

# F4E4-HA Awards & Winners

## Service Awards

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### 25 Years of Service



**Heather Kent** has 25 years of experience across county, regional, and state levels, specializing in volunteer, youth, and professional development. She applies her doctoral expertise in learning systems to develop award winning extension programs, supported by over \$1 million in grants. Most recently, she has led Florida 4-H's strategic planning process.

### Meritorious Service



**Shane Michael** began his 4-H career in 2007 in Seminole County. In 2016, he assumed the Regional Specialized 4-H Agent position, later becoming County Extension Director/4-H Agent in Seminole County in 2019. His programming emphasizes global citizenship, horse, SET, and teen leadership.

### Distinguished Service



**Dallas Meringolo** is the Lake County 4-H Agent. She holds a Master of Science in Agricultural Education and Communication from the University of Florida and a bachelor's degree from University of Central Florida. She brings a rich educational background to her role as the 4-H Agent and is passionate about empowering volunteers and fostering the development of life skills in youth.

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**Mary Lee Sale** is a Marion County, FL 4-H alum with her BS and MS in Family, Youth, and Community Sciences from the University of Florida. She started her 4-H career in Mathews, VA, and she has been proudly serving as the Alachua County, FL 4-H Agent since 2021. Her areas of specialization include volunteer management and teen leadership development.



**Melinda Souers** is a 4-H Agent with UF/IFAS Extension, Orange County. She leads programs in S.T.E.M., Healthy Living and Leadership through Community Clubs, School Gardens, and School-Enrichment. Melinda has been an educator for 26+ years in both Extension and Public Schools. She is a Florida 4-H Alumna and 4-H parent.

#### *Achievement in Service*



**Beth Kerr** has served as the 4-H and FCS agent for Hamilton County since 2019. Her passion for youth programming focuses on workforce preparation, career exploration, and financial literacy. She interweaves these life skills into all day camps, workshops, and school enrichment programs, regardless of the program topic.



**Chris Lauen** joined UF/IFAS Extension as the Holmes County 4-H Agent in 2021. His programming efforts have focused on hunting, shooting sports, conservation, and STEM education, with a strong emphasis on fostering an inclusive and diverse 4-H community.



**Claire Davis** serves as the Calhoun County 4-H and Family & Consumer Sciences agent. Her 4-H program focuses on fostering both subject matter knowledge and essential life skills among youth through a range of 4-H activities, including clubs, workshops, camps, and in-school programs.

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### Friend of 4-H Award



Following years of partnership and involvement at county and regional levels, in 2021 **Florida Power & Light (FPL)** stepped up to power the statewide Florida 4-H Public Speaking Program with a \$100,000 commitment over five years. This investment has ensured the program's post-COVID recovery and growth. FPL's support helped the program expand from 47,778 youth participants in 2021 to over 56,000 in 2024, while enhancing resources, awards, and classroom impacts. FPL representatives have actively supported the program by serving as guest speakers, judges, and presenters at award ceremonies, celebrating the accomplishments of youth across Florida.

The program has transformed the lives of countless students, including one who initially planned to accept a failing grade due to her fear of public speaking but went on to win first place in her class and school. Another success story highlights a limited-English-speaking student who overcame his apprehension to deliver a speech that revealed his humor and personality, earning an encore request from his classmates and building newfound friendships. FPL's support has made these life-changing experiences possible, empowering young Floridians with the skills and confidence to thrive in work, life, and beyond.

## Communicator Awards

### Educational Package (Individual)

Mary Lee Sale - [Alachua County 4-H Welcome Packet & New Member Information](#)

### Educational Package (Team)

Mary Lee Sale, Cindy Sanders, Kevin Korus, Tatiana Sanchez-Jones, Cynthia Nazario-Leary, Martha Maddox - [Alachua County Meet the Agent Series](#)

### Educational Piece (Individual)

Julia Kelly - [Florida 4-H Archery Match Handbook](#)

Educational Piece (Team)

Vanessa Spero, Darcy Cole - [Accommodation Kit](#)

Exhibit

Mary Lee Sale - [Alachua County 4-H Informational & Interactive Board](#)

Feature Story

Elaine Simfukwe - [Landed and Planted! Artemis Moon Tree Seedling Finds Home in Clay County, FL](#)

Media Presentation

Bailea Scarbrough, Lizzie Whitehead - [All About Branding & Marketing for Young Entrepreneurs](#)

News Story

Marnie Ward, Toni Noaker - [Growing Agriculture's Future](#)

Periodical Publication (Individual)

Tyce Prevatt - [Growing Together: Glades County 4-H](#)

Personal Column

Chris Lauen - [Highlighting Florida 4-H – Opportunities for Youth and Adults](#)

Promotional Package (Individual)

Mary Lee Sale - [Alachua County 4-H Club Leader Tabling Kits](#)

Promotional Package (Team)

Mary Lee Sale, Cynthia Nazario-Leary, Jesse Price - [Alachua County 4-H In School Teacher Marketing](#)

Promotional Piece (Individual)

Claire Davis - [Calhoun County 4-H Summer Day Camps T-shirt](#)

Promotional Piece (Team)

Mary Lee Sale, Caylin Hilton, Derby Sale - [Alachua County 4-H Volunteer Voices Impact Report](#)

Published Photo

Meagan Daniel - [4-H Excellence in Hands-On Demonstrations](#)

