



Plant City Campus Doing Good for the Neighborhood

UF Plant City CFFA Members Devon Morrison and Lexi Sanchez volunteered at the Florida Baptist Children’s Home in December along with Mrs. Barry and Mr. Steward. This year the Plant City CFFA collected several bags of food and school supplies to donate to the Children’s Home. Through this partnership with the Florida Baptist Children’s Home they plan to do biannual service projects and volunteer work to help meet the needs of the community.

You guys are Awesome!



Common Florida Spiders—the good, bad and the ugly

Photographed by Becky Willis, this intricate spider web may have been woven by a brown widow spider. The brown widow spider (*Latrodectus geometricus*) is native to South Africa and was first discovered in the United States in 1935. This spider is also commonly known as the grey widow, brown button and geometric button spider. While it is true that brown widow spiders are highly venomous to their prey, they are very timid and rarely bite humans; when they do bite, they don’t inject all their venom making them less harmful.



Winter of 2018
Baby it’s cold outside!



GCREC Employee News

January 2018



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

- 2....Robert Martin
- 2....Mayara Bolognesi de Morais
- 6....Christine Cooley
- 6....Bruna Forcelini
- 6....Phanio Lawson
- 7....Karol Krey
- 8....Andrea Ruthes
- 9....Marianne Smith
- 15...Ali Gonzalez Perez (PC)
- 18...Babu Panthi
- 22...Andrew Koeser
- 23...Steve Kalb

Early Career Scientist Seed Grant Recipients

The future of IFAS and UF is driven by the early career faculty that join to build their careers and impact the world through their research, teaching, and extension efforts. This year the UF/IFAS Dean for Research office, in partnership with the Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Vice President for Research, has once again implemented an Early Career Scientist Seed Grant program to facilitate development of new faculty research, jumpstart their research programs, and to provide a platform for their future success. This year’s competition was highly competitive, with 24 early career scientists presenting excellent proposals. After a rigorous review by a panel of UF/IFAS scientists, two of the fifteen awardees are here at GCREC. Congratulations!



Dr. Johan Desaeger
Title: Identification and characterization of nematode suppressive soils in Florida



Dr. Andrew Koeser
Title: Trees and Natural Disasters: Improving Estimates of Likelihood of Impact, Likelihood of Failure, and Consequences of Failure in Professional Risk Assessments

2018 Holidays

Need a break from work? We are closed the following dates:

- 5/28 Monday, Memorial Day
- 7/4 Wednesday, Independence Day
- 9/3 Monday, Labor Day
- 10/12 Friday, UF Homecoming
- 11/12 Monday, Veteran’s Day
- 11/22-23 Thursday and Friday Thanksgiving Holiday
- 12/25 Tuesday, Christmas Day

PostDocs and Grad Students work to expand their knowledge through educational seminars and you can too

Everyone is welcome to attend the GCREC Seminar for Postdoctoral Researchers and Graduate Students Thursday January 25th at 11:30 a.m. The presenter will be Nan-Yi Wang from Dr. Peres lab. The Postdoc and Students group is also organizing a seminar presented by Dr. Lance Cadle-Davidson on Wednesday January 30th at 11 a.m. The title of his presentation will be: “AmpSeq: a low-cost tool for linkage mapping, marker-assisted selection, population genetics, and mutation screening”. Dr. Cadle-Davidson is a grapevine pathologist at USDA and adjunct assistant professor for the Department of Plant Pathology at Cornell University, Geneva, NY. The AmpSeq method is a new genotyping tool to address practical questions in pathogen biology, population studies, and fungicide resistance.



NEW for 2018 — GCREC Grad Student Feature

Starting with this issue we will be featuring one or two of our awesome grad students to give readers the opportunity to learn something new about the Gators roaming the hall.

Meet Caroline Land, student with Dr. Gary Vallad's program.

What degree you are working towards? I am working toward a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology.

What you are working on in the Vallad Lab right now? My project is focused on Methyl Bromide alternatives to control Fusarium wilt on tomatoes. I am working on improving fumigation techniques, testing new fungicides and biologicals for their efficacy, and studying the interaction of pH and disease development.

Where you are from originally? I am originally from Clermont FL, a city about an hour and a half from here. I got my undergraduate and master's degrees from Auburn University before coming back to Florida.

Newly engaged! What is your finance's name and where did you meet?

My finance's name is Gavin Falcona and he is currently a Naval Flight Officer for F-18's. We met in College during our undergrads sophomore year.

