

Plant City Campus Corner—Lots of exciting news from PC



In February, UF/IFAS CALS at Plant City hosted the Tampa Gator Club for Gator Giving Day. The Tampa Gator Club was 4th in the nation with 197 gifts totaling more than \$14,000. In all, University of Florida received more than 11,000 gifts for a grand total of more than \$12.6 Million! Everyone was truly #AllForTheGators.



Plant City students, faculty, and staff have been busy at the fairs representing UF/IFAS CALS at Plant City. After spending 12 days at the Florida State Fair, we will be spending the next 11 days talking to students and fairgoers at the Florida Strawberry Festival Livestock Shows. UF/IFAS CALS at Plant City unveils their very own table at Johnson's BBQ.



Wonderful World of Drones

Wow! Check out this amazing photo taken by Ali Gonzalez from our Plant City Geomatics program. Our hops yard and fields look very impressive when you see them from this angle. Did you know that unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), which include modern day drones and remotely piloted vehicles, actually began back in 1849? The earliest recorded use of an unmanned aerial vehicle for warfighting occurred on July 1849, serving as a balloon carrier (the precursor to the aircraft carrier) in the first offensive use of air power in naval aviation.



2019 Graduate Student Research Day



Thursday April 4th, 2019 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. GCREC Auditorium
Please, submit your poster title to Ravneet Sandhu (rsandhu@ufl.edu) until March 20th. More information contact GCPSA (gcpsauf@gmail.com)
The Gulf Coast Postdoc and Student Association (GCPSA) is hosting the first Graduate Student Research Day at the UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center. Graduate students are invited to present their posters, while postdocs can sign up to be judges. All are welcome to come learn what our bright students are researching.

GCREC Honors and Awards Banquet will be Friday, April 19

It is time to send in your nominations for our Honors and Awards Banquet.

GCREC Outstanding Achievement Award for each of the following categories: Undergraduate Student (GCREC - Plant City), Graduate Student, Faculty, Staff (TEAMS Exempt and Non-Exempt) employee, and OPS employee. Nominees must have been employed for at least 12 months. *The committee will look for individuals that go above and beyond their job description.*

Nomination letters must include the following information: Name of the employee nominated, award category, years at GCREC, supervisor(s), and detailed narrative describing why the nominee meets the award criteria.

The criteria for the award categories are the following:

Undergraduate Student Award—The nominee must demonstrate academic achievement. Excellence in the classroom must be coupled with a strong record or extracurricular involvement, particularly in leadership roles and in service-oriented roles in the community.

Graduate Student Award—The nominee must demonstrate academic achievement. Describe the research capability of the nominee in terms of his or her proficiency in lab/field skills and demonstration of high-level research thinking and writing. Also elaborate on the areas of teamwork ability, ethics and integrity in research and service to the GCREC.

Faculty Award- The GCREC Faculty Award is designed to recognize a faculty member who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in the areas of service and education. Exemplary service activities are those activities that benefit the agricultural community, the university, the state, our nation and our world. Exemplary education is evidenced by excellence and innovation in teaching/advising/extension activities.

TEAMS and OPS Awards - The GCREC TEAMS and OPS Awards are designed to recognize employees who have gone above and beyond their required duties to serve the mission of the GCREC. Examples could include excellence in customer service, time invested in GCREC committee activities, other service activities that benefit the center, creation of novel techniques or equipment for research, etc.

NOMINATION LETTERS DUE BY MONDAY, APRIL 1ST AND SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO CHRISTINE COOLEY (ccooley@ufl.edu).

Remember they are more afraid of you than you are of them...



The fear of snakes or Ophidiophobia is the second most common phobia in the world. Nearly 1/3rd of adult humans are believed to have an intense fear of snakes. Most people with Ophidiophobia can lead normal lives as they do not have to confront the object of their fears under normal circumstances. In the garden, snakes can be of great benefit. They eat insects or rodents primarily, neither which are likely to benefit the garden themselves. One rodent-eating snake can nearly decimate a rat family in weeks, and several small snakes can do severe damage to a grasshopper population in a confined area in just one summer. If you encounter a snake at our center—don't freak out, just walk away slowly and let this kind predator get back to living its natural life.

Working on a large farm, we should all do our best to respect the wildlife at the center—the good, bad and ugly. Remember we all have fears, but as employees in agriculture, we should also be inspired by the wildlife here at the center. We have several people here at the center that will gladly help remove snakes, rodents, etc., from your lab or work area. Just call the front desk and report your findings, and we'll get someone to assist you without causing harm to the creature.



Did you know that Camp Bayou will be celebrating its 20th anniversary this year? There is a special event planned so save the date: Saturday, March 23, 2019. There will be local environmental organizations joining us in the celebration, with activities and displays - the Florida Aquarium, Little Manatee River State Park, Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation, and Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful, just to name a few. Camp Bayou volunteers will be showcasing the many options at the Center, including youth programs, trail amenities and exhibits. A brief 20th Anniversary presentation will be followed by a 'Taste of Ruskin' lunch, where winners of the raffles for wonderful prizes will be announced. Check out the updates on social media. #CampBayou20th #natureinyourneighborhood #EEinFlorida



GCREC Employee News

March 2019

Employee Appraisals Due March 25th

Advantages of annual appraisals:

- They give the employee the opportunity to better understand expectations, standards and rules.
- They give the manager an opportunity to 'get to know' the employee better.
- They give the employee the opportunity to learn what behaviors and attitudes they need to improve or modify.
- They send a message to the employee that you care about their performance as well as them as a person.
- They can help you chart a better course for the future of the employee.
- They can help the manager identify weaknesses and strengths that may not have surfaced on a day by day basis.

And remember, UF Employee Appraisals are used when merit bonuses or increases are announced, and the percent you receive will depend on your past appraisals.

Disadvantages of irregular or no reviews:

- They send a message that you are satisfied with performance, attitudes and behavior.
- They say to the employee they are not important enough for you to take the time for a review.



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1....Adrian Zuniga
- 6....Michelle Middleton
- 8...Nick Kypraios
- 9....Luis Osorio
- 10...Melissa Perez
- 26...Tyler Leonard
- 26...Gurleen Kaur

Did you know that March is National Umbrella Month? Here are some more wacky things to celebrate this month:



- **March 3:** What If Cats and Dogs Had Opposable Thumbs Day
- **March 9:** International Fanny Pack Day
- **March 13:** National Ear Muff Day
- **March 16:** National Panda Day
- **March 21:** Absolutely Incredible Kid Day
- **March 23:** World Meteorological Day
- **March 31:** World Backup Day
- **March 32:** Hug Your Drone Day