



The Power Source

Igniting the Future of Florida



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Stephanie, you are relatively new to the energy industry but not new to your profession in government relations, policy, and advocacy. What led you to pursue a career in energy and what inspires you to stay involved?

I was drawn to the energy sector because it's where some of the most exciting innovations are happening – like advances in renewable energy, smart grid technology, artificial intelligence and distributed generation. These developments are reshaping how we produce and consume energy. What inspires me to stay involved is the fast pace of change and the significant impact this industry has on our daily lives and our communities. Being part of a field that's crucial to our future and seeing the tangible results of our efforts is incredibly motivating.

Describe your educational background.

I have a bachelor's degree in political science from Florida State University. Going to school in the capitol city allowed me to be able to have hands on policy opportunities throughout my time in college. The experiences I gained interning on political campaigns and in the Governor's office was invaluable as I moved into my first professional role.

The policy work you do can be underestimated but we believe it is critical to sound regulatory practices and energy delivery. How do you explain the relationship between work before the Legislature and day-to-day energy delivery of services?

Policy work before the legislature directly supports the daily delivery of energy services. It involves emphasizing the impact of proposed regulations, highlighting their value, and ensuring that policymakers understand how regulations could affect energy delivery. Taking an educational approach helps to shape sound regulatory practices that facilitate efficient and reliable energy services for our communities.



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You are no stranger to civic service and currently, you also serve on CareerSource Florida. What are two major issues impacting today's energy workforce?

The energy workforce faces two main challenges: evolving technology and a growing skills gap. As technology advances, jobs are transforming, but the supply of skilled talent hasn't kept up with the demand. This shortage of skilled workers in energy supply chains leads to project delays and inefficiencies. Aligning training with state college systems, apprenticeships, and engineering schools is crucial to address this gap and meet the needs of the modern energy sector.

With so many important roles and family responsibilities, what advice would you give for work-life-play priorities?

I've had to focus on creating good work-life balance because it's easy for me to get absorbed in the professional aspect of my life. I enjoy working, and my role often requires operating outside of a standard 9-5 schedule. What's been most helpful to me is figuring out and setting boundaries that make sense for both personal and professional ease, as well as prioritizing things that give me peace of mind. I recharge by taking long walks outside and through personal travel to immerse myself in other cultures and new experiences.

This year's Forum theme is The Power of Collaboration. Describe one example of collaboration you've worked on for TECO or Peoples Gas.

A strong workforce is essential to our local economy and the communities we serve, as well as to delivering the energy that powers our modern lives. Electrical line workers maintain Tampa Electric's system 365 days a year and work tirelessly to safely restore power in the event of an outage. Quality training and access to electrical line worker jobs is vitally important. So, we've partnered with Hillsborough Community College (HCC) to create a workforce development program for future line workers. TECO and HCC collaborated to create the curriculum, provide instructors and build a training yard that offers hands-on learning with tall poles to practice essential skills. In addition, TECO provides scholarship funding and program equipment. Graduates leave the program equipped with the fundamental knowledge and skills needed to pursue career opportunities as line worker trainees in the electric utility industry. They can also apply for line worker positions at TECO.