Radio/Audio Program

Rachel Pienta, Caden Gruebel, Doug Apple, Amanda Gruebel - [Wakulla County 4-H Teen Science Cafe](#)

Social Media Package (Individual)

Mary Lee Sale - [Alachua County 4-H County Events Marketing](#)

Social Media Package (Team)

Haylee Linam, Brian Estevez, Jereme Johnson - [Escambia County 4-H at 4-H University](#)

Social Media Piece (Individual)

Chris Lauen - [Outdoor Adventures: Promoting Youth Hunting Opportunities Via Social Media](#)

Social Media Piece (Team)

Mary Lee Sale, Addison Grosz - [Alachua County 4-H State Horse Show Clinic Camp](#)

### Video Program

Mary Lee Sale, AseyeShika Nukunya, Jerick King, Calum Greaser, Abigail Pruden - [Discover Alachua County 4-H! Promotional Video](#)

## Specialty Awards

### Ag Literacy

Jessica Altum Cooper - [Gilchrist County 4-H Ag Literacy](#)

### Animal Science

Jessica Altum Cooper, Tyler Pittman - [Wild About the Outdoors](#)

### Camping

Michael Shawn Jackson, Meagan Daniel, Emily Beach - [Growing Skills, Building Confidence: The Jr. Homesteaders 4-H Camp](#)

### Citizenship

Spencer Hewitt - [The Dog Program](#)

### Club Support

Shreemoyee Ghosh - [Empowering Volunteers, Supporting Clubs: Polk County 4-H's Path to Success](#)

### Communication & Expressive Arts

Pauline Daniel - [Crafting & Friendship Camp](#)

### Diversity & Inclusion

Heather Pogue - [Inclusive Adventures: Customizing 4-H for Youth with Special Needs](#)

### Educational Technology

Claire Davis, Prudence Caskey, Chris Lauen, Evie Hunter, Heather Kent, Julie Dillard - [Northwest District Chick Chain Website](#)

### Healthy Living

Abbey Tharpe, Beth Moore, Michael Shawn Jackson, Beth Kerr, Dale Pracht, Larry Forthun, Sarah Hensley, Michelle Abraezinskas - [Building Resilient Communities: Strengthening Healthy Living Partnerships](#)

### Jim Kahler STEM

Jereme Johnson, Brian Estevez, Haylee Linam, Nick Simmons, Murilo Morata, Lina Berry, Aly Schortinghouse - [Escambia County 4-H: Aerospace Innovation Program](#)

### Natural Resources

Jessica Altum Cooper, Tyler Pittman - [Wild About the Outdoors](#)

### Peer Professional Development

Heather Kent, Geralyn Sachs, Vanessa Spero, Andy Toelle, Brent Broaddus - [In Search of a Vibrant 4-H Program and Balanced Life](#)

### Shooting Sports

Chris Lauen - [Holmes County 4-H Shooting Sports Program](#)

### Susan Barkman Research

Heather Kent - [4-H Administrative Burden Study](#)

### Teamwork

Beth Kerr, Kim Griffin, Katherine Allen - [Wheeling and Dealing: Buying Your New Ride](#)

### Teen Programming

Michael Shawn Jackson, Emily Beach - [Constructing Skills and Confidence - Lafayette 4-H Build It Camp](#)

### Urban Programming

Karen Henry, Brenda Urias - [Get Sanford Cycling](#)

### Volunteerism

Haylee Linam, Brian Estevez, Jereme Johnson, Lina Berry, Nick Simmons - [Escambia County 4-H Volunteer Support](#)

### Workforce Development

Chris DeCubellis, Omalola Beitku, Stacey Ellison, Sarah Hensley, Jamie Loizzo, Conchita Newman, Sarah Sarver, Katie Stofer - [Work Ready Florida 4-H](#)

## State Awards

### National Conference Scholarship

Meagan Daniel

### BJ Allen County Enhancement

Shreemoyee Ghosh - [Cloverbud Explorers: Enhancing Cloverbud Engagement Countywide](#)

### Mentor of the Year

Dallas Meringolo, nominated by Heather Pogue - [Nomination and Supporting Materials](#)

### Outstanding New Professional

Meagan Daniel, nominated by Shawn Jackson - [Nomination and Supporting Materials](#)

### Program Staff of the Year

Stephanie Klein, nominated by Dallas Meringolo - [Nomination and Supporting Materials](#)

### Literature

Julia Kelly - [Archery Match Handbook](#)

Kenan Bridges - [Broward County 4-H'ers, Steer Your Way to the Miami Youth Fair!](#)

Mary Lee Sale - [Parts of a 4-H Project](#)

Mary Lee Sale - [4-H County Events Blog Post](#)



Meagan Daniel - [Union County 4-H: Strengthening Community Support Through Impact Reporting](#)

[Program of Excellence](#)

Beth Kerr - [Exploring the Food Chain through Owl Pellet Dissection](#)

Claire Davis, Chris Lauen, Michael Young - [4-H Multi-County Conservation Camp: Promoting Environmental Ed & Shooting Sports](#)

Jereme Johnson, Brian Estevez, Haylee Linam, Nick Simmons, Murilo Morata, Lina Berry, Aly Schortinghouse - [Escambia County 4-H: Aerospace Innovation Program](#)

