

Feature Story



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Volunteering Overseas as an Extension Agent

One of the desirable skills of an Extension Agent is the ability to work with people of different cultures. Volunteering internationally gives you the opportunity to explore and learn about culture in different parts of the world, increase your knowledge of farming in different countries and develop professional skills in international agriculture. At the same time, you are helping people solve some of their agricultural problems. The practice of extension education improves the lives of people in the USA and throughout the world. The internet and globalization have made an abundance of agricultural information readily available, but there are limitations to the use of this information. Farmers in some developing countries do not have access to the internet while others are unable to read and write. This is when your expertise in extension education (helping underprivileged adults learn improved farming practices,

proper nutrition, etc.) becomes valuable to people overseas. Almost all overseas volunteers are selected based on their ability to communicate in their area of expertise such as food preservation or pest control. To be successful in accomplishing what you set out to do, it is important to accept an assignment that matches your expertise. You will find the project interesting and you are most likely to be motivated to carry it out.

Some Suggestions to Get Started

If you decide to do some international volunteer work, there will probably be many questions on your mind, the foremost being “How do I start?” The first thing to do is research nonprofit organizations and international agricultural development organizations that have volunteer programs. They are referred to as VOs in this document. The following are some websites that can help you to get started:

<http://www.heifer.org/about-heifer/careers/view-all-jobs.html>

<https://www.rescue.org/volunteer>

<http://farmertofarmer.crs.org/>

<http://www.mercycorps.org/volunteer>

<http://www.winrock.org/opportunities>

<http://www.acdivoca.org/volunteer>

<http://www.cnfa.org/opportunities>

<https://lol.avature.net/Careers>

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VO websites may list opportunities and assignments, most of which last between 2-4 weeks. You may be required to register online with the VO that is of interest to you, providing them with your biographic information and résumé. The next step is to make contact with the VO to express your interest in the assignment(s). The VO is expected to send you a scope of work which provides information about the country, the people, the culture and the details of what you are expected to do.

Funding

Many of these organizations will fund the cost of your trip including travel, accommodation and per diem associated with the assignments. Some VOs will advance approximately 80 percent of your expense and the rest will be paid to you upon submission of your volunteer expense report and out of country report. You may be able to find more information in a VO volunteer travel expense guideline if there is one available. It is advisable to carry additional money if you plan to do extra travels and buy gifts not associated with the assignment.

Protecting Your Health

It is always comforting to know you are protected with health insurance as a volunteer. Some VOs will provide health insurance during your assignment. Some countries require proof of vaccination against certain diseases noted on your health/immunization certificate. Check out the following website for health and vaccination information <http://www.cdc.gov/>. Some VOs require medical clearance from your healthcare provider

before you leave for your assignment. Do not forget to pack any medication you may be using on a regular basis and any other health care products. It can be difficult to buy these products if you are travelling in a country where medical supplies are limited in quantity and quality. Anti-diarrheal and mosquito repellents are a must.

Emergencies and Visas

In case of emergency, most VOs have an emergency plan. If you are with the University of Florida, you may be able to benefit from the emergency information which can be found at <http://www.ufic.ufl.edu/travelregistration.html>. Faculty members who are undertaking international volunteer work are required to fill out a Travel Authorization Request (TAR) form and seek permission from their supervisor. If you work for a county, you will need permission from the county administration. With respect to immigration requirements, find out if there is a visa requirement for the country you will be visiting. Normally, your VO will handle a visa application before you leave. You may be able to get your visa at the port of entry when travelling to certain countries, but confirm this before you leave. Keep in mind that your application for a visa at the port of entry may require visa fees. Keep a photo copy of your passport and visa with you always in addition to your passport.

Getting There

Now that you have been selected to go abroad for an international assignment, the following advice may be useful. Leave home well in advance for your

flight and keep the telephone number of a few nearby hotels handy just in case your flight is delayed. It is recommended that you be extremely careful and vigilant in protecting your personal articles including camera, cell phone and computers. Most VOs are not responsible for loss of your personal effects including baggage that has been lost or damaged. You may arrive in your host country ahead of your baggage if you have connecting flights, so consider packing some extra clothes in your carry-on bag. Travelling to a foreign country can be a bit stressful, especially if your flight is late or arriving at night. Most VOs will arrange for you to be picked up at the airport and be taken to your place of accommodation. Have with you the telephone numbers of the person who is picking you up and that of your host or VO's local office.

