

Gulf Coast Power Association: A History (1983-2024)

I. THE GENESIS OF AN ASSOCIATION: COGENERATION AND EARLY GROWTH (1983-1993)

The story of the Gulf Coast Power Association begins in the early 1980s, a time when cogeneration was emerging as a significant topic within the energy sector. Following the passage of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (PURPA), a group of about twelve engineers, each possessing a keen interest in cogeneration, began to meet informally. These meetings laid the groundwork for what would formally become the Gulf Coast Cogeneration Association (GCCA). The earliest available record of this nascent organization is dated June 18, 1984, marking the official beginnings of an association that would shape the conversation around power in the Gulf Coast region for decades to come.

Initially, the GCCA was established as a Houston chapter of the International Cogeneration Society (ICS), connecting it to a broader network of professionals interested in this emerging technology. During this period, the association marked several key milestones that would define its character. Cogen Technologies became the first corporate member in July 1984, signaling the importance of industry partnerships to the organization's financial well-being. The first newsletter was published in January 1985, which provided a crucial platform for disseminating information about industry participants, regulatory developments, and association activities. That same year, in August, the first lunch meeting was held in Houston, establishing a tradition of regular gatherings for networking and discussion that continues to this day. The following year the first public meeting was held, a half-day conference entitled "Cogen in the Oil Patch", providing a platform for state regulatory commissioners from Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma to engage and discuss key topics.

However, the GCCA's relationship with the ICS was not to last. By 1986, disagreements between the national organization and the regional chapters led to a separation, and the Houston group declared its independence, charting its own course as an organization deeply rooted in the specific needs and challenges of the Gulf Coast energy landscape.

During these formative years, with David Olver as Executive Director, the GCCA also began to engage with regulatory bodies, carefully following the notices of the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). GCCA members attended hearings and submitted comments on cogeneration-related cases, asserting its voice in the shaping of energy policy. In November of that same year, Houston Lighting and Power Company (HL&P) joined as the first electric utility corporate member. As the GCCA found its footing, it sought to create formal organization as well by setting membership dues, and beginning work on the Association Bylaws.

II. TRANSFORMATION AND A BROADER VISION (1994-2003)

As the 1990s progressed, the GCCA recognized a significant shift in the energy landscape. The interest of its members was expanding beyond cogeneration towards Independent Power Projects (IPPs), driven by the passage of the Energy Policy Act of 1992. This prompted the association to re-evaluate its mission and its identity. In 1994, the organization revised its focus to promote a competitive power market that was accessible to all consumers, signaling a move away from its exclusive focus on cogeneration.

This significant change was reflected in the association's very name. The Gulf Coast Cogeneration Association became the Gulf Coast Power Association (GCPA), a transformation that spoke to its broader vision and its commitment to representing the full spectrum of interests within the evolving energy sector. This broader focus contributed to a period of sustained membership growth, strengthening the GCPA's financial position under John Stauffacher's leadership as the second Executive Director after the retirement of Mr. Olver.

However, the early 2000s brought new challenges. The energy trading downturn had a short-term impact on GCPA's membership, conference attendance, and finances. Despite these difficulties, the association's strong foundation and the quality of its programming allowed it to weather the storm and emerge even stronger.

III. INNOVATION AND EXPANSION INTO THE DIGITAL AGE (2004-2012)

The years following the energy trading downturn were marked by a period of innovation and expansion. GCPA sought to enhance its offerings and reach, particularly through technological advancements and the development of new programs. Conference attendance continued to grow, and in 2009, the Spring program was expanded to a day-and-a-half format, offering attendees a more comprehensive and immersive experience. Robust luncheon programs in Houston and Austin continued to attract a strong following, providing a vital forum for networking and discussion. The introduction of special briefings added a new dimension to GCPA's offerings, providing timely updates and insights on critical issues facing the industry.

In 2006, GCPA made a significant investment in the future of the energy sector by establishing a scholarship program. This program, later named the GCPA David Olver Memorial Scholarship fund, reflected the association's commitment to supporting the next generation of energy professionals. In that same year, the organization established the Pat Wood Power Star Award.

During this time, GCPA also embraced the digital age, transforming its communication strategy to better engage with its members and the wider industry. The monthly printed newsletter was replaced by an electronic version in 2004, and in 2012, the newsletter was superseded by postings and discussions on the GCPA LinkedIn site. GCPA established its social media presence, creating LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook accounts to better connect with its

audience and share information. As GCPA prepared for the fourth decade, Mr. Stauffacher announced his planned retirement, and Tom Foreman was selected as the new Executive Director, set to take the helm in 2013.

