

# COMMUNIQUE

A PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTH  
CENTRAL INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 1

## 10 THE HOUMA NAVIGATION CANAL LOCK COMPLEX

CPRA IS GRANTED \$26.7 MILLION  
FOR PHASE 1 CONSTRUCTION

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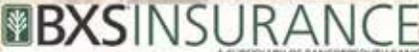
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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



A global Pandemic, a new President, a vaccine, a domestic Oil & Gas Moratorium..... So much has changed in such a short period. An old country music song comes to mind which said “the only thing that stays the same, is everything changes”. (I’m sure someone fancy said it first, but I’ll give the credit to Tracey Lawrence...) In a world where everything changes, I wanted to reassure you that SCIA remains steadfast in its vision and efforts to be a strong voice for our industry, our coast, our region, and our way of life. That has NOT changed!

As you will see in the following pages of this newsletter, a focus of SCIA has been on the ongoing moratorium as well as educating our members, members of all levels of Government, and anyone else who will listen, of its effects on our industry, our workforce, our coast and the trickle down that it will have on much of our way of life in the Gulf coast region. We have hosted Congressmen and Senators, testified in joint committees, had meetings with the Governor, written letters to the White House and put out videos with important information that explains our position and the importance of Energy Independence to our environment, our national security and our working coast. We will not give up and will continue the fight as long as there is a fight left to be had!

We recently received news that Louisiana will move to phase 3. This is BIG news for SCIA. It means that we can finally get back to in person monthly meetings and will also allow our annual Crawfish Boil to take place on Thursday April 8. I hope to see all of you there!

I will continue to pray for you and your families’ health and prosperity.

Stuart Fauchoux

## BOARD MEMBERS



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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



The first quarter of 2021 has been quite busy of SCIA.

- We've hosted three webinars for our members:
  - Congressman Cassidy, working with new administration
  - Congressman Scalise, moratorium effects
  - Senator Allain, proposed tax reform
- Advocated for you
  - Testified at a Joint House Natural Resources & Environment and Senate Natural Resources Meeting at the Capitol
  - Written letters to your delegation
  - Provided you with template letters
  - Collected those letters and sent them on to the delegation
- Arranged for a private tour for Congressman Scalise of a local oil/gas fabrication yard,
- The SCIA Board has had several Conference Calls
  - Chip Cline, Secretary Harris, Jason Lanclos, LED, Gov Office of Coastal Activities
  - Conference Call with Congressman Garret Graves – moratorium and its effects
- Launched our series of informative Membership Update videos from Board President Stuart Fauchoux

**Whew! Now, who is ready for a crawfish boil?** After a year of quarantining, those words sound almost as good as the boil smells! Get ready to gather, network, mingle, whatever you want to call it! Just get your tickets IN ADVANCE to the best event around! \$40 per person, includes crawfish, beverages and seeking folks you haven't seen in a while! Call 851-2201 or email [Kathy@sciaonline.net](mailto:Kathy@sciaonline.net).

Thursday, April 8th 4:30 – 7:30 pm at the Buquet Pavilion at Southdown Plantation. No tickets will be sold at the gate! We are also planning to begin our in-person luncheons in April! Look through the magazine for more info! We can't wait to see you!

Christy Alley Zeringue

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

### Annual Banquet

Lori Davis  
Stephanie Hebert

### Crawfish Boil

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# AG JEFF LANDRY SIGNS ONTO COASTAL LAWSUITS

BY CHRISTY ALLEY ZERINGUE

**Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry announced that he signed on to the \$100 million coastal lawsuit deal. He claims he's backing the settlement to resolve litigation between Freeport McMoran and coastal parishes alleging environmental damage.**

The proposed settlement with Freeport McMoRan Inc. requires the signature of both Landry and Thomas Harris, the secretary of the Department of Natural Resources, representing Gov. John Bel Edwards. Harris has already signed it. While this may seem like a big step, it still faces many hurdles before it can take effect. All 12 coastal parishes must agree to it.

Seven have: Cameron, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John and Vermillion. St. Mary, St. Martin and Iberia parishes have not filed suit, but began Coastal Impact Studies. Terrebonne is in litigation over whether the Parish DA or Parish President has the authority to sign and make the decision. In 2019 Terrebonne DA Joe Waitz signed onto the lawsuit and Parish President Gordon Dove filed a lawsuit against Waitz. Lafourche is not interested in signing on, Parish President Archie Chaisson adding, "Lafourche Parish continues to review the proposed settlement MOU and the litigation that accompanies it. This process needs to be about restoring the coast for damages and at this point we are not there."

Under the proposed deal, which Carmouche has not yet made public, the settlement releases Freeport from liability for any current claims, triggering its dismissal from the coastal parish lawsuits. In exchange, Freeport would deposit an initial \$15 million payment into an escrow account. The company would make additional annual payments, contingent on legislative action, of \$4.25 million over 20 years.

Payments would not be distributed until the Legislature creates a special fund and oversight board to manage the money, according to Landry's office. The board would award money toward projects consistent with the state's Coastal Master Plan, with 60 percent dedicated to state projects and 40 percent dedicated to local projects.

**"THIS PROCESS NEEDS TO BE ABOUT RESTORING THE COAST FOR DAMAGES AND AT THIS POINT WE ARE NOT THERE."**

— ARCHIE CHAISSON,  
LAFOURCHE PARISH PRESIDENT

Carmouche Law Firm claims they would collect nothing under the Freeport deal. They say their firm will only begin collecting payments if they reach agreements with other oil and gas companies.

Landry said the agreement balances environmental protection with a healthy oil-and-gas industry. It does not apply to other similar lawsuits involving dozens of other companies, and Landry said he respects those companies' right to continue to litigate if they chose to do so. However, the plaintiff attorney, John Carmouche and Governor Edwards are both hoping this acts as a framework for other similar actions.

Oil companies have the obvious defense that local and state governments issued them permits for every single action they performed, as well as the fact those companies paid royalties and severance taxes on oil produced through exploration and drilling onshore and offshore in Louisiana's coastal region.