Key Points

- Research on the internet will lead you to volunteer organizations.
- You are more likely to be offered an assignment if your skills and experience match the scope of work or assignment.
- Your health is important while travelling abroad. Ensure you have the vaccinations required by the host country, and keep a copy of your vaccination history (International certificate of vaccination). Do not forget any medication you are using.
- Ensure you have the necessary visa for the host country.
- Protect your personal articles.
- Do not forget to have fun!!!

From the District Director



Eric Simonne

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Happy New Year! Let's "Shout Extension" in 2015 as we turn 101 years old!

The momentum, excitement and celebrations of 2014 for the 100 years of Extension are bound to continue as a new year turns around. Your daily achievements continue to amaze me and continue to make the Florida Cooperative Extension Service one of the best in the country. Congratulations for your good work!

The proper launching of this New Year requires a reflection on the main district events of last year and some resolutions. You, our county faculty members and program assistants, are the engines of Extension. Thank you for all you have done.

With bitter-sweet feelings, we celebrated the retirement of Jane Corless (FCS, Clay) and Colan Coody (PA, Union). We also thank Scott Taylor who served as the Interim Director for the Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center (SVAEC) for the past 5 years. We lamented the departures of Sean McCoy (Marketing/Enterprise Budgets, RSA Suwannee), Melva Morfaw (FAMU, Small Farms, Madison), Amanda Burnett Marek (Ag, Nassau), and Jenny Jump (FCS, Columbia). We wish them good luck in their future endeavors.

We were lucky to be able to hire outstanding new agents like Samara

Deary (FCS, Bradford/Union), Katherine Marin (FCS, Duval), Sydney Hayter (Livestock, Duval), Terra Freeman (Small Farms, Duval), BJ Jarvis (Hort and CED, Citrus from Pasco), Stephanie Clamer (PA, Community Resource Development, Citrus), and Amanda Rhodes (PA, 4-H, Union). All these changes in personnel remind us that we need to always be looking for new talents. At the same time, we need to be ready to welcome colleagues with different skill sets, different knowledge and backgrounds, challenging points of view, and different ideas of what Extension could/should be. Our diversities make us a stronger District.

We are also thankful for those who have stepped up and accepted leadership roles like Stephanie Toelle (interim CED, Clay), Mace Bauer (interim CED, Columbia) and Bob Hochmuth (Director, SVAEC). We renew our congratulations and admiration to those who found time to complete their advanced degrees while on the job. Congratulations to **Dr. Debbie Nistler** and **Dr. Cindy Sanders!** You are inspirations to all of us!

Last, but not least, the New Year cannot start without being thankful for the passionate and often obscure work of our



Dr. Debbie Nistler

District professionals Julie Wilson, Nikki Wilson and Ben Beach. Their talents are in high demand, and all three continue to make our professional lives easy – every day, often in the shadows. How could we function without them? Thank them today!

With 2014 being an election year, we witnessed the typical turn over that elections and term limits bring to our County Commissioner positions. In addition, county managers and/or department heads who oversee Extension have changed in Alachua, Citrus, Columbia, Duval and Taylor Counties. Our jobs are clear: we need to educate or re-educate all these new partners about the value of and the need for Extension.

With the new Congress in session, the National Association of Counties (NACo) has provided an excellent analysis of how the shift in power may affect counties. See <http://www.naco.org/legislation/Documents/NACo-2014-Election-Analysis.pdf>. Enjoy!

As we actively seek “not to be the best kept secret anymore”, let’s shout Extension and make some noise! Happy 2015 to all!