Mary Lee Sale - [Alachua County 4-H Volunteer Voices Program](#)

Melinda Souers, Erin Reichel, Clarissa Chairez, Calvin Gardner - [Orange County 4-H Botany Series](#)

## FEAFCS Awards & Winners

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### Continued Excellence



**Elizabeth Shephard** holds the rank of Extension Agent IV and has served as a Family and Consumer Sciences Agent in Brevard County since 1999. In 2019, she accepted additional responsibility and added County Extension Director to her list of duties. She received her B.S. from Carson Newman College and her M.P.A. from the University of Central Florida. Her FCS programs were focused in the areas of Nutrition, and Food Safety. Beth has served in many positions in FEAFCS, including Parliamentarian, VP Professional Development, 2 times as VP Public Affairs, VP Awards and Recognition, and President, and has received numerous state and national individual and team awards during her 26 years in Extension.

### Distinguished Service



**Amy Mullins** is a registered dietitian and has been with UF/IFAS in Leon County since 2012. For the past 13 years, she has served her community by providing quality programs focused on nutrition, health & wellness, chronic disease prevention & management, and food safety. During her time as a Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Agent, Amy's achievements have been recognized with 4 national, 8 regional, and 20 state awards. In 2021, she was granted a promotion from Agent II to Agent III. And in 2023, Amy earned her doctorate degree in Human Sciences from Florida State University.

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**Lisa Hamilton** has served as a UF/IFAS Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent in Volusia County, Florida since 2015, and the UF/IFAS Extension Associate Program Leader of Housing Education since 2024. She provides financial and housing education and counseling and is passionate about helping people improve their financial well-being. Ms. Hamilton is an Accredited Financial Counselor and HUD certified housing counselor. Lisa and her husband began keeping honeybees in 2023 and are excited to be UF/IFAS Master Beekeeper program students and active members of the Volusia County Beekeepers Association.

### *Past Presidents' New Professional*



**Stephanie Clamer McMinds** has been a UF/IFAS Extension FCS Agent in Citrus County since 2022. She earned a Bachelor of Applied Science from the College of Central Florida in Business and Organizational Management. She is currently enrolled at the University of Florida working on her Master of Science in Family, Youth, and Community Sciences. Stephanie specializes in health and wellness, food safety and nutrition, and personal resource management. Stephanie earned a Tai Chi instructor certificate and received a certificate to be an instructor for A Matter of Balance.



**Lori Johnson** has been with UF/IFAS Extension since 2020 serving as the Lake County FCS Agent. Her main program areas are nutrition, health, and food systems reaching youth and adult populations. She educates through culinary experiences on chronic disease prevention and management, food safety and decreasing food waste.



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### Extension Educator of the Year



**Kendra Hughson** is a Regional Specialized Agent IV for Family and Consumer Sciences in the Northwest District. She leads, implements, teaches, and evaluates districtwide and statewide FCS programs. She served as Principal Investigator for the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network Florida grant. From that role, she leads the statewide Farm Well program to address mental health and the underlying causes of stress in agriculture. She co-leads the Mental Health and Well-being Priority Work Group. As the Northwest Extension District FCS RSA, Kendra conducts districtwide and

statewide Family and Consumer Sciences programs. She teaches professional development in-service training. She developed common measures and common evaluation tools for FCS programs. She previously served as interim state program leader for FCS.

### Outstanding Specialist



**Angela Lindsey** is an associate professor in the University of Florida's Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences and a faculty member of the University of Florida Institute of Food & Agricultural Science (UF/IFAS) Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (PIE Center). Angie currently serves as chair for the national Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN). Her research focuses on the role of Extension in disasters and disaster management efforts in communities before, during and after disasters. Her Extension program has been in partnership with Florida

Extension, local and state government, nonprofit organizations, and service organizations to meet gaps and needs within communities in areas of disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. When Angie is not chasing storms, she enjoys spending time with her three boys and participating in all of their adventures!

### Outstanding Paraprofessional

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**Christine Snyder** is the FCS Program Assistant at UF/IFAS Extension Clay County. Since 2019, she has delivered engaging nutrition and wellness programs, helping youth, adults, and seniors make healthier lifestyle choices through hands-on education and strong community partnerships.

*Friend of FEAFCS*

**Angelia Briggs** is the Community Development Manager for the City of Deltona. Since 2010, she has been a leader in building community coalitions and support to improve affordable, safe, and stable housing for the residents of Deltona and Volusia County. In her career, Angelia has managed millions of dollars in state and federal programs to benefit financial education and housing stability. She has served as an FCS advisory committee member since 2016 and has been a strong advocate and supporter for FCS programming.