SCIA and other industry advocates argue the companies facing the lawsuits acted properly based on the rules that were in place at the time. They say the lawsuits contribute to an anti-business legal climate that discourages investment in the state by an industry that provides much of Louisiana's coastal restoration funding.

# ANNUAL CRAWFISH BOIL

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# SCIA HOSTS CONGRESSMAN STEVE SCALISE FOR TOUR

In early February, SCIA hosted Congressman Steve Scalise and members of his staff for a tour of a local fabrication yard in lower Lafourche parish.

Scalise first met with members of the company's management to discuss the fourth generation family-owned business, its early days, its progress, and its challenges. Scalise was then given a tour of the facility before meeting and talking with the workers in the fabrication yard, some third-generation oil field workers. They voiced their concerns and asked questions about the Administration's moratorium and how it affects them personally. Scalise vowed to continue to fight for them and the industry.

SCIA then arranged for Congressman Scalise to have a lunch meeting with several CEO's of local oil/gas/service companies and local officials. The group discussed the moratorium, its affects on local businesses and government and how we can advocate for change.

Finally, Congressman Scalise gave a virtual webinar for SCIA members and allowed for over 20 minutes of question and answer time.



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# FLETCHER SEEKS INPUT FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

Fletcher Technical Community College is hosting a number of strategic planning sessions this month. These sessions will help the college identify goals and the strategies necessary to accomplish those goals over the next five years.

Strategic planning is important to an organization's growth as it builds engagement among stakeholders, establishes accountability, and clarifies priorities. Fletcher faculty, staff, and students are invited to participate, and the College urges the community's involvement as well.

"We believe that a strong community college in the Bayou Region is necessary for strong communities and a strong economy," commented Dr. Kristine Strickland, Chancellor. "As we look forward to the next five years, working toward our 75th anniversary, we invite everyone to join us and share your ideas on how Fletcher can continue to meet the needs of our community."

Community sessions will be held a variety of days/times to accommodate schedules. Limited seating will be available in rooms 213/217 of the Schriever facility, and all sessions are available virtually, as well. Those participating virtually must fill out the electronic form at <https://www.fletcher.edu/strategic-plan-2015-2025/>, and a Zoom link will be emailed. Community sessions are scheduled for these dates/times:

March 22, 2021, 12:00pm – 1:00pm or  
March 23, 2021, 4:30pm – 5:30pm or  
March 31, 2021, 7:30am-8:30am

# 2021 MARKS 70TH ANNIVERSARY FOR FLETCHER

Throughout 2021, Fletcher Technical Community College is celebrating 70 years of their provision of education and service to the Bayou Region.

The 70th anniversary logo was unveiled during convocation to faculty and staff on January 11. It will be used throughout 2021, and a number of special events for alumni, students, and the community are planned. Specific details will be announced as the dates draw closer.

Fletcher Technical Community College was originally established as South Louisiana Trade School in 1948. Classes were held on St. Charles Street in Houma. After name changes in 1977 and throughout the 1990s, the college was named L.E. Fletcher Technical Community College in 2003. Mr. F. Travis Lavigne, Jr. served as the chancellor of this new organization.

In 2012, Fletcher opened the doors to a new campus in Schriever, Louisiana. Three years later, the college launched a capital campaign to build a Workforce and Career Center through Act 360, a statewide initiative to improve Louisiana college facilities.

Dr. Kristine Strickland was named Chancellor in 2016, following Mr. Lavigne's retirement in 2014. In 2018, Fletcher was part of a realignment of South Central Louisiana Technical College. Through that alignment, Fletcher gained facilities in Galliano and Thibodaux.

Two highlights from 2020 include being named in The Chronicle of Higher Education as a Best College to Work For, and the announcement that the Fletcher Falcon Enterprise Corporation received a \$2.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration to build a new nursing training facility.

"Our college community is thrilled to announce the kick-off of our 70th anniversary year," commented Fletcher Chancellor, Dr. Kristine Strickland. "Fletcher Technical Community College has continued to serve our community through the continued evolution of our training and curriculum. We celebrate the tremendous impact our institution has had on our community and look forward to continuing the tradition of excellence. We look forward to celebrating with everyone this year!"

SCIA congratulates Fletcher Technical Community College on 70 years of educating the region and beyond!



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# CPRA RECEIVES \$26.7 MILLION RESTORE ACT GRANT TO FUND THE PHASE I CONSTRUCTION OF THE HOUMA NAVIGATION CANAL LOCK COMPLEX

**The Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) has been awarded \$26.7 million to fund the dredging of 1.2 million cubic yards of earthen material to begin construction of a lock complex adjacent to the Bubba Dove Floodgate on the Houma Navigation Canal (HNC). The grant subrecipient, Terrebonne Levee & Conservation District, will perform the dredging activities.**

The grant award comes from the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE Council) using funds from the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012 (RESTORE Act). The Council previously awarded CPRA \$18.5 million for engineering and design of the project. The State has allocated \$366 million in RESTORE Act Spill Impact Component funds to this project over a 15-year period.

The HNC Lock Complex is part of Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan and 2021 Annual Plan as a key component of the Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Protection system, enhancing the goals of both restoration and protection. It is designed to reduce saltwater intrusion and distribute fresh water within the Terrebonne Basin, an area experiencing one of the highest rates of land loss in coastal Louisiana, while also providing hurricane protection when the floodgate and lock are closed to hold out storm surges.

Hydrologic restoration will reestablish approximately 178 acres of brackish marsh habitat. The lock will enable greater flexibility in operating the floodgate by allowing boats to transit the flood control structure while the floodgate remains closed.

"This project will reinforce the ecosystem recovery we are seeing in the freshened areas behind the Morganza levees, with the added benefit of making a good storm protection system even better," said CPRA Chairman Chip Kline. "In the few short years since construction began on these levees, flood walls, and flood gates, the portions built have dramatically reduced storm surge damage to people and homes in Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes. And remember, to date, everything in the Morganza to the Gulf system has been accomplished with no federal money. It's all been funded 100% by the citizens of Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes and the State of Louisiana. This is a testament to what we can achieve when we join forces to accomplish a shared goal."

