

CASF Foundation funds perpetual scholarships at Everglades University

The CASF Foundation has made a gift of \$60,000 to Everglades University to establish a permanent scholarship endowment at its school of Construction Management. Per the terms of the agreement, the first scholarship will be awarded in 2021.

"This endowment is perfectly aligned with our Foundation's mission to help grow the construction labor pool in South Florida," said CASF President and Stiles Construction Vice President Doug Wallace. "Establishing this endowment and expanding on our relationship with Everglades will provide a lasting benefit to our member companies."

The CASF Scholarship Endowment will generate \$2,500 each year to be divided equally between two scholarships for deserving students attending the Everglades School of Construction Management. To qualify for the scholarship, applicants must be a junior or senior student and must submit an essay that outlines their plans to pursue a construction career in South Florida.

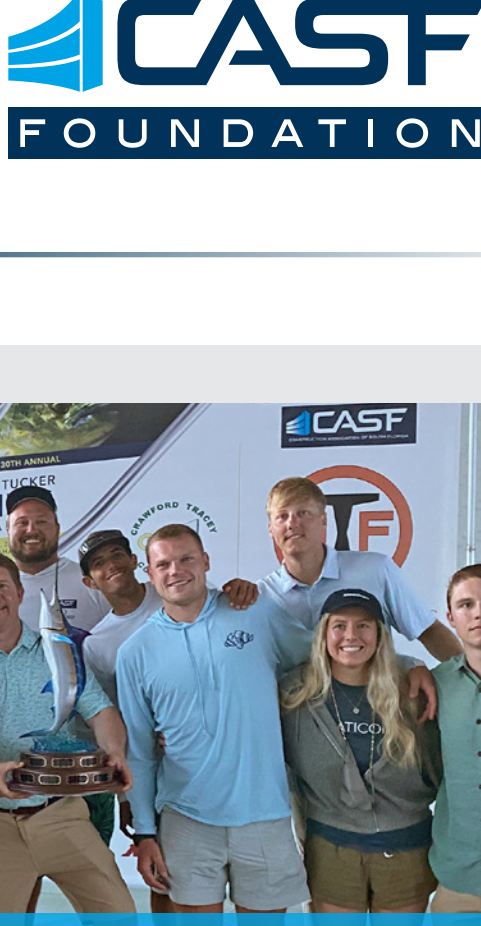
"We aspire to educate and train the future leaders of South Florida's construction industry, as well as to support the needs of the industry," said Everglades University President and CEO Kristi Mollis. "We're excited to build on this relationship with CASF to accomplish both goals."

In addition to the scholarship endowment, CASF is in talks with Everglades to create or expand a mentorship and internship programs, as well as outreach opportunities through CASF's Future Leaders, Women's Council and Skilled Labor committees.

The CASF Scholarship at Everglades is the third such endowment that CASF has established. CASF also has long-standing endowments at the MOSS School of Construction Management at Florida International University (FIU), and the M.E. Rinker School of Construction Management at the University of Florida. The Everglades endowment was funded entirely by the CASF Foundation and made possible by member donations during renewals and at CASF events.

"I'd like to thank all the members who checked the CASF Foundation box during renewals and helped make this endowment a reality," said CASF Executive Director Remy Mackowski. "We created the Foundation with a mission to attract more young people to the construction industry in South Florida. This is the CASF Foundation's first big initiative, and we're just getting started."

Everglades University is a private, accredited not-for-profit University. Everglades University has six campuses in Florida, including Boca Raton and Miami, as well as an Online Division at the main campus in Boca. EU offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees in niche degree majors, including Construction Management, Alternative and Renewable Energy Management, Land and Energy Management and Surveying Management for Roadway and Construction. EU has been recognized and received numerous awards for its programs, including recognition as a 2021 US News and World Report Best Colleges as a Best Regional University in the South.



Straticon captures top two spots at the 2021 CASF Tom Tucker Fishing Tournament

Straticon Founder and CEO Jeff Hardin entered two boats that finished first and second at the 30th Annual CASF Tom Tucker Fishing Tournament, held June 5th at the World Resorts in Bimini, Bahamas. Hardin's boat, El Jefe, bested the field of 25 boats with 438 total points. Straticon entry Emma Lou finished a close second with 434.4 points.

