

construction safety veteran, to bring together safety, health and risk professionals with OSHA, universities and colleges, attorneys, and safety vendors to develop best practices for improving workplace safety.

Wessin is employed by Sims Crane, Florida's premier crane and equipment provider, as the company's South Florida Safety Director.

The South Florida SAFE chapter now has nearly 500 members, with that success spurring the opening of additional chapters throughout Florida and beyond, according to Wessin.

"As SAFE celebrates its five-year anniversary this year, we are adding chapters in Tampa, Orlando and Jacksonville, as well as opening Texas chapters in Dallas, Houston and San Antonio," said Wessin, who also is SAFE's President. "In 2018, we plan to open an additional 20 chapters across the United States, and in 2019 another 20 chapters."

The Tampa and Orlando SAFE chapters opened in June and the Jacksonville SAFE chapter opened July 10. The Texas chapters are expected to come online later this year.

Wessin attributes SAFE's success to several key factors:

- SAFE meetings are free to attend each month and are open to the public, allowing the organization to include smaller companies who may not employ a full-time safety person.

- SAFE's monthly meetings feature dynamic presentations about current, relevant safety topics. SAFE members also receive a weekly newsletter, the SAFE Weekly Review, free of charge.

- SAFE works closely with the federal government and area OSHA offices to promote workplace safety and best practices. SAFE signed an alliance with OSHA in 2013 that was renewed in 2015. In 2017, OSHA announced that SAFE was one of the most successful alliances in the nation and that OSHA wanted to renew the alliance for five more years.

SAFE also focuses on giving back to the communities the organization serves. SAFE's Change4Change Program collects cash donations in a hard hat at every monthly meeting, with the funds collected donated quarterly to a local charity. In addition, SAFE supports and promotes local food banks throughout the year and conducts a November food drive. In December, SAFE conducts a toy drive, delivering toys to a local children's hospital.

For more information about SAFE, visit the website at www.safetyalliance.org.

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