Adequate funding was a major barrier to accomplishing the planned \$366 million upgrades to the HNC system until the Louisiana 2020 Regular Legislative Session passed Act 89 allowing CPRA to take advantage of the RESTORE Act distribution of funds in annual installments over a decade and a half. With these funds available, Phase 1 construction work can begin this year with Phase 2 anticipated to begin in 2022.

"This huge lock system on the HNC will control the ecosystem in Terrebonne Parish by stopping saltwater intrusion and abnormal high tides that have plagued Terrebonne for decades from high south winds," said Terrebonne Parish President Gordy Dove. "This is a testament to keep striving to move large and small projects forward. Thanks to Gov. John Bel Edwards, the Legislature, and Chip Kline and the great staff at CPRA."

State Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue said the funding signifies the first step in constructing the HNC Lock Complex, which is critical to the survival of the region. "We are thankful for all who have worked tirelessly to make this happen on a federal, state, and local level," Zeringue said. "Funding is always a challenge, however, but this investment will ensure that these communities, which have made a significant contribution to this levee system and the irreplaceable ecosystem it protects, can be sustained for generations to come."

The 36-mile Houma Navigation Canal was constructed by Terrebonne Parish Government in 1962 as a direct water route for commercial vessels between the Gulf of Mexico and Houma's Port of Terrebonne along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

"The benefits of the HNC Lock Complex are threefold: coastal restoration, hurricane protection, and increased access for commercial ship traffic," said State Representative Tanner Magee. "The state, through CPRA, has been incredibly supportive of this project and the people of Terrebonne



Parish, and we are appreciative of their hard work in securing the funding to build this key structure in the Morganza to the Gulf levee system.”

Reggie Dupre, Jr., Executive Director of the Terrebonne Levee & Conservation District, says the positive impacts of the system are almost immeasurable, except for one telling statistic.

“The storm surge in 2005 from Hurricane Rita flooded about 11,000 homes in this area, but with the system we’ve built, only 11 homes took on water after a similar surge from Hurricane Barry in 2019 and the numerous named storms in 2020,” said Dupre. “From 11,000 down to 11—I call that a pretty good start. But the storms won’t stop coming, so we won’t stop improving our system.”

**“THE BENEFITS OF THE HNC LOCK COMPLEX ARE THREEFOLD: COASTAL RESTORATION, HURRICANE PROTECTION, AND INCREASED ACCESS FOR COMMERCIAL SHIP TRAFFIC.”**

— TANNER MAGEE,  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

The RESTORE Act contains five different funding components, one of which directs 30 percent of the funds to each of the five Gulf Coast States based on a formula established by regulation for expenditure for ecological and economic restoration of the Gulf Coast region (the Spill Impact Component). In order for a Gulf Coast state to receive funding under the Spill Impact Component of the RESTORE Act, the states must first submit a plan to the RESTORE Council for the expenditure of Trust Fund monies through that funding component. The State of Louisiana was the first state to have a Spill Impact Component plan accepted by the RESTORE Council, a plan guided by the state’s Coastal Master Plan. Louisiana’s Spill Impact Component plan identifies \$366 million for the Houma Navigation Canal Lock Complex over 15 years.

**178 ACRES OF  
BRACKISH MARSH**

APPROXIMATION OF RESTORED  
HABITAT VIA THE HNC LOCK COMPLEX

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# SPRING COASTAL UPDATES

SUBMITTED BY RESTORE OR RETREAT

**No doubt about it—spring has sprung, and there are exciting things afoot! Here are some recent plans and projects underway on the coastal front:**

## VOLUNTEER BEACH CLEANUP

Restore or Retreat is teaming up again with the Barataria National Estuary Program to host a spring cleanup at Elmer's Island. The popular recreation spot along our coast near Grand Isle was recently restored to full glory, but it needs a little spring cleaning thanks to a series of hurricanes last year and general marine debris washing up daily. We are targeting the end of March for the major volunteer effort—check back with Restore or Retreat and BTNEP for more details soon. But don't worry, if you miss this volunteer opportunity, BTNEP will be regularly cleaning up the beach as part of a long-term partnership with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the state agency managing the island.

## COASTAL ANNUAL PLAN— COMMENTS REQUESTED:

Every year, the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority releases a report of the coastal work recently accomplished, and also outlines projects to be implemented in the upcoming three years. The Fiscal Year 22 Annual Plan intends to invest over \$877 million in coastal projects in the next year alone and over \$600 million for just Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes in the next three years, with the majority going to construction. Significant coastal investments like those outlined could lead to thousands of jobs for our area.

Priority projects on the list include: Shoreline protection for Port Fourchon, the Nicholls Coastal Center, levee projects for both North and South Lafourche and Terrebonne, as well as the completion of major barrier island work and the start of construction for the Houma Navigational Canal Lock, all impacting the entire bayou region. For more information on how you can lend your support for these coastal investments, visit [coastal.la.gov](http://coastal.la.gov) or go to Restore or Retreat's website to view our annual plan one pager under News and Events.

## MAJOR BASIN-WIDE PROJECT REACHES A MILESTONE:

At the beginning of the month, the US Army Corps of Engineers released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion. There is also a companion restoration plan by the Louisiana Trustee Group, which oversees the spending of post-BP dollars which will be paying for the project and the mitigation and stewardship required.

The urgency to build the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion cannot be overstated: Without this project, the future for our coast, communities, economy and wildlife is dire. The Barataria Basin alone could lose an additional 550 square miles of land over the next 50 years, a nightmare scenario that would jeopardize the safety and prosperity of not only Lafourche Parish, but our entire region, threatening our unique culture and our status as Sportsman's Paradise.