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*Communications Newsletters (Individual)*

Melanie Sutherland

*Communications Television/Video (Team)*

Hillary MacMichael, Jenny Aviles-Rodriguez, Wanda Adorno, Patrick Zayas, Jana Anderson, Calvin Gardner

*Communications Television/Video (Individual)*

Wanda Adorno

*Communications Written Media (Individual)*

Andrea Nikolai

*Community Partnership (Individual)*

Joshua Payne

*Community Partnership (Individual)*

Brenda Marty-Jimenez

*Educational Curriculum Package (Team)*

Lori Johnson, Dallas Meringolo

*Environmental Education (Team)*

Halie Corbitt, Heather Futch, Paulette Tomlinson, Erin Harlow, Zoie Whitlock, Kalie Picklo, Julia Fulton, Columbia Master Gardener Volunteers

Environmental Education (Team)

Terri Keith, Andrea Albertin, Yilin Zhuang, Judy Corbus, Claire Davis, Melanie Taylor, Katherine Allen, William Lester, LuAnn Duncan, Giovanna Benitez, Ondine Wells

Excellence in Teamwork (Team)

Kendra Hughson, Marcia Brown, Ginny Hinton, Jill Breslawski, Jennifer Bearden, Angelika Keene, Carla Jagger, Heidi Radunovich, Tamara Cushing, Brent Broaddus, Angela Lindsey, Daniel Gonzalez, Candi Dierenfield, Heather Futch, Laura Valencia, Nancy Moores, Lisa Hamilton, Samantha Kennedy

Extension Disaster Education (Team)

Halie Corbitt, Heather Futch

Extension Housing Outreach (Team)

Lisa Hamilton, Judy Corbus, Melanie Taylor, Cyndi Longley, Katherine Allen, Halie Corbitt, Stephanie McMinds, Jenny Rodriguez, Giovanna Benitez, Terri Keith, Natasha Parks, Jill Breslawski, Jennifer Hagen, Cindi Hetz, Laura Valencia, Johanna Gomez-Gonzalez, Katherine Marin

Family Health & Wellness (Team)

Kendra Hughson, Marcia Brown, Ginny Hinton, Jill Breslawski, Jennifer Bearden, Angelika Keene, Carla Jagger, Heidi Radunovich, Tamara Cushing, Brent Broaddus, Angela Lindsey, Daniel Gonzalez, Candi Dierenfield, Heather Futch, Laura Valencia, Nancy Moores, Lisa Hamilton, Samantha Kennedy, Ian Stone

Family Health & Wellness (Individual)

Andrea Nikolai

Financial Management Award in Memory of Dean Don Felker (Individual)

Shari Bresin

Innovative Youth Development Programming (Individual)

Stephanie Clamer McMinds

Marketing Package (Team)

Halie Corbitt, Heather Futch

Mary W. Wells Memorial Diversity (Individual)

Joshua Payne

Mary W. Wells Memorial Diversity (Individual)

Andrea Nikolai

Program Excellence Through Research (Team)

Kendra Hughson, Marcia Brown, Ginny Hinton, Jill Breslawski, Jennifer Bearden, Angelika Keene, Carla Jagger, Heidi Radunovich, Tamara Cushing, Brent Broaddus, Angela Lindsey, Daniel Gonzalez, Candi Dierenfield, Heather Futch, Laura Valencia, Nancy Moores, Lisa Hamilton, Samantha Kennedy

Social Media Education (Individual)

Suzanne Holloway

## FACAA Awards & Winners

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### Distinguished Service



**Mark Mauldin** is the Agriculture and Natural Resource Agent in Washington County, focused on cattle and crop producers, and pesticide applicators. He has become known for his expertise in weed management. In addition, he is a dynamic speaker, providing practical information in a way that is very relatable to farmers and ranchers. He has also become known for his teaching through the written word in articles written for trade journals and as a blog author.

Years of CES Service: 11



**Nick Simmons** has served as the County Extension Director for UF/IFAS Extension in Escambia County Florida since 2016. He is recognized for his educational programs focusing on building sustainable and productive livestock operations in Escambia County. Nick's programs have helped producers decrease input costs while improving the viability and profitability of their land and animals. He has received multiple awards for his work. Nick has served as an officer for FACAA and Committee Chair for NACAA.

Years of CES Service: 12



**Kalan Taylor** was the Sumter County 4-H agent from September 2013 until April 2020. May 2020, she started her position as the Volusia County Agriculture and Natural Resources agent. January 2022, she started her position as the Volusia County Extension Director and Natural Resources agent. She has offered a wide variety of agriculture related programs covering topics such as small ruminant management, introduction to backyard poultry, pasture management, toxic weed identification and management, beef cattle reproduction, and farm tours. She has earned 6 NACAA awards, numerous state

awards, and 4-H awards.

Years of CES Service: 11

### Achievement Awards

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**Laura Bennett** has been an agent for 9 years. She excels in livestock and forage production, agricultural awareness, and innovative outreach, securing \$11,000 in grants and \$84,000 in in-kind support. Her programs include creating curriculum guides for beginning ranchers and launching awareness campaigns reaching thousands. A multiple NACAA finalist and regional award winner, including Agricultural Awareness (2024), Laura's leadership shines through extensive service on national and state committees, advancing recognition, abstract evaluation, and animal science, exemplifying her commitment to Extension excellence.



**Hannah (Wooten) Eason** is a UF/IFAS Extension leader in urban agriculture, hydroponics, and sustainable practices. She has been in Extension for 9 years. She has educated over 2,000 individuals, developed innovative curricula, and fostered impactful community partnerships. As a Senior GI-BMP Instructor and advocate for integrated pest management, she has secured over \$79,000 in grants and delivered \$803,000 in program impact. Recognized with national awards, Hannah's visionary efforts advance agricultural sustainability and strengthen Florida's urban food systems.