"It's great to win," Hardin said, "but what really makes it special is that our team shared a unique experience. We had a great day fishing, and lots of fun with industry friends on a weekend getaway in the Bahamas. Winning against such a competitive field was just the icing on the cake."

In addition to Hardin, the El Jefe crew included Mike Gonzalez, Bernie Perez, Connor McNamara, Chloe McNamara and Chase Hardin. The fishermen and guests aboard the Emma Lou were Jesse Galvez, Ryan Merritt, Shaun Tuthill, Eugene Vasquez, Kyle Snyder and Wayne Henthorn.

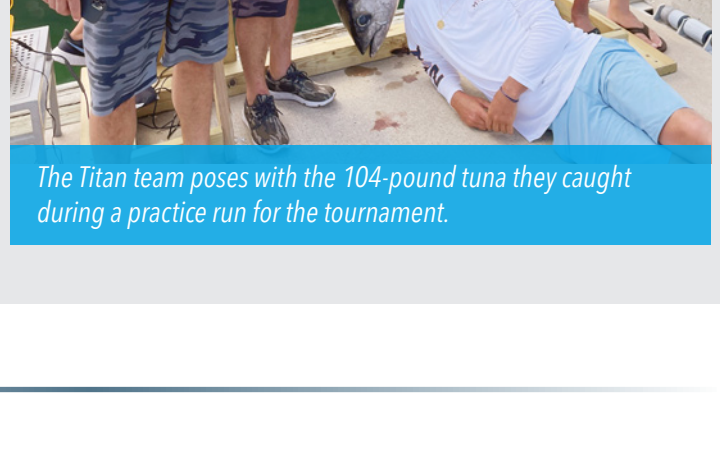
The Titan Structural team aboard the Vitamin Sea finished in third place. The Titan team of Zack Edwards, George Gore, Jon Warren, Trent Streeter, George Athanasopoulos, Jon Reisert and Alex Amaya also caught the tournament's largest official tuna at 58.1 pounds. During a practice run the previous day, the Titan team reeled in a whopping 104-pound tuna. That catch did not count towards their tournament-day haul but was the weekend's single most impressive fish. TWG Enterprises aboard the Frequent Sea reeled in the tournament's largest dolphin at 35.3 pounds.

After all the fish were weighed, the finishers at the top of the tournament leader board were:

- 1. EL JEFE Straticon
- 2. EMMA LOU Straticon
- 3. VITAMIN SEA Titan Structural
- 4. SEA SUN Miller Glass & Glazing
- 5. SHAKA Hypower
- 6. OUTNUMBERED Universal Engineering

This year's tournament marked the 30th anniversary of the CASF event. In 2011, the event was renamed in honor of Tom Tucker, an avid fisherman and active CASF Fishing Committee member who succumbed to that year to lymphoma at the age of 46. Every year since then, CASF has donated a portion of tournament proceeds in Tucker's honor to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

CASF's event partners for the 30th annual Tom Tucker Fishing Tournament were title sponsor Steel Fabricators, Crawford Tracy, Hypower, Go-Tilt Construction, Southeast Mechanical Contractors, Advanced Stucco, Miller Glass & Glazing, MOSS, HexArmor, Central Civil, Maschmeyer, Builders Plus, Speedy Concrete Cutting, Titan Structural, Diligent, Structural Roof Systems, Right Way Plumbing, Bateman Gordon & Sands, Shurhold and Universal Engineering.



The Titan team poses with the 104-pound tuna they caught during a practice run for the tournament.

CASF Awards FIU Scholarship: "There are no words to express my gratitude."

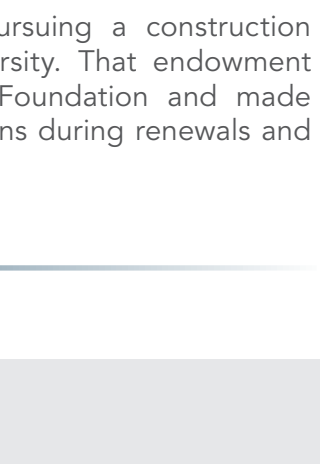
In Spring 2021, Florida International University (FIU) student Sheila Ramos was awarded a \$2,000 CASF Scholarship to continue her studies at the MOSS School of Construction. Ramos applied for the scholarship, which is presented annually from a perpetual endowment established by CASF.