For decades, scientists and engineers have considered all the tools available and agree the Mid-Barataria project is the best long-term solution necessary to match the challenges we face from land loss and sea level rise. Is it without challenges? No. But this is our best shot, and we need to take it. A "future without action" would mean a future without Louisiana, and that is something we simply cannot afford or allow. For more information on this project and the DEIS process, please join one of the community webinars on March 22 from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m., March 23 from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., April 20 from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. You can also visit Restore or Retreat's website to register for the webinars under News and Events.

There is no shortage of ways this spring to get active, get engaged and get to know more—let us know how Restore or Retreat can help you support the solution.



**UPCOMING MID-BARATARIA SEDIMENT DIVERSION WEBINARS**  
VISIT [RESTOREORRETREAT.ORG](http://RESTOREORRETREAT.ORG) TO REGISTER.

**MARCH 22**  
5:00–6:00PM

**MARCH 23**  
12:00–1:00PM

**APRIL 20**  
12:00–1:00PM



Restore or Retreat was able to see the first pelican egg on Queen Bess this spring during a recent trip out to the island!

# SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS ARE DUE APRIL 30, 2021

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[SCIAONLINE.NET/SCHOLARSHIP-PROGRAMS](https://www.sciaonline.net/scholarship-programs)

# LOUISIANA LEGISLATURE PUSHES TO CHANGE TAX STRUCTURE

BY CHRISTY ALLEY ZERINGUE

## Leaders of the Louisiana Legislature are pushing to “fundamentally change our tax structure.”

Political leaders have been talking about the need for revamping the state's tax system for many years, but legislators say this could be the year! While some are working independently and others are working in a team, they are all aiming to simplify the structure and eliminate as many exemptions as possible, while remaining revenue-neutral.

Senator Bret Allain, who chairs the tax-reviewing Senate Revenue & Fiscal Affairs committee, is working with Rep. Stuart Bishop, who chairs the tax-writing House Ways & Means Committee, to come up with a package of five to seven bills to consider when the Louisiana Legislature convenes April 12.

As with any odd-numbered year, this year is a fiscal session which presents an opportunity to rethink the state's tax structure. Some of the proposals that will be considered during the legislative session that begins April 12 include:

- **Centralization of Sales Tax Collection** – : This top priority issue would create a single sales and use tax collection board to collect both state and local sales and use tax and would function as a statewide political subdivision. This would allow for businesses owners to have a single source of contact for paying sales tax, rather than a disorderly system that changes from one parish to another. This would require a constitutional amendment.
- **Lower the Individual and Corporate Income Tax Rates** – plan to do this by eliminating the Federal Income Tax deduction for Corporations and Individuals. Eliminating the FIT deduction will require a Constitutional Amendment.
- **Reducing and Simplifying Corporate Franchise Tax** - Louisiana's corporation franchise tax is a net worth tax essentially imposed for the privilege of doing business in Louisiana. It is an unfriendly tax on businesses in addition to state and federal taxes. Only 12 states levy a franchise tax and many of those states are in the process of phasing it out. Senator Allain would most like to not charge on the first \$300,000, but they are even running the numbers to not charge on the first \$500,000 of capital in the state. “This will help relieve about 80% of the filers,” he claims, “maybe not as much for the big boys.” He went on to say, “between the franchise tax and the inventory tax, it is a horrible disincentive for attracting businesses here.”
- **Eliminate Inventory Tax** - Louisiana's Inventory Tax charges businesses for the products they have stored, ready to go into commerce. In Louisiana, local governments collect inventory taxes

from businesses. The state then repays the businesses for the amount collected. Only eight states continue to charge that tax and Louisiana is the only one that calculates what is owed based on the total value of the inventory. Since the 30's Louisiana has charged businesses for inventory they have. In 1991, the legislature decided to write a check back to the businesses which at the time was about \$41 million. In 2016, that burden had grown to \$450 million. Since then, Rick Ward's bill to make businesses choose between getting the credit or getting ITEP has lowered the burden to about \$300 million.

- **ITEP** – The Louisiana Industrial Ad Valorem Tax Exemption Program (ITEP) is an original state incentive program, which offers an attractive tax incentive for manufacturers who make a commitment to jobs and payroll in the state. With approval by the Board of Commerce and Industry and local governmental entities, the program provides an 80% property tax abatement for an initial term of five years and the option to renew for five additional years at 80% property tax abatement on a manufacturer's qualifying capital investment related to the manufacturing process in the state. Legislators are proposing to permanently limit the ITEP to 80% (which would require a constitutional amendment)

- **Modernize Severance Tax** – Currently, the amount the state charges on oil extracted in the state is 12.5%. This rate is higher than any other state except Alaska and triple the rate charged for natural gas. Allain's thinking is that there's been an exemption for horizontal fracking, almost since its inception to encourage new technology and investments in Louisiana. But now, almost 80% of gas is produced in the state of Louisiana by horizontal fracking which is exempted from any severance tax. Although Allain feels lowering the oil severance rate and bringing in a gas rate would be fair, he doesn't want to upset industry and has asked for industry to come up with ideas of their own. Another idea is to charge tax based on volume, not value.

Some argue that making the income tax a flat rate would alleviate problems, but it makes revenue neutrality extremely difficult to almost impossible. Allain feels lowering the income tax rates by removing the FIT deduction is definitely a step in the right direction.

When businesses are looking to locate a facility, Louisiana often loses out because of its tax structures, Allain argued. “Businesses look at the top line, then head to Texas or Florida or somewhere that the tax structure is less complicated.” For now, “The focus of our tax reform efforts will be stability, simplicity and predictability,” said Senator Allain.

# RECOGNIZING OUR CORPORATE MEMBERS

## PLATINUM



## SILVER



## BRONZE



## DANOS HAS AWARD-WINNING YEAR

Danos is the recipient of several notable awards this year including NOIA's Culture of Safety Award, LABI's Workforce Innovator of the Year, LSU's LSU100 and Roaring10, and the company was a finalist in the Center for Offshore Safety's Safety Leadership Award. We are proud of these accomplishments, as they are a reflection of the daily dedication of the Danos employees.

