

THE MILLENNIALS - OUR NEXT GENERATION OF MEMBRANE EXPERTS

By: **Raul Gonzalez**, AVISTA TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

The median age in the water treatment industry is estimated to be 40-50 years old, falling within the Generation X demographic. This aging population is looking for successors - opening up opportunities for millennials like me to enter the workforce. As a new professional in the membrane industry as well as in the early stages of my career, I want to share my experience with other young professionals.

I began in the industry as an intern working as a number cruncher for a water district. I honestly did not know a thing about membrane separation but was fortunate enough to work with a knowledgeable group that was willing to teach me the fundamentals. My engineering studies provided a broad basis for my future career. The decision on how to apply this knowledge was not clear until I actually touched a membrane. I knew at that point I wanted to be in the water industry for the long haul! Upon completion of the internship program I was given the opportunity to join a water treatment chemistry company, where I continue to learn and grow in this industry.

In a short time, I have had the opportunity to visit multiple sites, present at workshops and meet people from all over. It amazes me how small the water treatment industry is for it being such a large industry sector. It's like one big community! I'm surrounded by generations of knowledge which can be intimidating when I think about the big shoes I have to fill. In my experience, the willingness of my peers and predecessors to share their experience and collaborate to see things in a new way inspires me. I'm reminded that water treatment is still a developing industry where a young professional like me can make a significant impact.

I continue to learn and am thankful for everyone that I have crossed paths with. An operator once told me, "every time I walk into a new facility I become a student of that facility." I leave you with this: *be a student of everyone you cross paths with and do not be afraid of asking questions.*

Visit Us Online!



Go to the [Members Only](#) page, sign in and find all the great benefits you receive with being a member of the Southwest Membrane Operator Association (SWMOA) at www.swmoa.org.

Here are some quick links

[Photo Gallery](#)

[Board of Directors](#)

[Event Calendar](#)

[SWMOA News](#)

[Resources Page](#)

[About SWMOA](#)



Let your friends at other water districts know about SWMOA

We are dedicated to providing a forum for membrane system operators to exchange information, experience and knowledge. As important, we provide educational credits through our workshops and hands-on training necessary for Operator Certification. Our goal is to make our vital industry stronger and the technology more reliable. Prospective members can find application information online on our website at www.swmoa.org.

Take Full Advantage of SWMOA's Publication Emails!

- ◆ Workshop Announcements and Reminders
- ◆ Symposium Announcements and Reminders
- ◆ Awards Nomination Announcements and Reminders
- ◆ Newsletter Announcements

Are you having trouble receiving our event publication emails? - Please check your Junk mail box
Is your SPAM filter holding these emails from your inbox? - Please check your SPAM mail box
Please remember to add swmoa.org and totalevent.org to your email system's White lists!