

FEATURE Story

Should everyone get a trophy?

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During the year I have multiple conversations with my colleagues about awarding youth who participate in our 4-H competitions. During these conversations I often find myself asking the same question to some event organizers, “why are you giving everyone a blue ribbon, medal, or trophy?”

The typical response is some variation of, “every child is a winner, we don’t want one child to feel like they are not as good as another, we should be building them up, not breaking them down.”

I know as parents, we think our children are amazing at what they do, but the question remains: Are we doing our children justice if we always give them first place, is that realistic and what is that teaching them? When they interview for a job and do not get it because they were not the “best” fit or are overlooked for a promotion because someone did the job better, how will they handle it?

Healthy competition is important to the development of a child both personally and socially. Let me explain why, competitions are not meant to be easy for participants, they are meant to challenge their knowledge and skill



level. Meaning participants need to learn and practice in order to succeed in a competition.

After decades of research, Carol Dweck, a world-renowned Stanford University psychologist discovered a simple but groundbreaking theory called, *the power of mindset* which can be applied here.

Her research shows how success in school, work, sports, and almost every area of human endeavor can be dramatically influenced by how we think about our talents and abilities. People with a fixed mindset—those who believe that abilities are fixed—are less likely to flourish than those with a

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growth mindset—those who believe that abilities can be developed.

How do we influence the development of a fixed mindset? We give trophies to every participant despite their level of ability and effort. One of the primary reasons young people with a fixed mindset are less likely to flourish is due to their fear of failure later in life (e.g., college) when they realize they may not be the best at everything.

I know some reading this article may say, but what is good for one child is

not always good for another. I agree and that's why I think, regardless of trophies, that giving feedback, coaching, and recognizing true achievements will help young people develop skills that will empower them as adults.

As a youth development professional, I have the awesome responsibility of helping young people develop the skills they will need for real world situations. That would include winning and losing. I let my 4-H members know that they cannot always be the best, but they

can always do their best and learn from their experiences. This approach helps instill a grow mindset.

So, the answer to my initial question is NO - not *all* participants should receive a blue ribbon or trophy. If you are interested in learning more about this theory I encourage you google Carol Dweck's TedTalk on Mindset.

From the DISTRICT DIRECTOR



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And you thought it was only about ordering a pizza: Operating in a data-driven world

CALLER: Is this Gordon's Pizza?

GOOGLE: No sir, it's Google Pizza.

CALLER: I must have dialed a wrong number. Sorry.

GOOGLE: No sir, Google bought Gordon's Pizza last month.

CALLER: OK. I would like to order a pizza.

GOOGLE: Do you want your usual, sir?

CALLER: My usual? You know me?

GOOGLE: According to our caller ID data sheet, the last 12 times you called you ordered an extra-large pizza with three cheeses, sausage, pepperoni, mushrooms and meatballs on a thick crust.

CALLER: Yes! That's what I want ...

GOOGLE: May I suggest that this time you order a pizza with ricotta, arugula, sun-dried tomatoes and olives on a whole wheat gluten-free thin crust?

CALLER: Why? I detest vegetables.

GOOGLE: Your cholesterol is not good, sir.

CALLER: How do you know that?

GOOGLE: We cross-referenced your home phone number with your medical records. We have the result of your blood tests for the last 7 years.

CALLER: May be...but I do not want your what's-its-name vegetable pizza! I already take medication for my cholesterol.

GOOGLE: Are you sure? Looks like you have not been taking your medication regularly. According to our database, you only purchased a box of 30 cholesterol tablets once, at Drug RX Network, 4 months ago.

CALLER: I bought more from another drugstore.

GOOGLE: That doesn't show on your credit card statement.

CALLER: I paid in cash.

GOOGLE: But you did not withdraw enough cash for that purchase according to your bank statement.

CALLER: I have other sources of cash.

GOOGLE: That doesn't show on your last tax return unless you bought them using an undeclared income source, which is against the law.

CALLER: What??

GOOGLE: I'm sorry, sir, we use such information only with the sole intention of helping you.

CALLER: Enough already! I'm sick and tired of this. I'm going to an island without internet, cable TV, where there is no cell phone service and no one to watch me or spy on me.

GOOGLE: I understand sir, but you need to renew your passport first. It expired 6 weeks ago.