**Caitlin Justesen** has taught over 150 group teaching events in the past 7 years and developed over 295 creative works, with 10 awards for creative works & program excellence. Caitlin has generated \$112,327 in monetary and in-kind contributions for her programming. She has presented at 14 state and national conferences for FACAA/NACAA in addition to being a virtual conference facilitator for 2 years. Caitlin heavily supports FACAA by serving as district director and involvement in committees.





The Gadsden Extension Team planned to nominate **John and Harvey Suber** for the Outstanding Agriculturalist, however, before nomination, John passed away, but we want to nominate them both, because together, they have made a lasting impact on our local agriculture and Extension communities. John and Harvey Suber, brothers, and the owners of S.K. Enterprises, a three-generation family farm that produces tomatoes, cattle, citrus, corn, peanuts, soybeans, and sod in North Florida and South Georgia. John and Harvey have dedicated over 78 years to the agriculture industry in Gadsden

County. Active in the Gadsden County Tomato Growers Association and strong advocates for UF/IFAS Extension, they have contributed to many on-farm research trials and provide valuable input for educational programs. Their commitment to agriculture earned them the UF/IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center (NFREC)'s Hall of Fame Award in 2019. Both John and Harvey have served on the Gadsden Extension Advisory Committee and the UF/IFAS NFREC's Advisory Council for decades. John and Harvey have made a lasting impact on our local agriculture and Extension communities.



**Blake Hunnicut (Finest Farms)** was a proud University of Florida graduate, and calling him a devoted Gator football fan would be an understatement. Early in his career, he traveled across the southeastern United States, working long hours to expand his family's egg production business. His dedication led to success, allowing him to return to Brooksville to manage his family's cattle operations and real estate investments.

Blake was always on the move, known for his strong work ethic. His days began before sunrise and ended after sunset, ensuring every moment was productive. Following his father's philosophy, he often said, "When you love what you do, it doesn't feel like work." For him, success wasn't just about achievements—it was about perseverance and integrity.

Tragically, Blake passed away in a helicopter accident on February 27, 2025. He served on the Hernando-Citrus Farm Bureau Board, Hernando-Pasco FSA Board, and Hernando County Extension Advisory Committee.



**Okeechobee Livestock Veterinarians**, a dedicated four-member LLC, has significantly impacted Florida's agricultural community through expert veterinary care for beef and dairy cattle, small ruminants, and hogs. Their leadership extends beyond practice, with one member serving as Chair of the Florida Cattlemen's Association Health Committee. Their commitment to youth



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development earned them the Okeechobee County Friend of 4-H Award, as they provide affordable care and health certificates for 4-H livestock projects.

Recognized experts in herd health and reproductive management, they frequently present at educational programs, including the South Florida Beef & Forages Reproductive Management School and Herd Health program as well as Okeechobee Extension workshops. Their service on the South Florida Beef & Forages and Dairy RSA advisory committees further demonstrates their dedication to advancing Florida agriculture through Extension. Because of their expertise, community support, and leadership, Okeechobee Livestock Veterinarians are deserving recipients of the Outstanding Agriculturalist Award.



**Brooks Garland (Lee Peanut Farms)** has been a strong supporter of Florida agriculture and UF/IFAS Extension and an “early adopter” of agricultural technologies. Brooks manages 11,000-acre, multi-crop farm in the Suwannee River Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) area, requiring a 5.8-million-pound nitrogen reduction/year by 2035. With UF/IFAS collaboration, Lee Peanut has improved its best management practices accounting for 7% of their total required reduction. Brooks started with grid sampling to make better decisions on fertilizer needs and rate. In addition, Brooks side dress the first two nutrient applications in corn using 360 Y-drops for better placement which led to a reduction of nitrogen input by 50 lbs/acre for his entire operation. He uses soil moisture sensors to make irrigation decision and have reduced around 200 million gallons of water usage per year. Brooks plants cover crops following harvest to scavenge excess nutrients, add organic matter to the soil and to reduce wind erosion.

### Outstanding Specialists



**Julian Beuzelin** has provided leadership for Extension efforts aiming to improve insect pest management in agronomic crops (sugarcane, rice) and vegetables (sweet corn, celery, lettuce, pepper) produced in Palm Beach County, the largest agricultural county east of the Mississippi River, and surrounding region in southern Florida. This region leads the nation in terms of sugarcane, fresh market sweet corn, and fresh market pepper production. He has routinely conducted on-farm studies including large ecology experiments and pesticide efficacy trials involving Extension agents, crop consultants, and growers. This approach ensures that UF/IFAS specialists and Extension agents gain knowledge together while answering clientele needs and building trust.



**Nicholas DiLorenzo's** primary research and extension interests are in beef cattle nutrition, with the objective of improving the efficiency of use of forages and minimizing the environmental impact. DiLorenzo has been the coordinator of the Florida Bull Test since 2017 and the Extension program, with an estimated economic impact of \$6.7 million in the southeastern U.S. Dr. DiLorenzo has been an invited speaker in 16 extension meetings, including the Beef Cattle Short Course, local cattlemen association meetings, the NW Florida Beef conference, and the Plains Nutrition Conference-Midwest Consulting Nutritionist Forum, among other events. Dr. DiLorenzo has hosted multiple groups of FFA and 4H students at NFREC for field tours and talks about careers in agriculture and animal sciences. Multiple groups from the following counties have been received at NFREC for such events: Jackson, Holmes, Gadsden, Gulf, and Escambia.