"From the bottom of my heart, thank you for this scholarship," Ramos said. "There are moments in your life when you think everything is possible, and there are moments when you doubt. Then an opportunity like this knocks on your door and makes you believe again that everything is possible. Please acknowledge there are not enough words to express my gratitude."

CASF has been presenting scholarships to construction-studies students from FIU since 1992. In that same year, CASF presented its first scholarship to a student from the University of Florida M.E. Rinker

School of Construction Management. The association continued to pay for scholarship until the early 2000s when it established perpetual endowments at both universities. The CASF endowment have been awarding annual scholarships ever since.

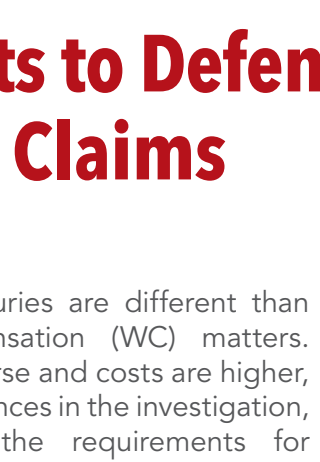
This year, CASF established a third permanent endowment for students pursuing a construction degree at Everglades University. That endowment was funded by the CASF Foundation and made possible by member donations during renewals and at CASF events.



Sheila Ramos

CASF Staffer to Become Officer Rose

The COVID pandemic prompted many individuals to reevaluate their lives. One of those was CASF staffer Latoya Rose, who is moving back to her home State of New Jersey to enroll in the Police Academy.



Latoya Rose

"This is something I've always wanted to do," Rose said. "I tried years ago and missed the [qualifying] obstacle course by one second due to an injury. I thought that was the

end. But it never left my mind, and I realized I have another chance to accomplish my dream."

Rose moved from New Jersey to South Florida to attend Barry University. She earned both a BS degree in Business Management, and an MBA. Shortly after graduation, she joined the CASF team. Latoya's calm demeanor, friendly nature, and desire to help endeared her to the membership.

"Latoya will be sorely missed," said CASF Executive Director Remy Mackowski. "At the same time we're excited for her to be pursuing her life goal. She'll be a valuable addition to any department, and we look forward to hearing about her inevitable future successes."

Six Key Points to Defend, Manage and Settle Catastrophic Claims

By Amy Siegel Oran

Claims for catastrophic injuries are different than typical workers' compensation (WC) matters. Obviously, the injuries are worse and costs are higher, but there are also clear differences in the investigation, the claim handling, and the requirements for settlement.

For starters, we have to recognize there are three different types of catastrophic claims:

- Those resulting in seemingly minor injuries that grow and develop into a significant permanent disability,
- Those that are clearly disastrous from the moment of the accident, and
- Those that result in death.

Even amongst those subcategories there are variations in the discovery process, management process, and settlement process. There is an exorbitant amount of information, but it boils down to these six key points:

1. The scope of discovery and investigation should be consistent with the nature and seriousness of the injury. Meaning, while we would not dig into someone's personal medical history all that deeply if they sustained a broken finger, if they fell off a building, we would need to search the records for signs of narcolepsy, epilepsy, vestibular dysfunction, and any number of conditions that could cause someone to accidentally fall.

2. We pay what we owe, but not a penny more. Our goal in all claims is to ensure we provide legitimately injured employees with the benefits to which they are entitled under the law; but, that we cut them off if the employees try to obtain more than is permitted. We always try to ensure we provide board certified well-respected physicians to treat our injured workers, but in these cases, we have to go the extra mile. If the injured worker needs in-patient care, we must make certain the facility meets or exceeds safety standards, is well-staffed by trained personnel, and has physicians available in case of emergency. If home modifications are done, we ensure the installer is qualified, licensed, and bonded before we rely upon him or her to make the house safe for the catastrophically injured patient.

3. Empathy and sympathy factors play a role, so use them to your advantage. Defending a case is always a contentious position, but then dealing with injuries of this nature, we have to work extra-hard to diffuse the anger and hurt. We cannot allow a paralyzed man to take the witness stand and tell the Judge his boss never even called him after he broke his back on the job. As the lawyer, I have to ensure the transcript of a widow or widower's deposition reflects I was comforting not attacking. It is unacceptable to look at these injuries as just a business injury, it is extremely personal to the person and the family whose life has been so fundamentally changed; big picture, if you go into a mediation with an angry injured worker it will be much more difficult that if you face an employee who feels it was an accident but that at least his boss and employer care about him.