Dr. Cindy Sanders

District Life

2014 NE District Master Gardener Continued Training

By **Tom Wichman**
former Florida Master Gardener Volunteer State Coordinator

On August 15th, 2014, Alachua County hosted the 2014 NE District Master Gardener Continued Training at the Paramount Plaza Hotel in Gainesville. This event, coordinated by Alachua County Extension Agent and Master Gardener Coordinator Wendy Wilber, was attended by 209 Master Gardener volunteers from all over the NE District. Master Gardeners chose four educational sessions to attend during this all-day event. Topics included plant selection, fertilizers, soil amendments, pests and landscaping. Also included in the program were the service awards by which Master Gardener volunteers were recognized for 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35 years of service to the program. The formal program was followed by a plant exchange. This allowed Master



Wendy Wilber presenting a 10 year award to Peg Owens, Alachua County Master Gardener

Gardeners to bring a plant to exchange for one brought by someone else.

2014 was the first year in which official regional events have been held. A state-wide three-day conference is normally held every fall and is attended by about 300 people annually. This conference will now be held every two years on the odd years. The even years will feature a day-long event in each of the



BJ Jarvis presenting a 20 year award to Barbara McCormick, Citrus County Master Gardener

five districts to enable more volunteers to attend. The goal of these regional events is to reach a total of 800 to 1000 Master Gardeners with up-to-date training information at an affordable cost. The topics are personalized to each district so that the information is relevant to those attending. The NE District was the first of the five district trainings, and judging from their success, the goal to train more volunteers is well on its way.

Information Technologies



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Prezi for the Professional

While still widely used, PowerPoint is no longer the innovative presentation software. Prezi is an emerging program that allows a picture to say more than a thousand words. The premise behind Prezi

is to make presentations more engaging and to help show the bigger picture. It is a cloud-based application that does not have to be downloaded and can be accessed from any location, even without having to log in. Prezi can be found at <https://prezi.com>.

To use Prezi, the first thing you need to become familiar with is the menu. The Prezi interface uses a "Bubble Menu" that has five items that are to be used to create a presentation. The Bubble items are: Frame, Write, Insert, Path,

and Colors & Fonts. I put these in order of how I set up my Prezi presentations.

A frame is a box that groups content together. These are integral parts of your Prezi presentation; they act as placeholders for content and points along the path of your presentation. When you add items to a frame, they will fill the screen area for the presentation. The available frame choices are Invisible, Circle, Bracket, and Rectangle.

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Success Stories



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Promoting Nursery BMPs in Northeast Florida

Jacksonville has one of the oldest Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) in Florida. Agricultural producers in BMAP areas have the option to sign up to voluntarily use Best Management Practices (BMPs) or agree to do DEP recommended water testing, which can be costly. Production nurseries in the area are no exception and many started receiving letters in 2013 from the Department of Agriculture encouraging them to join the BMP program.

Erin Harlow, Commercial Horticulture Agent in Duval County, partnered with Dr. Yeager from UF's Environmental Horticulture Department to provide a workshop that would help nursery operators understand the BMPs and how to register for the program. Participants learned how to calibrate their irrigation



Dr. Yeager shows participants how to calibrate an irrigation system during a Nursery BMP Workshop in Duval County.

systems during the hands-on portion. The workshop was conducted in partnership with the Northeast Chapter of the Florida Nursery, Greenhouse, and Landscape Association (FNGLA) and was held at a nursery prior to a monthly meeting. Key players in the BMP process including the Department of Agriculture – Water Policy, the St. Johns Water Management District and the local Mobile Irrigation Lab were represented by speakers at the workshop.

Nineteen participants came from 13 different nurseries and represented five different counties. Nurseries ranged in age from one-and-a half to 40 years old.

Twenty percent of respondents (N=10) were enrolled in the BMPs at the time of the class. One enrolled the day before because the class was at their nursery. Forty percent (N=10) of respondents indicated that they had never calibrated the irrigation systems at their nurseries. These included the oldest nurseries in attendance (26-40 years). One hundred percent of respondents indicated they would sign up for the BMPs. A follow-up survey will determine if nurseries do sign up for the BMPs and make the changes that they self-indicated, which include using EC testing, calibrating irrigation systems, and addressing runoff.

What's Working?