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#### 2025 FACAA Hall of Fame Award



**Bob Hochmuth** has worked for University of Florida IFAS Extension since 1988 as a multi-county agent, regional specialized agent, and center director. Bob's 43-year career stands out for his expertise in specialty crops, impactful educational programs, exemplary leadership and mentorship, and unwavering support for the agricultural community.

A lifelong advocate for the watermelon industry, Bob has guided Florida growers in improving water, nutrient, pest and disease management, including conversion to plastic mulch and drip irrigation systems on about 6000 watermelon acres. To support the adoption of best management practices, Bob has used innovative blue-dye demonstrations to show soil water movement, provided petiole-sap testing services, and led on-farm trials of soil-moisture sensors, controlled-release fertilizer, and paper mulch. In 2009, Bob founded the Suwannee Valley Watermelon Institute, an annual program fostering education and collaboration among farmers, industry, and Extension.

Since 2014, Bob has served as center director or assistant center director of the North Florida Research and Education Center – Suwannee Valley, overseeing expansions in programs, personnel, and facilities. Bob inspires others with his can-do attitude, humor, and team building. A servant leader, Bob generously credits the contributions of others, nominates colleagues for awards, and actively seeks opportunities to support their personal and professional growth. In 2013, he earned the first-ever UF/IFAS Extension Mentor of the Year Award.

Bob has been a member of NACAA since 1982. He served as chair on four committees for the 2004 AM/PIC and as fundraising chair for AM/PIC in 2022. He was FACAA president in 2001 and Florida Association of Extension Professionals board chair in 2002 and has served on scores of state committees. Bob is a national winner of seven NACAA awards.

He received the first Extension Professional of the Year Award from the Florida Farm Bureau and the Trailblazer of the Year Award from the Suwannee Chamber of Commerce. Also known in the community as “Coach Bob,” he served as a youth soccer and high school soccer coach for 20 years. Bob Hochmuth’s distinguished career embodies NACAA core values of professional excellence, support for Extension colleagues, and public service.

## Communicator Awards

### Audio Recording

Ashley Stonecipher, Jean Claude, Caitlin Justesen, Tim Wilson, Felicia Marable-Williams

### Published Photo

James Davis

### Computer Generated Presentations

Susan Haddock

### Event Promotional Package

Clarissa Chairez, Laynie Yip, Stephanie Gonzalez, Deanna Kanne

### Personal Column

Cynthia Nazario-Leary

### Feature Story

Bonnie Wells

### Newsletter

Alissa Havesh, Sam Erikson, Zach Franco, Alex Seasholtz

### Educational Video Recording

Tiare Silvasy

### Fact Sheet

Brittany Scharf, Victor Blanco

### Publication

Kevin Korus, Wael Elwakil

### Web Site/Online Content

Yilin Zhuang, Andrea Albertin, Stella Canfield

### Learning Module/Notebook

Heather Kalaman

### Bound Book/eBook

Michelle Atkinson

### Ag Awareness & Appreciation Award

## Search for Excellence Awards

### 4-H Programming

Mussoline, W, Strickland, J, Scharf, B, Wilson, T, Smith, M, McCazzio, C, Pogue, H - [Workforce Readiness Through Drone Technology: Preparing Youth for Careers in a Growing Industry](#)

### Consumer or Commercial Horticulture

Williams, D, Payne Smith, A, Martini, X, Shahid, M, Price, J - [Cold Hardy Citrus Extension Program](#)

### Crop Production

Wynn, K, Beach, E, Dufault, N, Korus, K, Kumar, S, Love, J - [Utilizing Florida Best Management Practices While Evaluating Grain Corn Varieties](#)

### Environmental Quality, Forestry and Natural Resources

Moffis, B, Iannone, B, Bohlen, P, Jones, P, Kipp, J, Levey, R, Sallin, T - [Empowering Professionals: Innovation and Education for Water Efficient and Biodiverse Landscaping Practices in Florida](#)

### Farm and Ranch Business Management

Kirby, C, Baker, H, Bennett, L, Butler, L, Crum, L, Stice, B, Trent, S, Williams, A - [Florida Cattlemen's Institute and Allied Trade Show](#)

### Livestock Production

Justesen, C, Wickens, C, Sanders, C, Wilson, T, DeNotta, S, Bittar, J, Thrift, T, Stice, B, Hersom, M - [Livestock Education & Certification for Agriculture Law Enforcement](#)

### Sustainable Agriculture

Rodriguez, L, Bosques, J - [Enhancing Beekeeping Knowledge: A Strategic Approach to Educate Beginner Beekeepers and the Next Generation of Apiculturists.](#)

### Young, Beginning, or Small Farmers and Ranchers

Waters, K, Simmons, N, Gonella-Diaza, A - [Panhandle Cattlemen's College](#)

# FANREP Awards & Winners

## Achievement Awards



### Early Career Leadership

Michael Sipos's extension work is imbued with an obvious enthusiasm for the outdoors and educating others so they can experience our marine systems in a sustainable way. Since Michael started with University of Florida and Florida Sea Grant in 2019, he has developed a broad extension program that impacts end users far outside Collier County, including national and state award-winning educational programs.



