



June 18, 2014  
#140618-FACACC

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## **Commissioner Jim Melvin earns FAC Advanced County Commissioner Designation**

*--Florida Association of Counties graduates Melvin from secondary certification program--*

The Florida Association of Counties presented Santa Rosa County Commissioner Jim Melvin with the Advanced County Commissioner designation following Santa Rosa County completion of a comprehensive study program developed by the association. Commissioner Melvin received the designation along with 12 other county commissioners during an awards ceremony held at the FAC Annual Conference in Orange County, FL.

Launched by FAC in 2006, the Advanced County Commissioner education program, "The Florida Forum for County Leaders," is an advanced leadership program designed for graduates of the Certified County Commissioners program. This year, the program has been held in Alachua County and saw 13 commissioners graduate in June with a total of 145 graduating since the inception of the program in 2006.

"This certification allows our citizen electorate to become experts in county government improving their communities," said FAC Executive Director Chris Holley. "Through FAC's education programs we are able to teach commissioners how to advance their policies through the complexities of government bureaucracies."

The ACC program is organized as a series of three seminars, with 27 hours of course work. The course content focuses on leading within Florida's counties. Participating Commissioners must commit to fully participate in all three seminars in order to graduate. Seminars include: Tough Policy Choices in Florida During Tumultuous Times; Leading Your Communities During Turbulent Times; and, Understanding and Working with Stakeholders and County Decision Makers during these Turbulent Times. The University of Florida/IFAS Extension has sponsored this program for the last six years in Alachua County.

Following are the names of the county commissioners who received their ACC designation in 2014: Sue Birge, Hardee County; Christopher Constance, Charlotte County; Stephen R. Deutsch, Charlotte County; Don Elwell, Highlands County; Clyde Fleming, Suwannee County; Grady Johnson, Hardee County; Stephen Kelley, Nassau County; John Kenney, Citrus County; Nathan McLaughlin, Flagler County; Jim Melvin, Santa Rosa County; Malcolm Page, Taylor County; Sean Parks, Lake County; Jack Richie, Highlands County.

For more information about the ACC program and courses, visit the FAC web site at [www.fl-counties.com](http://www.fl-counties.com).

For over 85 years, the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) has represented the diverse interests of Florida's counties, emphasizing the importance of protecting home rule – the concept that government closest to the people governs best. The Florida Association of Counties helps counties effectively serve and represent Floridians by strengthening and preserving county home rule through advocacy, education and collaboration.

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