DISTRICT Life

UF/IFAS Extension Participated in Agriculture Literacy Day in Alachua County

Dr. Cindy Sanders

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Traditionally the week before Thanksgiving has been known as Farm City Week. This week is used to celebrate and recognize the beneficial partnership between rural and urban communities that make our food supply safe and plentiful, and to educate the importance of Agriculture to our citizens.

In November several of our county Extension Agents, 4-H members, 4-H volunteers, Alachua County Farm Bureau Women's Group, and Alachua County Farm Bureau Young Farmers

participated in the Agriculture Literacy Day. These volunteers read to over 1500 Alachua County students the book *These Florida Farms!* This book is written for 3-5th graders, and helps educate youth on Florida Agriculture, taking them from the farm to the grocery store. The book along with many teacher resources and activities is provided by Florida Agriculture in the Classroom. Florida Ag in the Classroom's mission is to increase agricultural literacy through PreK-12 education in Florida. They also provide grant money to teachers and volunteers that teach students where



their food comes from and the important contribution Florida farmers make to their communities and their state. If you are interested in Florida Ag in the Classroom please visit their website <https://faitc.org/about-faitc>

SUCCESS Stories

Lunch & Learn Cattlemen's Series

Dan Fenneman

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With the current trend in downward prices, livestock producers need current research-based information to increase their chances of maintaining sustainability. In Madison County, Florida and the surrounding counties there are approximately 135,000 head of cattle. Many of these local producers buy and sell cattle at the local livestock market in Madison. Sales at the market are on Tuesdays starting at 1p.m. These same livestock producers may or may not attend educational events hosted by local Extension agents.

To reach a broader cliental group, this agent teamed with the local livestock

market to provide Educational trainings during lunch on sale days during the last sale of the month. A sponsor provided lunch was provided for all participants free of charge and the meeting was conducted in the sale arena. The Agent consulted with the market owners and various other livestock producers to develop a seasonally related topic agenda for these meetings. Extension Specialists from UF and industry representatives were invited to share their knowledge through a venue of open discussion and question & answer sessions. Topics included: pasture fertilization, forage varieties, weed control, livestock nutrition, bull selection/genetics herd health and economics. In 2015, the first five-part/monthly series, was attended by a total of 217 producers. The series was expanded in 2016 to six sessions, three in the spring and three in the fall. A total of 231 producers

attended in 2016, 240 in 2017 and 342 in 2018. This year's (2019) program will be six sessions again.

Post session surveys (n=72) were conducted due to the time constraints of the sale. Respondents indicated **86%** (n=63) **increase in knowledge** gained from the various sessions, **78%** (n=57) **plan to make changes** to their operations. Overall **100%** (n=72) indicated the open discussion/question & answer format was a **valuable learning experience**.



What's WORKING?

Expanding Extension's Reach with Sway

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Microsoft Sway is a program that all UF employees can utilize to publish dynamic newsletters, blogs, and other online content. Sway is user-friendly, even for those who aren't very 'techie'. There are certain templates to choose from depending on your certain project, and each template comes loaded with design opportunities for you. Since the software itself determines sizing, color schemes, and after effects like transitions between articles, it is super easy to create an eye-catching newsletter for your clientele.

Sway has the ability to be shared using a visual link, embed code, or traditional



Analytics for Jan/Feb Edition of NE Florida Farm and Ranch

URL. Sway documents can also be printed in a PDF format if you are still mailing newsletters to clientele. The best thing about using Sway, since it is online, is the ability to track your readers. Sway can tell you how many users simply opened the document and scrolled through, other users who read a few sections or interacted heavily with certain sections, and the number of users that engaged with the document for a long period of time (Deep reads). This type of analytics helps us determine how to alter our newsletters to provide something for everyone, the 'glancers' will want to see eye-catching pictures & captions, the light readers

will want informative titles, and the deep readers will want a lot of text content and information. Sway can be shared on social media, via email, on a blog or website, as well as in print, allowing us to reach all of our clientele base with one simple document.

Check out our first edition of the NE Florida Farm & Ranch Newsletter Here: http://bit.ly/FarmAndRanch_January2019

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Leveraging the Florida Master Naturalist Program to work for you

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The Florida Master Naturalist Program (FMNP, <http://www.masternaturalist.ifas.ufl.edu>) offers participants the chance to learn about and experience Florida's natural environment under the guidance of professionals. But, what does the program offer YOU?