Danos is the recipient of the 2020 Workforce Innovator of the Year Award by the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI). According to the organization, the award honors organizations "that have provided substantial innovations or contributions to workforce development in Louisiana. The award recognizes those who have excelled in creating, implementing or supporting a high-caliber education and/or workforce development initiative."

"Danos is honored to receive this recognition by LABI," said Owner Paul Danos. "Danos has always been intentional about creating a culture that supports overall business goals and objectives. Part of that is focusing on process improvement by embracing technology to advance worker training and competency," said Danos.

This year Danos also received the 2020 Culture of Safety award from the National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA). According to NOIA, Danos was recognized for

"establishing an institutional safety culture through behavior-based safety programs and innovations like virtual reality to enhance worker training and augmented reality to improve work processes."

The award came following the company's best total recordable incident rate (TRIR) of 0.11, while logging a record 8.9 million-man hours in 2019, a 35% increase over the previous high of 6.6 million-man hours.

"We have been developing our safety program and culture for 73 years. While our company has grown, and our service offerings have evolved, one thing that has remained constant is putting people and their safety first. Our safety team is second to none, but every Danos employee plays a role in contributing to our safety culture daily," said Danos.

Danos received further safety leadership recognition this year, as it was named one of three finalists for the Center for Offshore Safety's 2020 Safety Leadership Award. In addition, for the fifth time Danos was named one of the LSU100, Louisiana State University's annual list of the 100 fastest-growing LSU graduate-led businesses. The company also received recognition on LSU's ROARING10 list, which recognizes the ten highest revenue generating LSU graduate-owned or LSU graduate-led businesses.

## SYNERGY BANK ANNOUNCES NEW BANKING OFFICERS

Houma, LA - Synergy Bank's board of directors recently named Wayne Robinson and Katie Portier as Officers of Synergy Bank. The announcement was made by Jerry P. Ledet, Jr., Synergy Bank President.

Wayne Robinson is a 2003 graduate of South Lafourche High School. Mr. Robinson serves as the Gray Office Manager and Consumer Lender. He has 12 years of banking experience, previously holding the positions of Assistant Branch Manager and Loan Assistant, Credit Analyst, Administrative Loan Assistant, and Teller. Mr. Robinson is a member of the Terrebonne Men's Carnival Club and is a Thibodaux United Competitive Soccer coach. He has previously served as a Thibodaux Chamber of Commerce Ambassador.

Katie Portier is a 2005 graduate of Terrebonne High School and received her bachelor's degree in Mass Communication: Public Relations from Nicholls State University in 2009. Mrs. Portier has 11 years of marketing and non-profit experience. She currently serves as the bank's Marketing Director and has previously served as the Marketing Associate. She is a member of the Rotary Club of Houma and Junior Auxiliary of Houma.



Wayne Robinson



Katie Portier

## NLLD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DWAYNE BOURGEOIS ELECTED CHAIRMAN LEVEE CONSORTIUM

NLLD Executive Director Dwayne Bourgeois was elected Chairman of the Coastal Louisiana Levee Consortium during the group's December 10 meeting.

The consortium serves as an advisory panel to the LA Coastal and Restoration Authority (CPRA) with members representing levee districts and parish governments across south Louisiana. The panel is charged with facilitating communication and coordination of efforts of the levee districts, flood protection authorities, and parishes that make up its membership, and advising the CPRA on integrated coastal protection strategies and policies, among other critical duties.

In addition to the NLLD, the South Lafourche Levee District and Terrebonne Levee and Conservation District are also members of the Coastal Louisiana Levee Consortium.

The purpose of the consortium is to facilitate communication and coordination of efforts of the levee districts, flood protection authorities, and parishes that make up its membership; to protect coastal Louisiana, its people, property, and resources; to increase awareness and understanding of integrated coastal protection, including but not limited to conditions, issues, strategies, and policies of flood control, coastal levee systems, hurricane risk reduction systems, and mitigation projects; and to provide one unified voice that is representative of the coastal levee community in communicating information necessary for decision making to policymakers at the state and federal levels and to the Coastal Protection and Restoration Board and the Authority.



**Dwayne Bourgeois**

## CLOSING CEREMONY HELD FOR COHORT 6 LINEWORKER STUDENTS

### All Students Have Secured Employment

Family members, staff, and faculty gathered on December 21, 2020, for the socially distanced closing ceremony of Fletcher Technical Community College's Certified Line Worker Training Program. This is the sixth group to complete the program. Cohort 6 graduates are: Jack Blanchard; Greg Landry; Jordan Caillouet; Nathan Rhodes; Brent Oubre; Ricky Savana; Colt Stevens; and Derek Stevens, Jr. All eight students have secured employment with Linetec Services, South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association, and Chain Electric Company.

"We would like to congratulate all of our cohort six graduates of our line worker program," commented Fletcher Chancellor, Dr. Kristine Strickland. "Once again all of our students have secured employment in the industry. The students have continued the long tradition of hard work and commitment to success and we wish them much luck as they start their careers."

The Certified Line Worker Training Program provides the necessary foundation for participants to begin their line worker career as a helper/apprentice for an electric utility company. Students are encouraged to complete training in Fletcher's CDL Class A course, which immediately follows the Line Worker Training Program. Upon completion of both programs, students receive certifications in NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, and CDL Class A license.

SCIA is proud to have provided a partial scholarship to one of the graduates, Mr. Colt Stevens, as part of our ongoing commitment to workforce training. If you or someone you know is interested in an SCIA workforce scholarship at Fletcher, contact Fletcher for more information.



The sixth class of Line Worker students who have completed Certified Line Worker Training Program were honored December 21, 2020, at Fletcher Technical Community College. Pictured left to right:

**Brent Oubre; Colt Stevens; Ricky Savana; Jack Blanchard; Jordan Caillouet; Derek Stevens, Jr.; Nathan Rhodes; Greg Landry.**

## SYNERGY BANK ANNOUNCES NEW VICE PRESIDENTS & CHIEF CREDIT OFFICER

Houma, LA – Synergy Bank’s board of directors recently named promotions within bank leadership. Gerald Thibodaux II was named Vice President and Chief Credit Officer, while Wade Richard and Rusty Bourg were named Vice Presidents. The announcement was made by Jerry P. Ledet, Jr., Synergy Bank President.

