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## **2020 Ones to Watch: Jerson Olano, Structural Project Manager at Veitas & Veitas Engineers, Inc.**

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Jerson Olano  
Veitas & Veitas Engineers, Inc.

Which project, deal, or transaction was the “game-changer” in the advancement of your career? My firm was commissioned for one of the largest student housing developments in Florida. The scope included more than 4 million s/f of construction to be built during a two-year construction schedule. The project included more than 2,500 dorm units and numerous amenity spaces. With many high wind demand structures, the scale of the project and fast paced schedule, I was challenged and encouraged to make improvements in the firms approach to technology with large scale wood developments. This project was a game change in my approach, capacity, and knowledge as a structural engineer.

What advice can you offer to someone who is interested in a career in your industry? I would recommend embracing versatility, engage in a diverse range of activities, and make strong connections. Networking is invaluable in life, not only for this industry but for any aspect of a professional career. As of for college classes, I would recommend a near even split between structural analysis/design, management classes and construction courses.

What led you to your current profession? I started my studies focused on the hydraulics & water resources engineering branch of civil engineering. I took a class during my last year of college called “Structural Projects” lead by professor Luis Fargier-Gabaldon, an invaluable mentor of mine with a strong passion for structural engineering, and impressive experience in the field. During class, we applied what we learned to a building with all its components, loads, analyzed it, designed it, and drafted it to a Construction Documents level. This course made me love structural engineering and made it the path I decided to follow.

Who or what inspires you? My father, Juan Olano, I have never heard of a more versatile person than him. He is a businessman that has been involved in many industries, ranging from shoe retail stores, photography, domestic gas companies, to restaurants, car-dealerships, furniture retail stores and former president of a Chamber of commerce. You name it, he has done it! His hobbies range from Amateur radio to flying his own light aircraft (while he had it). At 74 years old now, he has battled cancer and some days I feels like he has more energy and optimism than me! Will let you know when he writes a book about his adventures...

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