donated 100% of the proceeds, and “raised” over \$1,000.

“I believe that solving the water crisis will solve many problems we have in our world, including health and education. Additionally, I believe that clean water is a human right and we all should have it.”



In addition to her role as a Human Resources Business Partner, **GINGER E. BUTLER** supports **CDM Smith's** Water For People Annual Workplace Giving Campaign as a local coordinator in their Syracuse, New York, office. In 2020, she led a strong remote campaign resulting in Syracuse being among their top offices with the highest contributions per capita. Ginger is a true leader, embodies their core values, and CDM Smith's culture of caring.

“I am fortunate to be part of a team at CDM Smith that embraces a culture of giving – something that is important to me, personally. Water For People's mission to provide clean water and sanitation for healthy communities everywhere, aligns not only with my beliefs but also what we do at CDM Smith and what we believe as professionals

and as people. I believe ‘paying it forward’ is not only a responsibility, but a privilege, so I'm excited to participate in any way in this great organization. CDM Smith is a firm I'm proud to be part of, including our long-standing support for Water For People.”



**KELLY COMSTOCK** has been a longtime active volunteer for Water For People through **Georgia Section AWWA**. In 2015, when he was Georgia Section AWWA Chair, he organized the first No Water No Beer Event, with the primary charitable recipient being Water For People. He has continued to organize and chair the annual event. Each year, the event attracts more people and raises more money for Water For People. Over the first 5 events, through 2019, the No Water No Beer events in Georgia have raised over \$24,000.

“Water For People is a great organization that provides the opportunity to give back the most important element to sustain life (safe water) to those in the most need. I have gotten great value from working with others in our industry to support this wonderful cause.”



**CHARLENE DENNIS** has worn several different hats while helping the **San Diego Local CA-NV Section AWWA Committee** to sustain its efforts through the pandemic. She served as vice-chair of the San Diego Committee, helping to manage meetings and keep the group motivated and inspired through the stressful times of 2020. She organized and led the San Diego group's participation in the World Water Classic, including a socially distanced in-person element and virtual participants. She has taken a leadership role in planning Jazz on Tap, one of the group's largest and most successful annual events.

“I love that Water For People changes people's lives – I have realized that being able to turn on a tap and have unlimited water delivered to our homes is something I have always ‘taken for granted’. Imagine, particularly in these COVID-19 times if you were told how important it is to ‘wash your hands’, but you had no ready access to clean water. Providing basic water and sanitation can elevate people's lives so they can focus on school, start businesses and make positive contributions to the world – that is life changing!!”



In **FRANK DUBASIK'S** five years with the **Arizona Water Association Committee**, he has made significant contributions as the Social Media Chair, Secretary, event coordinator, and energetic champion of Water For People. As a former Peace Corps volunteer, his service reflects his ongoing passion for global access to clean water and sanitation solutions for everyone. Frank brings a calming energy, balanced perspective, and passion for global water and sanitation access that expand the impact of the Arizona Committee.

“I served as a Water, Sanitation, and Health volunteer in the Peace Corps from 2015-2017. Volunteering with Water For People allows me to carry on that mission with an organization that is working for sustainable community driven solutions.”





**FARIDA GODERYA, PHD, PE** has been involved in **Texas AWWA-WEA Water For People Committee** for over a decade. During Texas Water 2018, she was thrilled to enjoy breakfast with Water For People CEO Eleanor Allen, and share her unique perspective on the water and sanitation crisis in her home country of Pakistan. Dr. Goderya uses both her personal and professional network to grow support and awareness within Texas, in the form of auction item

donations, sponsorship approvals, and in-kind contributions. Anyone who knows Farida knows that she is not timid about advocating for Water For People and is world famous for persuading folks to donate to the cause.

*"I strongly believe in giving back and doing the right thing. Given water-wastewater being my passion and profession, it is a most plausible and sensible way I can make my contribution to the community, society, and the world. Water is a precious commodity and basic right for all humans; there is a need for clean water and sanitation services all over the world. My ultimate goal is to start Water For People program in Pakistan, where I am from and has a tremendous need as well."*



**CHRISTOPHER A. HARRISON** has been a longtime member of the **Indiana Section AWWA Water For People Committee**. Chris started the annual Sunset Cruise in Syracuse fundraising event in 2015, and he continues to lead the event. A second, family-friendly afternoon cruise was added to expand the event and include more Water For People supporters. The annual cruise has raised nearly \$40,000 for Water For People in its six years! Additionally, Chris is an active and valuable member of the Wine into Water event committee and supports Water For People year-round in various ways. He often shares new ideas and steps up to help. His work with the Water For People has been a boost to the Indiana Section's fundraising.