Gerald Thibodaux II is a 1994 graduate of Thibodaux High School and received his bachelor’s degree in accounting in 1998 and his Master of Business Administration in 2001 from Nicholls State University. Mr. Thibodaux is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with 20 years of banking experience, previously having served as Vice President of Operations and Accounting Manager at Synergy Bank, as well as Senior Vice President at another financial institution. He is a member of the Rotary Club of Thibodaux, E.D. White Catholic High School Cardinal Club Board of Directors, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, and Society of Louisiana Public Accountants.

Wade Richard was promoted to Vice President. Mr. Richard is a graduate of Thibodaux High School and received his bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from Nicholls State University. He has 45

years of banking experience, serving the last 9 years as Synergy Bank’s Gray Branch Manager. Mr. Richard is a member of the Raceland Lions Club, Raceland Grand Marshalls Club, Raceland Fire Department, and Central Lafourche Chamber of Commerce.

Rusty Bourg was promoted to Vice President. Mr. Bourg is a graduate of South Terrebonne High School and received his bachelor’s degree from Louisiana State University in 2006. He serves as Synergy’s Administrative Services Manager, overseeing bank security as well as vendor and facilities management. Mr. Bourg also fills the roles of Bank Secrecy Act Officer and Information Security Officer. He serves as a member of the Terrebonne Parish Sheriff’s Community Council.



Gerald Thibodaux II



Wade Richard



Rusty Bourg

## DANOS WINS PRODUCTION OPERATIONS CONTRACT

Danos has been awarded a multi-year contract for production operations with a major oil and gas producer in the Gulf of Mexico. As a result, Danos has transitioned 107 personnel to the company’s employment over a 30-day period with zero safety or operational issues. The contract began in October, and the employee transition was completed on November 9.

Danos will be providing traditional production service operations and maintenance personnel, such as operators, shipping and receiving clerks, and electricians. Many of the positions are located offshore in the Gulf of Mexico, as well as at the customer’s Lafayette warehouse.

“Our production services team is second to none,” said Owner Paul Danos. “In the last few years, we have successfully completed over 10 contract transitions, representing over 1,300 people. I am proud of our team and their ability to remain in lockstep with our customers’ needs.”

Danos has over 2,100 employees working in the Gulf of Mexico, South Louisiana, the Permian and Delaware Basins, the Eagle Ford Shale and the Marcellus Shale.

## BOLLINGER SHIPYARDS DELIVERS 42ND FAST RESPONSE CUTTER STRENGTHENING DEFENSE CAPABILITIES IN THE ARABIAN GULF

Bollinger Shipyards LLC delivered the USCGC ROBERT GOLDMAN to the U.S. Coast Guard in Key West, Florida in late December. This is the 165th vessel Bollinger has delivered to the U.S. Coast Guard over a 35-year period and the 42nd Fast Response Cutter ("FRC") delivered under the current program.

The USCGC ROBERT GOLDMAN is the second of six FRCs to be homeported in Manama, Bahrain, which will replace the aging 110' Island Class Patrol Boats, built by Bollinger Shipyards 30 years ago, supporting the Patrol Forces Southwest Asia (PATFORSWA), the U.S. Coast Guard's largest overseas presence outside the United States.

"Bollinger is proud to continue enhancing and supporting the U.S. Coast Guard's operational presence and ensuring it remains the preferred partner around the world," said Bollinger President & C.E.O. Ben Bordelon. "It is our top priority to ensure that the brave men and women of the Coast Guard stationed in PATFORSWA have the most state-of-the-art, advanced vessels as they work to build and maintain the necessary regional alliances to ensure maritime security in the region. Building ships for the Coast Guard provides critical assets to bolster our national security and advance America's interests, both at home and abroad."

At a PATFORSWA change of command ceremony earlier in the summer, U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area Commander Vice Adm. Steven D. Poulin emphasized the importance of the unit, saying, "During these historical times it is important, now more than ever, that we maintain maritime security operations throughout the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. [PATFORSWA is] pushing forward into the unknown to protect American interests in the region."

PATFORSWA is composed of six cutters, shoreside support personnel, and the Maritime Engagement Team. The unit's mission is to train, organize, equip, support, and deploy combat-ready Coast Guard Forces in support of U.S. Central Command and national security objectives. PATFORSWA works with Naval Forces Central Command in furthering their goals to conduct persistent maritime operations to forward U.S. interests, deter and counter disruptive countries, defeat violent extremism, and strengthen partner nations' maritime capabilities in order to promote a secure maritime environment.

The majority of the USCGC ROBERT GOLDMAN build occurred despite the COVID-19 global pandemic and six named storms impacting the Gulf region, all of which affected Louisiana and two of which made landfall in the state as hurricanes, including Hurricane Laura – a Category 4 storm and the strongest to hit the state since the Great Storm of 1856. Bollinger undertook precautions to ensure the health and safety of employees and not only maintained its schedule but delivered the vessel 3 weeks early.

Each FRC is named for an enlisted Coast Guard hero who distinguished himself or herself in the line of duty. Robert Goldman enlisted in the Coast Guard in October 1942 as a pharmacist's mate. In 1944 he reported for duty aboard the Coast Guard-manned, 328-foot Landing Ship, Tank-66, taking part in a campaign to re-take the Philippines from the Japanese. On November 12, 1944 a Japanese kamikaze plane flew straight for the men gathered on the starboard side of the LST's stern. Goldman witnessed the enemy fighter impact the deck and explode. Goldman's back was on fire from the aviation fuel, his right leg received shrapnel from the crashing fighter, and he suffered severe shock from the sudden crash and resulting carnage. Disregarding his own injuries, Goldman courageously treated the wounded and dying. For his heroic deeds, Goldman received the Purple Heart and Bronze Star medals.



USCGC ROBERT GOLDMAN is second of six cutters destined for overseas operations in Manama, Bahrain.