For one, it offers you the chance to find your next group of dedicated volunteers. Florida Master Naturalist graduates are not required to complete volunteer hours but if you come prepared with a set of volunteer opportunities, you will find that many will jump on



board. Don't have an ongoing need for volunteers? No problem! You could plan your course to center on a specific local project. For example, your course could focus on elevating and beautifying a local park via clean-ups, trail clearing, invasive species roundups, and educational resource creation - each activity in the course could focus on accomplishing the larger goal (and all while getting outside).

Furthermore, FMNP courses are a great way to build natural resources expertise in an existing volunteer group, enabling them to provide a higher level of service to our clientele. The FMNP curriculum is flexible and can be adapted to include hands-on field trips and training on a variety of natural resource topics tailored to the local area. Master Gardeners who have taken the

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Leveraging the Florida Master Naturalist Program to work for you...continued from previous page

Upland Systems course might be better able to answer questions about backyard birds or attracting beneficial wildlife such as bats. Club leaders who have taken the Freshwater Systems course might be confident leading educational field trips to our many springs and cypress swamps in North Florida.

And lastly, the Florida Master Naturalist Program offers you an important way

to create lasting change in your participants. FMNP graduates routinely report that the program influences their conservation decisions after taking the course. Graduates of FMNP courses in the Northeast District in 2018 reported that their participation in the course strongly influenced positive behaviors related to personal consumer choices 63% of the time, environmental

activism and volunteering 73% of the time, and observation and enjoyment of nature 89% of the time.

Not sure how to get started?

Get in touch with the FMNP Coordinator, Shelly Johnson (Shelly.Johnson@ufl.edu), or with me (savanna.barry@ufl.edu) to talk about partnering to offer a course.

PROFESSIONAL Development



Debbie Nistler, Ph.D.

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Listen, learn...then lead TED Talk with 4-Star General Stanly McChrystal

The world is different today. Leaders must lead to meet today's challenges. General McChrystal describes his observations during a routine Army Ranger jump training on a Tuesday in September. He saw soldiers who were ready to be led into battle. This was not just any day in September; this was September 11, 2001. When the plane took off our country was at peace. By the time they landed, the world had changed.

TED RADIO HOUR

McChrystal was brought up learning traditional leadership and his experience reflected that tradition. His leadership would need to change. How we process information and view the world changed dramatically. Gone were the days of building trust and confidence face to face. New leaders could not place a hand on the shoulder or have a pep talk after a trying day. Technology through email, video chat, and text replaced those face-to-face interactions. Instead of giving orders, McChrystal needed to build consensus and a sense of shared purpose.

With the infusion of technology, roles and responsibilities changed, leaders need to develop strategies to stay engaged and relevant with those they lead. How do you stay relevant if you have never done the jobs of those you

lead? McChrystal believes relationships are key. "They are the sinew that holds the force together". He believes in being more transparent and listen more. In a world of fast pace technology and often information overload, we need to rely on each other for success. The Army Rangers say a creed as they prepare to meet the new day; one line states they will never leave a fallen comrade to fall into enemy hands. Everyday promising I will be there for you. The Ranger creed is good advice in a noisy world; together we are stronger.

In an era of divisions and angry Tweets McChrystal may be on to something. Build relationships; reach out to others to help solve problems. Admit you do not have all the answers and admit we need each other. Technology can do amazing things; it can also force us into tunnels where our information is filtered. Break out of those tunnels and find common ground in the sunshine.

Let's Meet WHO'S NEW TO EXTENSION

NE District Welcomes



Dr. Izabella Toledo
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Dr. Izabella Toledo was born and raised in south Brazil, where

she received a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine. After graduating in Brazil, she spent a year working at the University of Florida Veterinary Medical Center. Subsequently, she was offered a scholarship for the Master program in Animal Molecular and Cellular Biology at the Department of Animal Sciences at University of Florida. Her MS program was focused on dairy cattle reproduction. Her PhD program was also completed at the Department of Animal Sciences at University of Florida and it was focused on the effects of heat stress on immunity, production and reproduction of dairy cows during the transition period.

Her research was conducted at the University of Florida Dairy Unit and also at commercial dairies, where she had the opportunity to actively work and interact with dairy producers. During her PhD, she was a teaching assistant for the Introduction to Animal Sciences and the Reproductive Physiology and Endocrinology in Domestic Animals courses. Furthermore, she was recruited to teach a Companion Animal Biology and Management course during three semesters. Prior to starting her current position, she spent two years as a post-doctoral fellow working in lactation biology at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Research and Development Center in Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada. The goal of her programs is to contribute to the development and improvement of the dairy industry by transmitting knowledge to the scientific community, producers, academic students, and the general public.



