

Biography

Jack Allison Butler was born in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, when his father worked for the Oak Ridge National Labs in the Y-12 research facility. However, he spent most of his youth in La Fayette, Georgia, before attending Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia, where he graduated with a degree in business systems (now known as “big data”). He subsequently earned a certificate in supervisory management from Florida State University and a master’s degree in engineering from the University of Colorado Denver. Jack lives in Winter Garden, Florida, with his wife and two school-age children. Their house has its own Instagram page with thousands of followers. Much of the site’s content consists of their home-improvement projects.

His diverse work career in regional and local planning, traffic engineering, residential construction, and public works generated a sequence of research projects and publications that eventually centered on public policy and the geography of transportation. His publication topics include regulatory policies, writing technical job descriptions, engineering economics in the electrical power and telecommunications fields, market economics, database design, geography, and managing state departments of transportation. He became a professional racecar driver and instructor, the latter experience being exceptionally motivating for effective and concise communication. Jack has served as the president of two international professional organizations, led the Sunshine Bimmers Chapter of the BMW Car Club of America, crafted or edited six national standards, and was the ethics officer for the GIS Certification Institute.

Jack joined Sigma Xi in 1995 through a nomination by members of the Florida State University faculty. He is not a traditional member of Sigma Xi. He joined the organization with only a bachelor’s degree in business administration as his academic credential, but was already established as a leader in traffic engineering practice standards and geographic information systems design through self-study, research, and publication. He has been certified or licensed in six professional fields: urban planning, construction, project management, racecar driving, 911 center operations, and geographic and land information systems.

Recent years have seen his focus move to public administration, where he is able to base government policy on technical concepts. He has drafted legislation, provided testimony to legislative committees, developed political strategies, submitted amicus briefs in federal lawsuits, and produced policy papers that present technical information to lay regulators in a way they can understand and make informed decisions. He participates in governmental affairs committees at the national and state levels.