4. Don't pay for the funeral; find another way to be the caring company. If an industrial accident leads to the death of an employee, one of the benefits available under Florida law is reimbursement of funeral benefits of up to \$7,500.00. However, that is only due if the death was causally related to (more than 50% caused by) the job. If that benefit is provided before the investigation is completed, and it had not actually been due but had been paid, a Judge could find the employer and its carrier acquiesced to the compensability, and with that comes the open door to dependency benefits of \$150,00.00. It's OK to give money to help the children or even just generalized money to help the family, but not reimbursement or direct payment for funeral costs.

5. Accidents are often worse than they first appear. Many catastrophic injuries will impact organs and other bodily functions beyond the core injury itself; spinal cord injuries are high on that list. When one is bed-bound, his or her skin deteriorates, is more susceptible to infections, and organs are unable to support all they need to. We are responsible for the secondary effects of the accident. Employee but true example: if a paralyzed male employee has erectile dysfunction and cannot procreate, there are circumstances in which the employer/carrier will pay for the surgery to extract sperm and perform in vitro fertilization. It may be an extreme example, but in my practice, it is one I have seen many times.

6. Settlement is almost always the goal, but it's never easy. Like in WC cases, catastrophic claims are better when they're closed. To accomplish that goal though your team has to deal with Medicare Set Asides, CMS approval, present value of PTD benefits, possible SS offset, and annuities, and potential guardianships. If your settlement is in the six or seven figure range, don't come to the table unless you have a very experienced team handling your money.

TAKEAWAY
To successfully handle a catastrophic claim, every member of the defense team -- the employer, adjuster and defense counsel -- must be fully committed. The costs and the risks are too great to assume someone else is handling it.

As an employer, hopefully you will never have to face such a case. But if you do, being prepared can make all the difference in the outcome.

Amy Siegel Oran is a Partner at Kelley Kronenberg focusing her practice on Workers' Compensation
www.kelleykronenberg.com/attorney-profiles/amy-b-siegel/