*"Giving to others is contagious and richly rewarding! To me, happiness is giving time, energy, and compassion to help others. Each small step I take creates opportunity to support families, develop communities, and over time change their world! Being a water professional and community servant, I cannot think of a better organization to partner with than Water For People!"*



**MATTHEW KALLEVANT** has been a star office coordinator in **Carollo's Walnut Creek office** for many years, bringing energy and ideas which have historically raised very high per person average in that office. In addition to his regular office coordinator activities, he went above and beyond to start the annual Wine into Water event. It is an external event which includes the local Committee and other workplace giving partners. It has been

a tremendous success and an event everyone looks forward to. Despite his busy schedule, he also enthusiastically volunteered to be their workplace giving Committee Assistant for the last few years, helping run the campaign on the company level. In this role, he has been instrumental in building the internal website on Carollo Central,

bringing technology to streamline the office coordinators, and present information on their campaign for all employees to see.

*"Ten years ago, I moved from my home state of Wisconsin to pursue my passion – to leave the world a better place than I found it. Water For People is a natural extension of this passion and my chosen career, civil and environmental engineering, and I'm grateful that Carollo is a corporate partner in this important mission."*



**THOMAS A. KELLY, JR.** (aka TK) is one of the original **Water Buffalos (Ride With Purpose Association)** and has been an active and committed member of the Water Buffalos since 2007 and is a constant promoter of unity amongst the Herd. In 2007, he made the ride with a then small herd of Water Buffalos to Toronto, Canada to be initiated as Water Buffalo #15! TK has made the annual ride to ACE every year since 2007 and has always relied on a Harley-

Davidson to get him there. In addition, TK has been an active member of the water industry for many years, volunteering on various committees and numerous fundraisers to help raise money and awareness for Water For People and seven years with the Water Buffalo's as Regional Director I representing the Northeast region. He has also done several presentations and written multiple articles promoting the importance of the Water Buffalos and Water For People. TK volunteers to help spread the word about Water For People and the Water Buffalos every chance he gets.

*"Water is life! The fact that only one-third of the people on Earth have access to a clean and reliable source of water on a daily basis is unconscionable. It is my honor to be associated with an organization like Water For People whose end goal is to bring about changes that improve that statistic in a positive way."*



**CHRISTINE KOSMOWSKI** planned a 2020 **Michigan WEA** fundraiser that required a 4.15-mile, open water swim across the Straits of Mackinac which separate Michigan's lower and upper peninsula. Unfortunately, the pandemic changed her plans. Rather than give up, Chris located Gogouac Lake that was safe for a small group of swimmers with a minimum of support. In August, Chris and six other swimmers took the plunge followed by two kayakers and a pontoon boat. Chris pulled a small float that held snacks and, believe it or not, drinking water. Even when you are up to your ears in the water, you need to stay hydrated! Because she has been a serious swimmer since high school and was well trained, Chris finished the 4.15-mile circumference of the lake in 2 hours and 20 minutes. With the help of family, friends, colleagues, and corporate sponsors, she raised \$3,100 for Water For People.

*"I have worked in the water protection field my entire career in the areas of wastewater treatment, stormwater, drinking water protection, and protection from emerging contaminants, such as PFAS. I feel access to safe drinking water and sanitation is of vital importance worldwide. I believe the methodology that Water For People uses makes their efforts successful and sustainable well into the future, which is why I fully support Water For People and their mission of Everyone Forever."*



**JUSTIN LADNER**, president of Illinois American Water, willingly took on the role as the champion and spokesperson for **American Water's** first-ever virtual 5K in 2020. Despite the demands of his professional work, Justin still makes a point to serve his community and act as a role model for employees. Justin recorded videos to encourage employees to participate. During his video, Justin discussed details of the race but also stressed to employees how

we don't often think about the effort it takes to get access to clean water but for so many around the world, getting fresh, clean water is a full-day activity. He made sure to address that with the current public health emergency, access to clean water for personal hygiene and sanitation has never been more critical in keeping everyone safe and healthy. Employee feedback noted how they felt connected knowing that their colleagues were participating in the same event on the same day. Justin also recorded a thank you video, after the successful 5k that saw more than 360 employees participate, raising over \$7,000.

"Clean, safe, and reliable water should be accessible to all human beings. Unfortunately, this is not reality across the world - particularly in under-developed countries. However, Water For People is working hard to change this and I was honored to support American Water's partnership with Water For People to raise money to further increase critical hygiene education for use at health clinics."



**JENNIFER LIGGETT** has been a dedicated steward of Water For People for the last five years, starting as a volunteer with the Rocky Mountain Section AWWA Water For People Committee and then getting involved with **Jacobs'** Employee Giving Campaign in the Denver office. Her interest grew each year as she volunteered to take on leadership roles by becoming the Denver Office Champion in 2019 and then accepting the challenge of co-leading the

corporate campaign in 2020. Over the years, Jennifer has become a true advocate of Water For People and is a role model for our fellow Office Champions.

"Water For People provides clean water and sanitation to communities in need. Helping those in need is always the right thing. Water For People also has a sustainable model that has proven successful."



In 2020, **Florida Section AWWA** was planning to host the Water Bash in conjunction with ACE. **SHANE MAJETICH** developed the concept of utilizing the Water Bash, not only as a party/fundraiser, but also as a venue where ACE exhibitors could host their client events. This win-win idea offered a readymade event to companies (secured venue, catering, drinks, entertainment, etc.), while also increasing the fundraising potential and allowing companies to

highlight their support for Water For People. Organizing the huge Water Bash event requires a significant amount of time and effort. Shane was a key committee lead with his support, marketing skills, and brilliant concept. Both his Water Bash concept and the new sponsorship base will be long-lasting legacies of Shane's efforts on behalf of Water For People and will reflect well on FSAWWA for many years to come.