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## DANOS PROMOTES JUSTIN GONCE TO GENERAL MANAGER OF ONSHORE

Danos is pleased to announce the promotion of Justin Gonce to general manager of onshore. In this role, Justin will lead the company's production services teams in the Eagle Ford, Marcellus and the Permian basins, as well as the project services team in the Permian.

"Justin is a great addition to our production and projects business," said Daryl Rousse, vice president of production operations. "His experience complements what is already a strong team in these areas."

Gonce joined Danos in 2020 as the executive account manager for shale operations, where he supported business development efforts across multiple services lines in the Permian, Eagle Ford, Marcellus, Bakken and other shale basins across the United States.

Gonce, a Texas A&M University graduate, brings 20 years of experience in sales and business development in the oil and gas and construction industries. Prior to joining Danos, he served as senior vice president of operations for U.S. onshore and Gulf of Mexico operations with an international oil and gas service company.

"I am thankful to be a part of the Danos team and look forward to this next chapter as we all grow together," said Gonce.

Danos is also pleased to announce the promotion of Melanie Hill to operations manager of onshore. In her new role, she will oversee consultant services and all land-based opportunities outside of the Eagle Ford, Permian Basin and Louisiana Gulf Coast. Hill joined Danos in 2020 as a business development representative, supporting and developing Danos' shale-based business. A 10-year industry veteran, Hill is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University.

## DANOS PROMOTES STEPHEN GROS TO SAFETY MANAGER

Danos is pleased to announce the promotion of Stephen Gros from lead safety specialist to Gulf of Mexico safety manager. Stephen started with Danos in 2000 and has been a valuable asset to our safety department. Stephen is well-rounded, having supported our IT department, production operations team and the safety department. For the past eight years, Stephen has supported both production services and project services through safety.

Stephen embraces Danos' values and continues to exhibit our high performance traits that separate us from the pack. He is a great example of what caring looks like. One Stephen's strongest attributes is his ability to effectively communicate with employees in the field, upper management and customers. Congratulations Stephen!



Justin Gonce



Stephen Gros

## DELTA COAST CONSULTANTS RELOCATES TO NEW OFFICE

Delta Coast Consultants, LLC is excited to announce the opening of our new main office facility at 631 South Hollywood Rd. Our new location will enable our team to continue to provide quality services to our expanding client base. As we celebrate our seven-year anniversary, we want to thank our community for the support and partnerships we have formed. We will continue to strive to be an active part of our community and provide innovative solutions for the gulf- south region.

Delta Coast Consultants office operates:  
Monday-Thursday (7:30 AM-5:00 PM)  
Friday (8:00 AM- 12:00 PM)



## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING BILL INCLUDES FUNDING FOR FOUR ADDITIONAL FAST RESPONSE CUTTERS

At the end of year, the President of the United States signed into law the omnibus spending bill for Fiscal Year 2021, which included funding for four more Sentinel-class Fast Response Cutters (FRC), allowing Bollinger to build and deliver four more FRCs to the United States Coast Guard. This increases the total number of funded boats to 64.

"It's a great honor to have the confidence of the U.S. Congress to continue the work we're doing in support of the U.S. Coast Guard," said Bollinger Shipyards President & CEO Ben Bordelon. "The Fast Response Cutter program is something we're all proud of here in Louisiana. Delivering vessels on schedule and on budget to the Coast Guard during these challenging times shows the determination and resiliency of our workforce."

All four of the newly appropriated FRCs will be built at Bollinger's Lockport, La. facility.

Earlier this month, Bordelon authored an opinion piece on how an expanded U.S. Coast Guard presence around the globe can "help further the regional partnerships and alliances necessary to curb the creeping influence of America's strategic competitors and adversaries." Bordelon argues that the Coast Guard has the opportunity to establish itself as the preferred regional partner through its work with Patrol Forces Southwest Asia (PATFORSWA), Operation Aiga and elsewhere. Bordelon concludes that "white hull diplomacy should be looked to more and more as a complementary arrow in the whole-of-government quiver."

The FRC program has had a total economic impact of \$1.2 billion since inception and directly supports 650 jobs in Southeast Louisiana. The program has indirectly created 1,690 new jobs from operations and capital investment and has an annual economic impact on GDP of \$202 million, according to the most recent data from the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) on the economic importance of the U.S. Shipbuilding and Repair Industry. Bollinger sources over 271,000 different items for the FRC consisting of 282 million components and parts from 965 suppliers in 37 states.

"We're proud that Bollinger continues to be an economic pillar and job creator in south Louisiana," Bordelon said. "More than 600 of our 1,500-plus employees have important roles related to the FRC program. Without the support of the Coast Guard and Congress for the continuation of this critical program, the security of these jobs would be thrown into question."

The FRC is one of many U.S. Government shipbuilding programs that Bollinger is proud to support. In addition to construction of the FRC, Bollinger is now participating in industry studies for [five] programs, including the U.S. Coast Guard's Offshore Patrol Cutter (OPC) program, the U.S. Navy's Common Hull Auxiliary Multi-Mission Platform (CHAMP) program, the U.S. Navy's Auxiliary General Ocean Surveillance (T-AGOS(X)) program, The U.S. Navy's Large Unmanned Surface Vehicle (LUSV) program and the U.S. Navy's Light Amphibious Warship (LAW) program.

### About the Fast Response Cutter Platform

The FRC is an operational "game changer," according to senior Coast Guard officials. FRCs are consistently being deployed in support of the full range of missions within the United States Coast Guard and other branches of our armed services. This is due to its exceptional performance, expanded operational reach and capabilities, and ability to transform and adapt to the mission. FRCs have conducted operations all over the globe and embarked on journeys as far as 10,620 nautical miles from its port of origin. Measuring in at 154-feet, FRCs have a flank speed of 28 knots, state of the art C4ISR suite (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance), and stern launch and recovery ramp for a 26-foot, over-the-horizon interceptor cutter boat.