IV. A WIDER HORIZON: GEOGRAPHIC REACH AND NEW INITIATIVES (2013-2018)

Under Mr. Foreman's leadership, GCPA embarked on a period of significant geographic and programmatic expansion. One of the most notable initiatives was the launch of the emPOWERing Women program in 2013, aimed at supporting, developing, and networking women in the electric power industry. This program quickly gained momentum, hosting leadership conferences, issuing newsletters, and partnering with other organizations to promote women's advancement in the field. GCPA began focusing on electric power events outside of Texas, including the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) and Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO). GCPA made its presence in New Orleans, Louisiana for its MISO South briefing, and its involvement grew.

The association also began to focus on the electric power market in Mexico, taking steps to engage with the industry and promote dialogue across borders. Initiatives included meetings in Mexico City, the development of a bilingual glossary of terms, and partnerships with Mexican energy organizations.

As GCPA expanded its reach and scope, it also invested in its infrastructure, transitioning from consultants to staff and enhancing its internal operations. This included securing insurance, establishing a business line of credit, and conducting a financial audit to ensure sound financial management. A new website was launched in April 2017 to provide a better user experience and facilitate engagement with the association's growing membership. By 2018, GCPA had established itself as a key player, not just in Texas, but also in neighboring regions and Mexico.

V. NAVIGATING DISRUPTION: GCPA IN THE PANDEMIC ERA (2018-2024)

The period from 2018 to 2024 presented both opportunities and unprecedented challenges for the GCPA. The year 2018 concluded with the organization at a peak, having expanded its reach into new markets and launched successful initiatives. However, the shifting political landscape in Mexico and the onset of a global pandemic would soon require a significant shift in strategy and operations. In mid-2018, Mr. Foreman announced his retirement from GCPA at the end of 2018. Following a comprehensive and competitive selection process, Kim Casey, a former Board member, was chosen and assumed the role of Executive Director in January 2019.

In late 2018, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) assumed the Mexican Presidency. His administration quickly moved to curtail the Mexico Energy Reform, prioritizing energy sovereignty over the competitive market GCPA had sought to foster. Recognizing this change, GCPA made the strategic decision to withdraw from the Mexican market, re-allocating resources to initiatives closer to home.



In 2019 and 2020, GCPA doubled down on its regional focus, expanding the MISO SPP Regional Conference and drawing increased attendance from key stakeholders in those markets. The Association also continued to champion women in the power sector, staging successful emPOWERing Women Leadership conferences in January 2019 and 2020. These events provided invaluable networking and professional development opportunities for women in the industry.

The momentum gained in these years was abruptly halted by the arrival of the global pandemic in early 2020. The emergence of COVID-19 forced GCPA to make the difficult decision to cancel its Spring conference, a flagship event that had long been a staple of the association's calendar. However, demonstrating resilience and adaptability, GCPA pivoted to a virtual format for its Fall 2020 conference. This innovative approach allowed the Association to continue to deliver valuable content and connect with its members, even in the face of unprecedented restrictions on travel and gatherings.

The year 2021 proved to be exceptionally challenging. In addition to the ongoing impacts of the pandemic, the energy sector was rocked by Winter Storm Uri, which caused widespread power outages and industry chaos across Texas and the surrounding region. This crisis further underscored the importance of GCPA's mission to foster informed dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders. The association played a crucial role in facilitating conversations about the causes and consequences of the storm, as well as potential solutions to enhance grid resilience.

Despite these challenges, GCPA emerged from the pandemic era stronger than ever. By 2022, thanks in large part to the financial diligence and acumen of Ms. Casey, the association was once again thriving. Membership numbers rebounded, conference attendance increased, and GCPA's reputation as a leading voice in the power sector remained intact.

However, change was again on the horizon. In 2023, Ms. Casey announced her intention to resign as Executive Director in 2024. This announcement triggered a comprehensive executive search effort by GCPA, seeking a leader to guide the organization into its next chapter. After a thorough and competitive process, former Board member Barbara Clemenhagen was selected and hired as the new Executive Director, assuming the role in May 2024. The year 2024 was dedicated to this leadership transition. In addition to onboarding the new Executive Director, the Association launched a new GCPA website and implemented a new association management software platform, solidifying its technological infrastructure and preparing GCPA for continued success in the years to come. The period from 2018 to 2024 tested the organization's adaptability and resilience, but ultimately demonstrated its unwavering commitment to serving its members and advancing the energy industry.