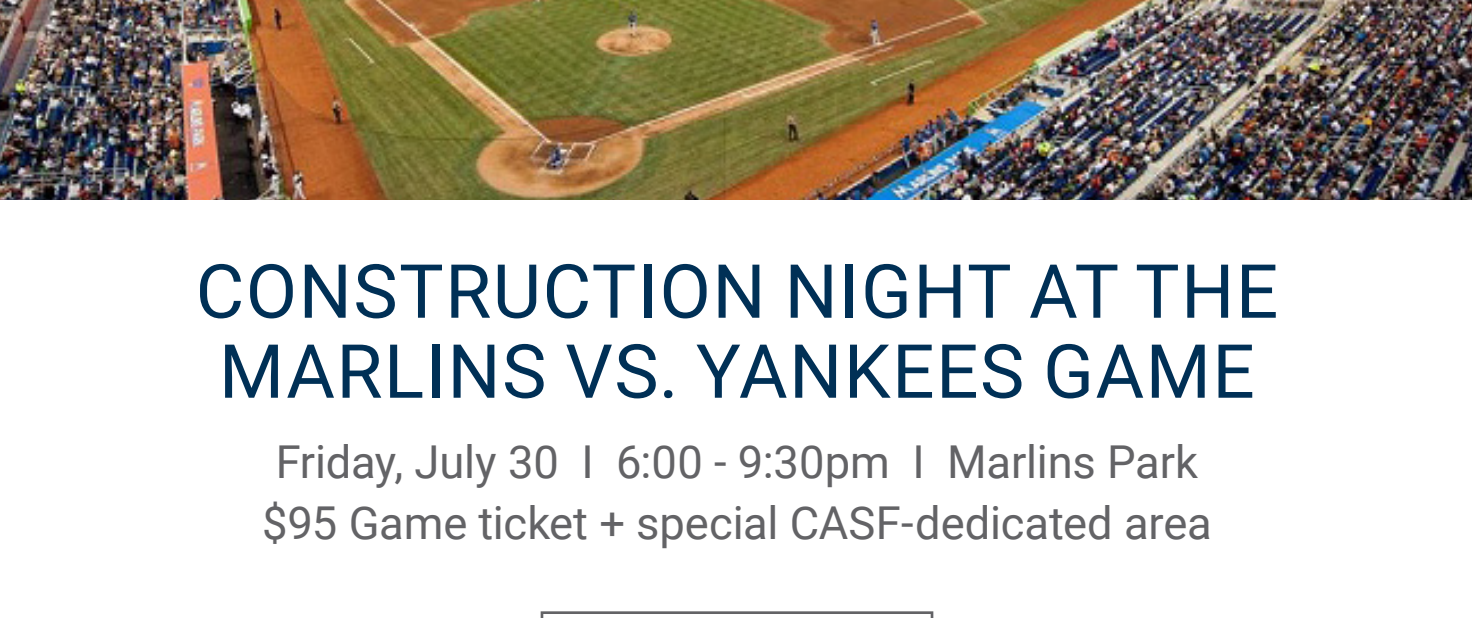
UPCOMING EVENTS



SUMMER NETWORKING SOCIAL

Thursday, July 15 | 5:00 - 7:00pm
Sistrunk MarketPlace & Brewery

REGISTER NOW

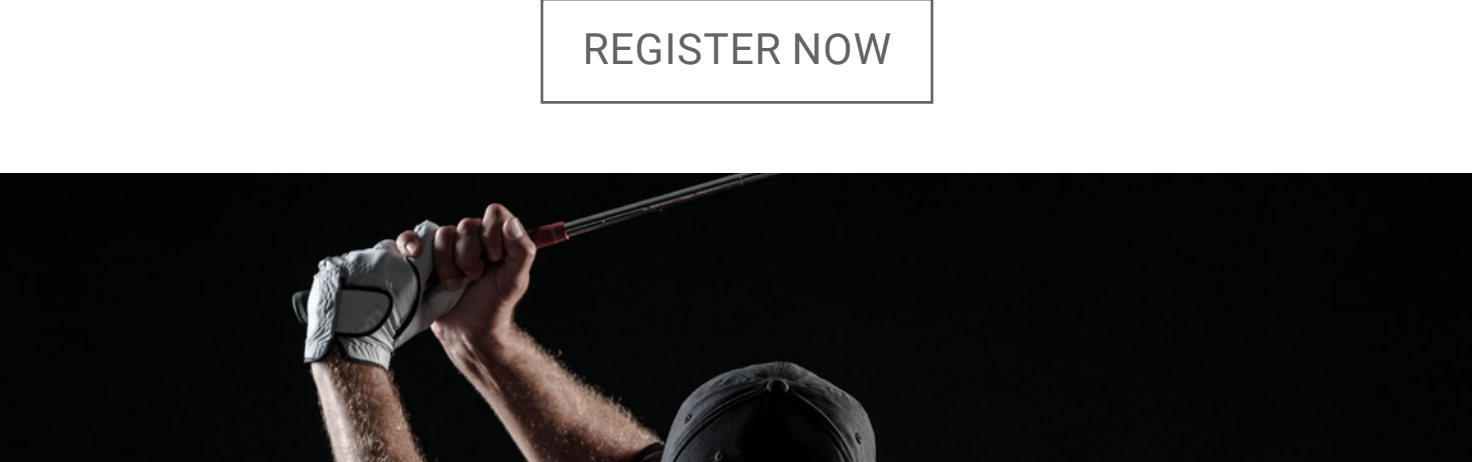


Jorge Morros Executive Vice President Plaza Construction
Jeff Hardin Founder/CEO Straticon Construction
Travis Serpas Vice President MOSS Construction

SOUTH FLORIDA CONSTRUCTION EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE

Thursday, July 22 | 8:30 - 9:30am
This session will be held via ZOOM meeting
Complimentary event for CASF members | \$40 for non-members

REGISTER NOW



CONSTRUCTION NIGHT AT THE MARLINS VS. YANKEES GAME

Friday, July 30 | 6:00 - 9:30pm | Marlins Park
\$95 Game ticket + special CASF-dedicated area

REGISTER NOW

71ST ANNUAL CASF INSTALLATION & AWARDS BANQUET

Thursday, August 19
5:30pm Registration & Reception | 6:30pm Dinner & Program
Huizenga Pavilion at Broward Center of the Performing Arts

REGISTER NOW

CASF CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC

Thursday, October 7 | 11:00am - 5:00pm
Jacaranda Country Club

REGISTER NOW