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Extension Cross-Discipline Partnerships with Clara White Mission

Who: A host of Extension Agents in Duval County working together with community partners.

- Natasha Parks, FCS Agent
- Terry Delvalle, Horticulture Agent
- Brad Burbaugh, former Ag Agent
- Mary Puckett, Urban Garden Program Assistant
- Terra Freeman, Small Farms/Alt Enterprises Agent

- Healthy Jacksonville Obesity Prevention Coalition
- Clara White Mission
- Northern Irrigation
- Northeast Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection

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Prezi for the Professional...continued from page 4

Writing is simple. You can type text virtually anywhere, but it will not show up correctly unless it is in a frame. You can edit your text from the text menu when you click to type. Inserting an image, symbol, shape, YouTube video or music is very easy. By selecting 'insert' from the drop down Insert menu, you can click on anything you would like to add to the presentation.

A 'path' is the course you will take as you travel from frame to frame. After you set up your first frame and have typed the necessary information, you can add another frame using the frame button with a plus sign. Prezi automatically sets a consequential path. If the path needs to be changed, just right click on the bar that has the thumbnail display of available frames and select the 'edit path' button.

Colors and Fonts help you jazz up your Prezi presentation even more. When you have your text box open, the Bubble menu has options just like PowerPoint. You can change the title, subtitle, and body text individually or select/create a theme for your presentation.

Overall, Prezi is a user friendly system. Although it does not come with instructions or a tutorial, it is easy to grasp with a little practice. Prezi is free, or you can choose to upgrade your profile for a fee. The basic upgraded package includes premium support, managing privacy and sharing, and 500MB of cloud storage.

One last thing to consider...it has been said that Prezi can be a little over stimulating for some and that the "zooming user interface (ZUI)" can induce nausea. So, unless you want to take your audience on a roller coaster ride, try to focus on the information that you are trying to convey and use the motions and animations responsibly.

Some great Prezi presentations to watch are:

- Free Falling Through Prezi by Missing Link <https://prezi.com/d3lswto1mebc/free-falling-through-prezi/>

- The 10 Most Common Rookie Presentation Mistakes by Terry Gault, The Henderson Group (this is not about Prezi presentations, but is good to see how they incorporated Prezi to "layer" their presentation) https://prezi.com/5ye8po_hmikp/10-most-common-rookie-presentation-mistakes/
- A great TED Talk that uses Prezi is by Chris Anderson: How Web Video Powers Global Innovation https://www.ted.com/talks/chris_anderson_how_web_video_powers_global_innovation
- Visit <https://Prezi.com> and select the 'explore' option at the top of the page to see examples of presentations that others have made, such as "Hatching Helpers".

This information is from *Prezi for Dummies*, *Wikipedia*, and from learning to use the site.

Roaming Interview Section

By **Larry Figart**
UF/IFAS Extension Duval County
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This edition's roaming interview is contributed by **Clay Olsen**. The agents for this section are randomly selected, so be ready.

Where are you from/where did you grow up?

I was born Wichita, Kansas, and grew up in northern California, the Virgin Islands and South Florida.

How and when did you decide you wanted to be an Extension Agent?

I started with Extension when I graduated from UF. As I continued working in Extension, I decided I wanted to be an agent – wasn't that sure when I started out...

What are your hobbies?

Gardening. Lately, here in N. Florida, I have been playing with cool tolerant bananas and some large, fifty foot bamboo. I spend ample time, as weather permits, saltwater fishing the grass flats of the big bend.

State something about yourself that most people don't know about you?

I have a twin sister.

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Clay Olsen, Roaming Interview Section...continued from previous page

If you won the lottery tomorrow, what would you do/how would you spend your time?

I would expand my current perennial peanut production, explore small bale silage production, plant some of the new cool-season citrus being developed in N. Florida, and I would get a bigger boat.

Where did you go on your last vacation?

St Kitts, Nevis, British West Indies.

What was the last book you read?

"Falling in Love with Prayer" by Mike Macintosh.

What is the weirdest question you had to answer as an extension agent?

What can I do with the ozone hole in the atmosphere that opened over my farm and is affecting my cows?