Beth Kerr
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Beth Kerr is a life-long supporter of 4-H and extension services. She has

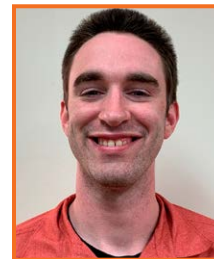
led science based project classes for both the homeschooling community and for the Suwannee Regional Library. She holds teaching certifications in English, Math, and Agriscience. Beth's passion is for science education and career development for youth, advocating for vocational and college exploration by coordinating career focused field trips and guest speakers. Beth chartered and developed middle and high school FFA chapters at Westwood Christian School before serving as the math instructor for the Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch in Live Oak. She is pursuing a Master's degree in Educational Business Administration. Beth is excited to serve her hometown community of Hamilton County.



Jay Capasso
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Jay Capasso is the new agriculture agent in Columbia County

working predominately with commercial row crop production. He grew up in Maine and completed his B.S. at Cornell University where he majored in International Agriculture and Rural Development and worked at Cornell's Soil Health lab. He went on to complete his M.S. in Soil and Water Sciences at the University of Florida working with Dr. Jehangir Bhadha. His graduate research focused on water quality and phosphorus in the Everglades Agricultural Area.



Luke Miller
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My name is Luke Miller and I have the pleasure of working

as the Bradford County Horticulture/ Small Farms Agent. I hold a master's degree in Horticulture through the University of Georgia and a bachelor's degree in Sustainable Agriculture from the University of New Hampshire. My main interests include precision agriculture, irrigation design, agroecology, and hydroponics. Originally from Pennsylvania, I am very active and love to hike, swim, run and play sports. I am very excited to work in a great community and alongside amazing producers and Master Gardeners in Bradford County.



D'Alicia Straughter
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With five years of experience work-

ing with families through Extension D'Alicia Straughter has become the new Family Consumer Sciences Agent for Bradford County. Using her education in Human Services and experience in finance she plans on using those tools to support Bradford County residence through program implementations. As a Family Consumer Sciences agent D'Alicia focus areas for Bradford County are financial education, wellness, family and human development.

Let's Meet WHO'S NEW TO EXTENSION...continued



Matthew Olson
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Matthew Olson
joined the
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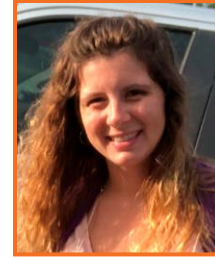
Extension Office on December 3, 2018 as a 4-H Agent and will be focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programs. Matthew grew up in Arizona where he was a 4-H member for ten years and received his bachelors in Natural Resources from The University of Arizona. While attending college, Matthew worked in the Arizona Cooperative Extension Administrative Office. After graduation, Matthew served an AmeriCorps term of service at the James 4-H Camp in Arizona where he discovered his passion for working with youth to reach their fullest potential. Matthew joined the South Dakota 4-H Program as a 4-H Youth Program Advisor (agent) serving Pennington County, SD in 2015. Matthew is currently pursuing his Masters in Agricultural Education from South Dakota State University and hopes to graduate in May 2019. Matthew has 1 brother who lives in Sebastian, FL and his parents still live in Arizona.



Beth Moore
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Beth Moore is a 10
year 4-H alumni
and the new 4-H
Agent in Madison

County. Living in Madison County all her life, Beth brings 26 years of public education experience to her new job. She received her bachelor's degree in early childhood education and her master's degree in Educational Leadership from Valdosta State University. She has taught kindergarten, third, fourth, and fifth grades and was a principal for the last 15 years. She and her husband of 25 years have two sons, Jacob 21 and Joshua 19 (both 4-H alumni). Beth is very excited to be a part of the Extension Service and the 4-H family. "4-H was always a huge part of my life growing up. I want to make it a part of the lives of the children in Madison County. We have so much to offer to our youth!" In her spare time, she enjoys painting barn quilts, outdoor photography, gardening, and taking trips to the North Carolina Mountains.



Halie Corbitt
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Halie Corbitt is
the new Family
Consumer

Science Agent for Columbia County. She received her B.S. in Microbiology and Cell Science from the University of Florida with a Minor in Dance. She then continued her education and received a Masters in Public Health from the University of West Florida. Halie has worked as a Health Educator for 5 years and has served the community of Columbia County as a Health Educator for the last 2 years.

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