"Water For People is an amazing organization that allows me to feel as though my efforts help to contribute to water and sanitation solutions globally. It is a great community of people that share a vision for available and sustainable water resources for everyone. I am proud that I have been able to share some of this community with my kids, to give them a wider view of the world and how their actions can make a difference."



**ALESANDRA REED** is an incredibly dedicated and passionate **Rocky Mountain WEA** volunteer who in 2017, spearheaded an extremely successful beer festival, ThirstyFest, to raise funds and awareness for Water For People. Through her service, she has helped build a team of volunteers dedicated to putting on ThirstyFest raising \$44,000 in 2019. She is the woman with the plan, from logistics to sponsorship to vendors to finance to entertainment. She

hardly misses a beat when thinking about everything that must go into a successful beer festival and never loses sight of the goal, always reminding her team of Water For People's mission, and why they do what they do. This year, Alesandra helped to lead a partnership with Water For People to celebrate the 30th Anniversary at ThirstyFest 2021!

"Water For People's mission continues to be a central source of inspiration in my career as an environmental engineer. I've been fortunate to work for CDM Smith, which has encouraged my volunteerism and holds Shared Commitment, Teamwork, and Integrity as core values, values which are embodied by Water For People. When I started volunteering with my local Committee in 2012, I was grateful to have finally identified an organization which uniquely prioritizes the long-term sustainability and community engagement in its projects, two components which I believe are critical to the success of any mission to address the global water crisis. Water For People's mission inspires and propels our Committee's volunteers to achievements which would be unattainable if not for the clear worthiness of the organization's cause. Over the years, Water For People has connected me with likeminded volunteers and brought me hope that one day, across the globe, Everyone will have access to safe water and sanitation Forever."



**ERIN SEDLAK** has been instrumental in coordinating workplace giving within multiple operating companies under the **Brenntag North America** umbrella. She has been invaluable in building awareness for the need for water charities, and Water For People in particular, throughout the company. She is proactive in inspiring support and collaboration among the Brenntag employees. Erin exemplifies a genuine passion for this charity that is inspiring to

others. Through her example, many Brenntag employees are learning about Water For People and wanting to get involved themselves.

"Water is essential to all life. I deeply believe that every person deserves clean, safe water to drink and a safe place to use the facilities. No parent should ever have to worry if the water they give their child is safe, or to not be able to see their daughter succeed in what they chose because they have to stop going to school. Water For People helps to ensure everyone can be healthy and be given the opportunity to be what they want by educating and collaborating with the community to ensure the solution is sustainable. They teach a community to 'fish' for themselves, truly lifting people to be their best selves."





**SHANTEL SHEPARD** has served the **Pacific Northwest AWWA** Committee for more than 10 years. She has been instrumental in raising funds through their annual silent auction held at their annual conference, as well as being the lead planner of numerous creative fundraising events, including Wheels for Water. Her leadership, creativity, and generous nature has made fundraising efforts successful.

“The impact that Water For People is able to make around the world is so inspiring. It is a blessing to be able to be a part of helping to make that impact and change the lives of so many communities. Water is life and no one should have to do without.”



**MELANIE TURLINGTON** has been an incredible asset to the **San Francisco Bay Area Committee** since she started volunteering with the committee in 2015 after traveling on an Impact Tour in Bolivia. She has been the Vice Chair of the committee for the past three years. Her technical expertise has supported the committee in so many ways - designing committee newsletter and event flyers, PayPal credit card payments, Eventbrite pages, virtual event logistics, etc. She has such a delightful and pleasant demeanor and is so willing to help. Melanie truly believes in the Water For People Mission, and she deserves this award for all her hard work with this Committee!

“Having access to clean water and sanitation opens up so much opportunity for families to thrive. Water For People is important to me because they are helping to create this opportunity in communities that need it the most.”



**CHRIS WADDELL** graciously volunteered to chair the **Kentucky/Tennessee AWWA** and jumped into the role, continuing to plan and assist with events without missing a beat. Chris continues to volunteer his time by being a key player in coordinating the annual golf tournament, assisting with the annual bowling tournament, and working events at the Water Professional's Conference each year. He participates at every event in addition to contribute to the planning of future events.

“When I first heard about Water For People, I had no clue what this organization was. After becoming involved and learning what others less fortunate than myself go through daily, to just obtain drinking water, was a real eye opener. Having a daughter myself, I cannot imagine her having to bear the brunt of obtaining water for the family and basically forgoing any kind of education just for the cycle to repeat itself in future generations. I hope what contributions I am able to make in time will help resolve this.”

## CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THE KENNETH J. MILLER FOUNDERS' AWARD RECIPIENTS!

To learn more about becoming a Water For People Champion,  
reach out to [volunteers@waterforpeople.org](mailto:volunteers@waterforpeople.org).





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