### Innovative Program

The Water Ambassador Program – Connecting Communities to Water:  
Lorna Bravo

The Water Ambassador Program demonstrates a unique and effective approach to water conservation and sustainable landscaping in urban environments. The program has saved an estimated 11 million gallons of water annually, enough to supply 125 households. By combining specialized training, community engagement, and measurable impacts, this program stands out as an innovative solution to pressing environmental challenges in Florida.



### FANREP Outstanding Specialist

Dr. Vivek Sharma, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Precision Water Management Specialist in the UF Agricultural and Biological Engineering Department since 2020. Dr. Sharma exemplifies the type of researcher you want to collaborate with, and he is an excellent communicator with both colleagues and farm clientele. His amazing success with external funding and his ability to build a strong collaborative team of County and Regional Extension agents has built the foundation for him to be recognized as an exemplary faculty member. He is innovative, driven by stakeholder needs, and committed to helping Florida's agricultural producers succeed.

### Friend of FANREP

David Griffis has made significant contributions to Extension natural resources programs throughout his life. Throughout his tenure with Extension since 1978, David Griffis has dedicated himself to teaching environmental education programs while also developing community programs for both youth and adults. His dedication to the Florida Master Naturalist

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Program (FMNP) has been particularly noteworthy, serving as an instructor since the program's inception. In his career, retirement, and volunteerism, he demonstrates his extraordinary commitment to advancing natural resource education in our community.



#### Outstanding Team

Landscape University Team: Morgan Pinkerton, Hannah Eason, Brooke Moffis, Chris Weber, Rachel Rector, Ally Lineville, and Kelly Field

The Landscape University annual webinar series exemplifies an innovative, successful model for providing continuing education to

horticulture professionals in the green industries. The program has engaged 860 live participants with 590 CEUs issued. Through interdisciplinary content, engaging virtual delivery, and impactful post-training results, the program met a critical need for accessible, quality education on sustainable landscape practices.

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## Outstanding Educational Programs

### Book or Comprehensive Curriculum

**1st Place:** Basics of Landscaping in Florida Bilingual Book. Hannah Wooten, Morgan Pinkerton, Tina McIntyre, and Tatiana Sanchez-Jones

**2nd Place:** “Pollinator Monitoring Citizen Science Training Program,” Holly Abeels and Sofia Cordoba

**3rd Place:** “Poisonous Plants of Northeast Florida Comprehensive Program,” Terra Freeman

### Long Publication

**1st Place:** Invasive Trees of Pinellas County Rack Cards. Lara Milligan, Matthew Hill, Alissa Berro, Carolyn Cheatham Rhodes, Alexandra Rieman, and Kailey Travis

**2nd Place:** Wildlife on a Forest Hike – Study Guide. Shelly Johnson

### Short Publication

**1st Place:** Responsible Scallop: Build Your Own Scallop Sorter. Brittany Hall-Scharf and Victor Blanco

**2nd Place:** Stall Talk Series: Sustainability. Marnie Ward and Toni Noaker

**3rd Place:** Pollinator Brochure Highlights Local Plants and Garden. Kaydie Gene McCormick, Sue Cullen, and Lindsey Kelly

### Newsletter / Series of Articles / Blogs

**1st Place:** “The Spooky Bug Brigade: A Blog Series,” Jackie Leboutitz

**2nd Place:** “The Dirt Newsletter,” Lisa Sutphin Strange

### Podcast / Radio

**1st Place:** “Wild Turkey Science,” Dr. Marcus Lashley, Dr. Will Gulsby, and Charlotte Nowak

**2nd Place:** “Marine Science Minute with Florida Sea Grant” Radio Spots, Savanna Barry, Ana N.



Zangroniz, Carolyn J. Kovacs, Donielle N. Nardi, Victor Blanco, Brigid R. Massey, Sarisha S. Boodoo, Maia P. McGuire, Holly A. Abeels, Armando Ubeda, Anna E. Braswell, Joshua T. Patterson, Monica Wilson, Victoria Gambale, Vincent Encomio, Michael J. Sipos, Laura G. Tiu, Nicholas Haddad, Razieh Farzad, Eric J. Cassiano, and Lisa Krimsky

**3rd Place:** “I want to Know, Have you Ever Smelled the Rain?” Shannon Carnevale, Lara Milligan, and Hanley Renney

#### Promotional & Marketing Materials

**1st Place:** “2024 Seminole County Farm Tour Promotional Kit,” Morgan Pinkerton, JK Yarborough, Kaydie McCormick, Bennett Lloyd, Shane Michael, Tina McIntyre, Karen Henry, Wanda Adorno, Kelly Field, Rachel Rector, Ally Lineville, Kurt Slafkovsky, and Meredith Brown

**2nd Place:** “Operation TRAP Promotional Kit,” Monica Wilson, Savanna C. Barry, Laura K. Reynolds, Morgan Edwards, Michael Loizzo, Hayden Henke, John Polasik, and Emily Colson

**3rd Place:** “2024 Garden Festival & Plant Sale,” Clarissa Chairez, Laynie Yip, and Amber Boas

#### Webinars

**1st Place:** “Landscape University Annual Webinar Series,” Morgan Pinkerton, Hanna Eason, and Brooke Moffis

**2nd Place:** “Edible Gardening Webinars Teach Environmental Stewardship,” Kaydie Gene McCormick, Morgan Pinkerton, and Jamielyn Daugherty