What led you into this field? I have always been interested in agriculture. I was a part of FFA in high school and in College my favorite courses were always the Agronomy based classes. During my undergrad I got a job with a plant breeder who was attempting to breed nematode resistance into cotton plants. He introduced me to a few great plant pathologists and I got hooked.

What your goals are when you graduate? I am really interested in working in industry. I enjoy the more applied side of plant pathology and especially working with growers. I would love to bridge the gap between everyday growers and R & D scientists to help solve real world problems.



Interns Hit the Fields

With the beginning of a new year comes some new faces—Meet the new strawberry pathology interns with Dr. Peres' lab—In order left to right—Carlos Silveira, Mayara Morais, Paulo Mello and Rafaela Ruschel. This interns will be hard at work in the fields and the labs, and perhaps return one day as grad students like many have before them. Hopefully they will have time to enjoy Florida during their stay. Good luck to you all.

Meet Jessica Chitwood Brown, student working in Dr. Sam Hutton's program

What degree you are working towards? PhD

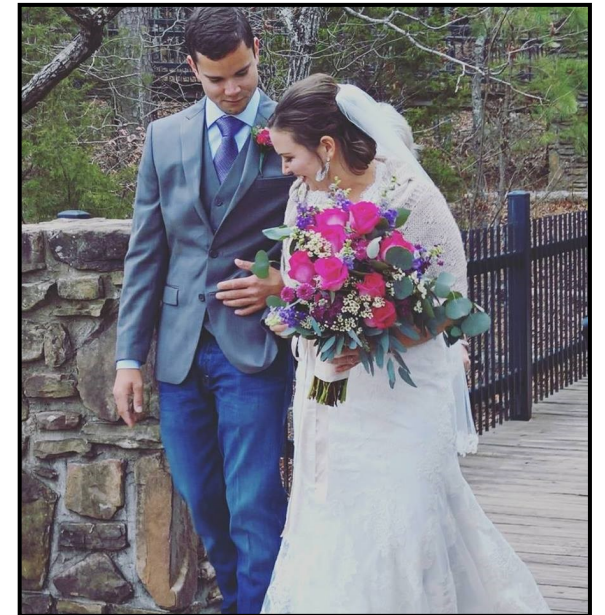
What you are working on in the Hutton Lab right now? I am working with resistance to Fusarium wilt race 3 in tomato. My goals are to reduce problems associated with the *I-3* gene, identify novel resistance genes from wild tomato accessions, and incorporate all the known and novel resistance genes for race 3 into elite tomato germplasm.

Where you are from originally? I'm from Alma, Arkansas, which is in the western part of the state along the Arkansas River.

You're a Newlywed! Congratulations on your recent Nuptials! Where did you and Nate meet? Nate (an employee of the Hutton tomato lab) and I met at the Farmer's Co-op (a feed and farm supply store) in Van Buren, Arkansas. The rest is a great story, feel free to ask me if you're interested!

What led you into this field? Although I've always been involved with agriculture, I was introduced to the world of horticultural sciences while working at the Farmer's Co-op after I had graduated with my B.S. in Biology. The director of the UA Vegetable Research Station would come in for supplies and chat with me about the Horticulture Department at UA, and he encouraged me to apply as a master's student. I had loved genetics in my undergraduate studies, so I asked to be placed with someone who worked in this field, and I was placed in a plant breeding program. I quickly realized that plant breeding was basically the bee's knees, and that I could enjoy the work I do while having a positive impact on many people, from students to growers to consumers. I get asked all the time, "Why tomatoes?" Also a great story! The short version: I found Dr. Hutton's program after doing a class assignment and loved the idea of working in a crop that I enjoy eating, is one of the most popular vegetables in the country, and has industry support. I set my sights on UF and never looked back.

What your goals are when you graduate? While I'm trying to keep an open mind, I would love to be a plant breeder for a horticulture crop in academia. I love teaching and I hope to find an appointment with some percentage of teaching.



New and Familiar Faces in the Hallway

Many of you might remember Jinhee Kim (pictured on the left) who was research scholar in 2016 in strawberry breeding program and now she's back working on her PhD in the Horticulture Science Department with Dr. Seonghee Lee (advisor) and Dr. Vance Whitaker (co-advisor). On the right we have Clemen de Oliveira who is working in Dr. Johan Desaegeer's lab. Clemen is from Federal University of Vicosa located in Brazil. He is currently working on his Master's Degree. We would also like to welcome Frankin Dubon, not picture, also from Brazil working in Justin Renkema's lab. *Welcome!*