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BEN BORDELON, CEO OF BOLLINGER SHIPYARDS

## BOLLINGER SHIPYARDS DELIVERS 43RD FAST RESPONSE CUTTER STRENGTHENING USCG STRATEGIC PRESENCE IN THE INDO-PACIFIC THEATER

Bollinger Shipyards LLC (“Bollinger”) has delivered the USCGC FREDERICK HATCH to the U.S. Coast Guard in Key West, Florida. This is the 166th vessel Bollinger has delivered to the U.S. Coast Guard over a 35-year period and the 43rd Fast Response Cutter (“FRC”) delivered under the current program.

The USCGC FREDERICK HATCH is the final of three (3) FRCs to be home-ported in Apra Harbor, Guam, increasing the presence for the U.S. Coast Guard in the Indo-Pacific Theater. Additionally, in 2020, Bollinger delivered two of six (6) FRCs that will be home-ported in Manama, Bahrain, which are replacing the Island Class Patrol Boats supporting the Patrol Forces Southwest Asia, the U. S. Coast Guard’s largest unit outside of the United States.

“Bollinger is proud to continue enhancing and supporting the Coast Guard’s operational presence and mission in the Indo-Pacific region with the delivery of the USCGC FREDERICK HATCH,” said Bollinger President & C.E.O. Ben Bordelon. “Building ships for the U.S. Coast Guard provides critical assets to bolster our national security interests, both domestically and abroad. We are proud and humbled to be partners in the FRC program.”

The homeporting of three FRCs in Guam is part of the U.S. Coast Guard’s “doubling down on Oceania,” allowing more frequent and longer patrols in an area where the U.S. Coast Guard has increased its presence over the past two years and is aligned with the U.S. position on maritime security in the Indo-Pacific. In the early days of the new administration, President Joe Biden has assured U.S. allies in the region that the United States is committed to “maintaining a secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.”

U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Karl Schultz has previously stressed the strategic importance of the service’s presence in the region saying, “We’re on a trajectory where the geostrategic importance of the Oceania region has not been higher here in decades, and it’s a place that the Coast Guard’s looking to be part of the whole-of-government solution set.”

The majority of the USCGC FREDERICK HATCH build occurred despite the COVID-19 global pandemic and six named storms impacting the Gulf region, all of which affected Louisiana and two of which made landfall in the state as hurricanes, including Hurricane Laura – a Category 4 storm and the strongest to hit the state since the Great Storm of 1856. Despite these challenges, Bollinger undertook precautions to ensure the health and safety of employees and maintained its record of on-time deliveries to the Coast Guard.

Bordelon continued, “Delivering vessels on schedule and on budget to the Coast Guard in these unprecedented times given the COVID-19 challenges that we are all facing shows the resiliency and dedication of our incredibly capable workforce. The FRC hot production line continues to produce and provide stability in the industrial base for the U.S. Government and our Bollinger workforce, assuring economic benefit for the Lafourche Parish Louisiana region, our vendor partners in the 40-plus states that support the FRC program, and our country.”

Each FRC is named for an enlisted Coast Guard hero who distinguished himself or herself in the line of duty. Surfman Frederick Hatch was a two-time winner of the Gold Lifesaving Medal. Hatch was awarded his first medal in 1884 for his actions as a surfman at the Cleveland Life-Saving Station for rescuing the crew of the schooner Sophia Minch. He was awarded his second gold medal in 1890, for his selfless act of courage as he rescued those on board the schooner Wahnapitae, which grounded near the Cleveland Breakwater lighthouse where he served as keeper. His career exemplified the Coast Guard’s core values of “honor, respect and devotion to duty” and serves as an inspiration to other enlisted men and women.

### About the Fast Response Cutter Platform

The FRC is an operational “game changer,” according to senior Coast Guard officials. FRCs are consistently being deployed in support of the full range of missions within the United States Coast Guard and other branches of our armed services. This is due to its exceptional performance, expanded operational reach and capabilities, and ability to transform and adapt to the mission. FRCs have conducted operations as far as the Marshall Islands—a 4,400 nautical mile trip from their homeport. Measuring in at 154-feet, FRCs have a flank speed of 28 knots, state of the art C4ISR suite (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance), and stern launch and recovery ramp for a 26-foot, over-the-horizon interceptor cutter boat.



Bollinger delivers final of three USCG Fast Response Cutters to be home-ported in Guam.

## SEALEVEL CONSTRUCTION RECEIVES EXCELLENCE IN CONSTRUCTION MERIT AWARD FOR PILING PROJECT

Sealevel Construction of Thibodaux has achieved an Excellence in Construction Merit award for their Koch Methanol Piling Project at the new Koch Methanol facility in Vacherie, La. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the award ceremony has been postponed to a later date.

President of Sealevel Construction Richard Roth said, "Our deep foundation crews executed this project safely and efficiently. Receiving this award speaks highly of our team's work ethic, innovation and commitment to safe performance. I am very proud of our team's accomplishment."

As the subcontractor to Brown and Root Industrial Services, Sealevel's portion of the project consisted of splicing all pipe piles once galvanized, driving a total of 1,808 concrete and pipe piles and installing 44 drilled shafts. These pilings stand as the foundations for future pipe racks, bridges and buildings throughout the new facility.

Though there were several schedule changes and delays, Sealevel managed to complete this \$5 million project ahead of schedule, under budget and with zero lost time incidents.

ABC's Excellence in Construction® Awards has become the premier competition within the construction industry that recognizes outstanding construction projects across the nation. The EIC Awards honor the skill and creativity of the entire team—contractor, owner, architect and engineer—responsible for an outstanding merit shop construction project.

"Our industry is essential in ensuring our economy recovers, and these world-class construction projects are examples of the vital part of that economic engine," said David Helveston, President and CEO of ABC Pelican. "ABC Pelican members have time and time again met and exceeded the challenges posed by the global pandemic, abiding by the new health and safety standards, employing innovation and new technologies and delivering these projects with excellence in an entirely new reality. Many of these projects began or wrapped while the world grappled with the uncertainty of COVID-19, and these contractors deserve our applause for upholding the prestigious standards set by this competition."



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