Appendix: GCPA BOARD 1995-2025

Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer	Executive Director	Board Members
1995	Paul Ruwe	Marianne Carroll	Jim Lanier	Alan Smith	David Olver	John Hart, Bob Hurt, Jack Johnson, Felix Ludwig, Fred Machinchick. Chris Stauffer, Carrie Parker Tiemann
1996	Paul Ruwe	Marianne Carroll	Jim Lanier	David Sims	David Olver	Jack Johnson, Felix Ludwig, Fred MachInehick, Carrie Parker Tiemann, Bob Reilley, Alan Smith, Chris Stauffer
1997	David Sims	Fred Machinchick	Tom Anson	Alan Foley	David Olver	Mark Darby, Tom Foreman. Pete Golde, Ed Murphree, Charles Pierce. Paul Ruwe, Bob Webb
1996	Fred Maehinchick	Henry Bunting	Tom Anson	Diana Naylor	David Olver	Tom Foreman, Pete Golde, Paul Ruwe, David Sims, Joe Synnott, Bob Webb, Bob Hanes
1999	Henry Bunting	Diana Naylor	Tom Anson	David Sims	David Olver	Tom Foreman, Bob Hanes, Robin Kittel, Paul Ruwe, Jeff Schroeter, Mike Shinn, Joe Synnott
2000	Diana Naylor	Jeff Schroeter	Tom Anson	David Sims	David Olver	Kim Casey, Tom Foreman, Bob Hanes, Robin Kittel, Mike Shinn. Joe Synnott, Pat Wilkins
2001	Jeff Schroeter	Mike Shinn	Tom Anson	David Sims	David Olver	Kim Casey, Tom Foremen, Bob Hanes, Robin Kittel, Diana Knox, Joe Synnott, Pat Wilkins
2002	Mike Shinn	Bob Hanes	Tom Anson	Jim Collins	David Olver	Kim Casey, Don Chandler, Keith Emery, Tom Foreman, Diana Knox, Jean Ryall, Jeff Schroeter
2003	Bob Hanes	Jim Collins	Tom Anson	Keith Emery	David Olver	Kim Casey, Don Chandler, Tom Foreman, Darrell Hayslip, John A. Moore, Paul Ruwe, Jeff Schroeter
2004	Jim Collins	Tom Anson	Henry French	Keith Emery	John Stauffacher	S. "Bala" Balakrlshnan, Tom Foreman, Darrell Hayslip, Bob Hanes, John A. Moore, Paul Ruwe, Jeff Schroeter
2005	Tom Anson	Keith Emery	Henry French	John Moore	John Stauffacher	S. "Bala" Balakrlshnan, Tom Foreman, Darrell Hayslip, Bob Hanes, Jim Collins. Rich Rapannani, Paul Ruwe
2006	Keith Emery	Darrell Hayslip	Henry French	John Moore	John Stauffacher	Tom Anson, S. "Bala" Balakrlshnan, Tom Foreman, Bob Hanes, Jim Collins. Bob King, Brad Jones, Paul Ruwe, Marcie Zlotnik
2007	Darrell Hayslip	John Moore	Henry French	Marcie Zlotnik	John Stauffacher	Tom Anson, S. "Bala" Balakrlshnan, Marianne Carroll, Keith Emery, Tom Foreman, Bob Hanes, Bob King, Brad Jones, Paul Ruwe

