

FACAA Scholarship Report

Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor (CLIA)

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Plan

I intended to use the scholarship funds to become a Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor (CLIA), with Drip Specialty, through the Irrigation Association (IA). In order to obtain the Drip Specialty certification, the IA required you first obtain your CLIA certification. The IA has since discontinued the Drip Specialization, but I was still able to use the funds to obtain my CLIA in April 2020.

Benefits

- Develop expertise in delivering irrigation trainings to professionals and Master Gardener volunteers. In our Treasure Coast region, I am currently working to develop my expertise as a resource for irrigation-related needs. Since taking the training for the CLIA certification, I have offered a more advanced training for Master Gardener volunteers on the topic of irrigation. I have gained knowledge I am able to apply when teaching the Irrigation Module of the Green Industries Best Management Practices Training. I have also been working with specialists, farmers, and other extension agents to pilot soil moisture sensors in our region's farms.
- Become a resource for municipal and industry clientele with regard to irrigation troubleshooting and scheduling. According to the Irrigation Association, CLIAs quantify and analyze landscape irrigation water use. CLIAs:
 - Collect site data.
 - Make maintenance recommendations and perform minor repairs.
 - Perform field measurements and observations.
 - Determine irrigation uniformity and efficiency.
 - Develop a basic irrigation schedule.
 - Work with a water manager or property owner to manage irrigation water use.

With the certification, I am able to provide technical advice to local government and industry clientele in modifying their irrigation system/schedule to conserve water. As a start, in February 2020, I collaborated with our Martin County Parks and Recreation Department irrigation lead to offer the field portion of the MG irrigation training, which included a catch can test conducted at a County park. In early March of 2020, to practice and connect with industry on irrigation, I worked with a local company to audit a sampling of zones at a golf course community they manage.

Earning professional certification in irrigation is helping me to develop expertise, provide more advanced training, better serve municipal and industry clientele, and market my skills.