Do you play a musical instrument?

No.

What is the most exciting place you have ever visited?

Europe – Germany.

Featured County Extension Office



Sarah M. Ellis

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Family and Consumer
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Labor Pains of Rebirthing Extension in Citrus County

In 2013, UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County went through some major changes as all of the agents left their positions for various reasons. When I joined the group as the new FCS agent in December of 2013, the office had been running for several months with a skeleton crew consisting of an office coordinator, a program secretary, and the new 4-H agent.

Of course, there were some bumps in the road and there were days when I asked myself, "What was I thinking?" I had never worked as an extension agent. I came from the aging network in which I monitored senior service programs in 16 counties. I had an idea of what I was supposed to be doing as an extension

agent, but had never done it! There were no programs running, no advisory committee, and no County Extension Director (CED) when I came aboard.

There were some great opportunities here, too. I had a completely blank slate to work with which meant I had a chance to try new and different programs. For some new agents, starting from scratch might be intimidating. However, I saw this as an exciting opportunity.

There are some important things I learned during the process. First, as a new agent, having a permanent County Extension Director (CED) to help guide and direct a new agent is important. Our interim CED was great but she was usually available only one day a week for questions and/or guidance. With so much to learn, this was difficult and some days I was overwhelmed! Next, I think every office should have a new employee handbook. I accidentally found PDEC online with the resources that are available there. Had this information been available in a handbook, it would have saved time and avoided confusion. Finally, I cannot express how helpful and

patient the district directors support staff were. They were on speed dial for a long time!

During my first several months with extension, I had to take a lot of initiative. Once I found PDEC I was able to register for in-service trainings including new agent orientation. I took the time to meet with several state specialists in an effort to learn more about the programs they were working on and what I might be able to bring to my county. I also joined committees and attended meetings in the community to start assessing what the needs were in Citrus County.

Once Citrus County got a permanent CED, things began to run a bit smoother and the office found some direction. We have all worked hard in the office this year to get programs up and running while increasing community awareness of what extension has to offer. I have learned so much over the last year and I have met some of the most delightful and dedicated people! I am proud to be part of the UF/IFAS Extension team.

Extension Cross-Discipline Partnerships with Clara White Mission...continued from page 5

What and Where: This urban garden is located where access to healthy food is needed. This 15 acre project, including a former Boys and Girls Club facility, is where healthy food will be produced, processed and sold at its own farm market. Additionally, the site will serve as an educational facility featuring nutrition and cooking classes for students and adults.

When: The idea began to unfold about two years ago when Terry Delvalle and Brad Burbough were first contacted to provide expertise on crop production at the “White Harvest Farm”, an urban



Future location of the Farmers Market at White Harvest Farms

working farm. This led to a series of events which brought in more partners, more ideas and more talent. The project continues to grow and develop.

What makes this program delivery unique? Teamwork. Teamwork is essential to providing quality programs across disciplines. After all, that is what Extension is about!!

UF/IFAS Extension Northeast District Offices – Find your local office at <http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/map/>

Alachua

2800 NE 39th Avenue
Gainesville, FL 32609
Phone: 352.955.2402

Baker

1025 W Macclenny Avenue
Macclenny, FL 32063
Phone: 904.259.3520

Bradford

2266 N Temple Avenue
Starke, FL 32091
Phone: 904.966.6224

Citrus

3650 W. Sovereign Path, Suite 1
Lecanto, FL 34461
Phone: 352.527.5700

Clay

2463 SR 16 West
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043
Phone: 904.284.6355

Columbia

971 West Duval Street, Suite 170
Lake City, FL 32055
Phone: 386.752.5384

Dixie

99 NE 121st Street
Cross City, FL 32628
Phone: 352.498.1237

Duval

1010 N McDuff Avenue
Jacksonville, FL 32254
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Gilchrist

125 E Wade Street
Trenton, FL 32693
Phone: 352.463.3174

Hamilton

1143 NW US HWY 41
Jasper, FL 32052
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Lafayette

176 SW Community Circle, Suite D
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Madison

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