**3rd Place:** “Ecotourism Webinar Series,” Carolyn Kovacs, Kate Rose, and Mike Sipos

#### TV / Video

**1st Place:** “Floridian Flora Fridays: Like, Share, Grow Native,” Heather Kalaman and Chris Weber

**2nd Place:** “Bite Back: Simple Tips for a Mosquito-Free Environment,” Jackie Leboutz, AJai Hilton, and Carly Dufficy

#### Website / Apps / Educational Technology

**1st Place:** “Florida Well Owner Network Website,” Yilin Zhuang, Andrea Albertin, and Stella Canfield

**2nd Place:** “Visualizing Community Conservation with ArcGIS WebApps,” Shannon Carnevale and Lara Milligan

## FACDEP Awards

#### Excellence in Community Development Work, Team Award

Kevin Camm

#### Excellence in Teamwork, Team Award

Prudence Caskey

### Educational Materials, Team Award

Jessica Sprain

### Educational Materials, Individual Award

Prudence Caskey

### Educational Technology, Individual Award

Prudence Caskey

## ESP Awards & Winners

### Distinguished Service

**Brent Broaddus:** In 2024, this individual achieved the rank of Agent IV (Full Professor), recognizing their significant contributions. Their scholarly record includes 5 refereed publications, a book chapter, and 91 presentations (6 international, 32 national, 2 regional, 31 state), along with over \$10.7 million in grant funding for impactful programs.

They bring expertise in training and mentoring, including international work with USSOUTHCOM ( $p < .001$ ) and 429 Air Force staff across Europe (99–100% knowledge gains and behavioral improvements). Mentoring of Extension agents enhanced conflict resolution, program development, and risk management. Volunteer trainings led to 90–95% proficiency in core 4-H elements, while grantsmanship training improved knowledge, with 17% applying for grants. During COVID-19, they supported agents and volunteers with training that significantly boosted knowledge in 4-H policies and youth development. Faculty development efforts on work-life balance helped reduce turnover, saving an estimated \$1.5–\$2.2 million.

Youth programs show strong impact: 100% of Gator Pit participants gained entrepreneurial skills (77% knowledge increase), 4-H in Space raised awareness of space careers, and Tech Wizards significantly reduced delinquency ( $p < .001$ ) while improving mentoring outcomes.

Through STEM engagement, life skills development, and strategic training, this leader has strengthened 4-H, boosted sustainability, and supported a future-ready youth workforce.

### Mid-Career Service

**Karen Henry:** Karen is a dedicated Extension professional whose career exemplifies excellence in volunteer management, youth development, and community engagement. As the 4-H Youth Development Agent in Seminole County, Florida, she has successfully implemented the Florida 4-H Positive Youth Development model, focusing on leadership, workforce readiness, and character development, positively impacting thousands of youth.

Her success is rooted in effective volunteer engagement, community partnerships, and inclusive programming. Using the ISOTURE model, she has trained over 80 volunteers to support youth in a nurturing environment. Under her leadership, Seminole County 4-H now serves over 7,000 youth annually, with notable improvements in belonging, leadership, and skill-building. Evaluation data shows volunteers are better equipped to implement positive youth development strategies, and youth have increased communication, leadership, and critical thinking skills.

A hallmark of Karen's work is building partnerships to extend 4-H's reach into diverse and underserved communities, offering opportunities that promote both subject matter learning and life skills. She is also an active leader in professional organizations like Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP) and NAE4-HYDP, contributing to the advancement of Extension and supporting peer development. Her participation in national conferences and trainings ensures she remains current on best practices.

Karen's work has been recognized through numerous awards and has influenced 4-H programming at the state and national levels. Through innovative programming, leadership, and mentorship, Karen Henry sets a high standard in 4-H Youth Development and continues to inspire youth, volunteers, and colleagues alike.

#### Early-Career Service

**Victor Blanco:** Victor Blanco holds a bachelor's in marine biology, a master's in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences, a graduate certificate in Environmental Education and Communication, and three scuba diving instructor certifications. Since 2016, he has served as the Marine Extension Agent for UF/IFAS Extension and Florida Sea Grant in Taylor County, bringing extensive international experience, including work with UN agencies. A member of ESP since 2021, Victor plans to seek a chapter-level committee position.

Victor has earned 19 Florida state awards, 6 national awards, and holds a registered USPTO patent for coastal erosion control, with a second patent pending for a fishing device. He has secured nearly \$500,000 in grant funding and serves on several professional committees at state and national levels.

His extension work focuses on sustainable fisheries, marine ecosystem literacy, and waterway safety, including a 4-H component. He has created over 1,000 educational materials, reaching 14,139 in-person participants, 700,000 website visitors, and over 395,000 via social media. He has coordinated 360 volunteers contributing 3,577 hours.

Program impacts include influencing two fisheries regulation updates, improving marine ecosystem literacy for 4,667 residents and visitors, and promoting conservation of 48,000 acres of seagrass beds and 4.25 nautical square miles of reef habitat. Debris removal efforts have improved safety across 2,500 acres of coastal waters, reducing boating incidents and enhancing navigation. His trap removal efforts prevented mortality of over 22,000 crabs and 7,000 fish, and his scallop sorter has released thousands of juveniles back to the ocean.

#### Distinguished Team

Karen Henry & Brenda Urias - Get Sanford Cycling

#### Administrative Leadership

Kevin Camm

*Visionary Leadership*

Heather Futch