2008	John Moore	Brad Jones	Tom Anson	Marcie Zlotnik	John Stauffacher	David Bodden, Amy Brand, Marianne Carroll, Keith Emery, Tom Foreman, Bob Hanes, Darrell Hayslip, Bob King, Paul Ruwe
2009	Brad Jones	Marcie Zlotnik	Mary Zientara	Keith Emery	John Stauffacher	Tom Anson, David Bodden, Tom Foreman, , Darrell Hayslip, Bob King, Irwin Kowenski, John Moore, Paul Ruwe, Mark Walker
2010	Marcie Zlotnik	Tom Foreman	Mary Zientara	Keith Emery	John Stauffacher	Tom Anson, Calvin Crowder, Darrell Hayslip, Brad Jones, Bob King, Irwin Kowenski, John Moore, Paul Schulze, Mark Walker
2011	Tom Foreman	Calvin Crowder	John Moore	Keith Emery	John Stauffacher	Tom Anson, Mary Anne Brelinsky, Brad Jones, Bob King, Irwin Kowenski, Paul Schulze, Chris Shugart, Mark Walker, Marcie Zlotnik
2012	Calvin Crowder	Paul Schulze	Chris Shugart	Keith Emery	John Stauffacher	Tom Anson, Mary Anne Brelinsky, Tom Foreman, Brad Jones, Bob King, Irwin Kowenski, John Moore, Mark Walker, Marcie Zlotnik
2013	Paul Schulze	Mary Anne Brelinsky	Irwin Kowenski	Marcie Zlotnik	Tom Foreman	Tom Anson, Calvin Crowder, Keith Emery, Brad Jones, Bob King, John Moore, Kenan Ögelman, Chris Shugart, Mark Walker
2014	Mary Anne Brelinsky	Kenan Ögelman	Irwin Kowenski	Marcie Zlotnik	Tom Foreman	Tom Anson, Calvin Crowder, Keith Emery, Brad Jones, Bob King, John Moore*, Paul Schulze, Chris Shugart, Mark Walker
2015	Mary Anne Brelinsky	Kenan Ögelman	Irwin Kowenski	Marcie Zlotnik	Tom Foreman	Tom Anson, Calvin Crowder, Keith Emery, Brad Jones, Bob King, Paul Schulze, Chris Shugart, Mark Walker, Allison Wall
2016	Bob King	Allison Wall	Tom Anson	Mark Walker	Tom Foreman	Kristy Ashley, Mary Anne Brelinsky, Calvin Crowder, Keith Emery, Todd Hillman, Irwin Kowenski, Kenan Ögelman, Paul Schulze, Chris Shugart
2017	Allison Piper	Mark Walker	Kristy Ashley	Chris Shugart	Tom Foreman	Tom Anson, Mary Anne Brelinsky, Katie Coleman, Calvin Crowder, Keith Emery, Todd Hillman, Bob King, Kenan Ögelman, Paul Schulze
2018	Mark Walker	Katie Coleman	Rebecca Bollenbach	Mark Dreyfus	Tom Foreman	Tom Anson, Kristy Ashley, Mary Anne Brelinsky, Calvin Crowder, Keith Emery, Todd Hillman, Allison Piper, Paul Schulze, Chris Shugart

2019	Mark Walker	Katie Coleman	Rebecca Bollenbach	Mark Dreyfus	Kim Casey	Tom Anson, Kristy Ashley, Mary Anne Brelinsky, Calvin Crowder, Keith Emery, Todd Hillman, Allison Piper, Paul Schulze, Chris Shugart
2020	Katie Coleman	Mark Dreyfus	Beth Garza	Rebecca Bollenbach	Kim Casey	Tom Anson, Jim Barkley, Donna Benefield, Barbara Clemenhausen, Keith Emery, Mark Egan, Todd Hillman, Brian Lloyd, Paul Schulze
2021	Katie Coleman	Mark Dreyfus	Beth Garza	Rebecca Bollenbach	Kim Casey	Tom Anson, Jim Barkley, Donna Benefield, Barbara Clemenhausen, Keith Emery, Mark Egan, Todd Hillman, Brian Lloyd, Paul Schulze
2022	Mark Dreyfus	Beth Garza	Barbara Clemenhausen	Brian Lloyd	Kim Casey	Tom Anson, Jim Barkley, Donna Benefield, Rebecca Bollenbach, Katie Coleman, Keith Emery, Mark Egan, Todd Hillman, Paul Schulze
2023	Mark Dreyfus	Beth Garza	Barbara Clemenhausen	Brian Lloyd	Kim Casey	Tom Anson, Jim Barkley, Donna Benefield, Rebecca Bollenbach, Katie Coleman, Keith Emery, Mark Egan, Daryl Brown, Paul Schulze
2024	Beth Garza	Brian Lloyd	Donna Benefield	Mark Egan	Barbara Clemenhausen	Tom Anson, Jim Barkley, Rebecca Bollenbach, Katie Coleman, Mark Dreyfus, Keith Emery, Daryl Brown, Paul Schulze
2025	Beth Garza	Brian Lloyd	Donna Benefield	Mark Egan	Barbara Clemenhausen	Emily Jolly, David Kelley, Jim Barkley, Rebecca Bollenbach, Katie Coleman, Mark Dreyfus, Keith Emery, Daryl Brown, Paul Schulze