

January 10, 2018

TO: UF/IFAS Faculty  
FROM: Jackie K. Burns  
SUBJECT: 2018 Early Career Scientist Seed Grant - Announcement of Awards

The future of IFAS and UF is driven by the early career faculty that join us to build their careers and impact our world through their research, teaching, and extension efforts. This year the UF/IFAS Dean for Research office, in partnership with the Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Vice President for Research, has once again implemented an Early Career Scientist Seed Grant program to facilitate development of new faculty research, jumpstart their research programs, and to provide a platform for their future success.

This year's competition was highly competitive, with 24 early career scientists presenting excellent proposals. After a rigorous review by a panel of UF/IFAS scientists, I am pleased to announce 15 awards. The research projects represented by these awards demonstrate the breadth of UF/IFAS research programs.

Please join me in congratulating this year's awardees!

**The awarded 2018 Early Career Scientist Seed Grant Proposals are:**

Author: **Dr. Ute Albrecht**

Unit: Horticultural Sciences / Southwest Florida REC

Title: Deciphering citrus rootstock-scion interactions and consequences for HLB disease development

Research Funding: \$50,000

Author: **Dr. Zachary Brym**

Unit: Agronomy / Tropical REC

Title: Evaluating the agroecosystem context of a simplified cropping system

Research Funding: \$50,000

Author: **Dr. Thomas Chouvenc**

Unit: Entomology & Nematology / Ft. Lauderdale REC

Title: Impact of invasive subterranean termites on urban tree canopy: detection and remedial control

Research Funding: \$49,916

Author: **Dr. Johan Desaeger**

Unit: Entomology & Nematology / Gulf Coast REC

Title: Identification and characterization of nematode suppressive soils in Florida

Research Funding: \$49,791

**Author: Dr. Celina Gomez**  
Unit: Environmental Horticulture  
Title: Optimizing Young-Plant Production with Controlled Environments  
Research Funding: \$50,000

**Author: Dr. Zane Grabau**  
Unit: Entomology & Nematology  
Title: Sod-based crop rotation impacts on plant-parasitic nematode management and soil ecology  
Research Funding: \$48,514

**Author: Dr. Jennifer Jones**  
Unit: Family, Youth and Community Sciences  
Title: Funding Climate Change Initiatives: Building a Theory of Philanthropic Behavior for Addressing Complex Problems  
Research Funding: \$47,772

**Author: Dr. Andrew Koeser**  
Unit: Environmental Horticulture / Gulf Coast REC  
Title: Trees and Natural Disasters: Improving Estimates of Likelihood of Impact, Likelihood of Failure, and Consequences of Failure in Professional Risk Assessments  
Research Funding: \$48,488

**Author: Dr. Jimena Laporta**  
Unit: Animal Sciences  
Title: Improving serotonin bioavailability: happier and healthier dairy calves?  
Research Funding: \$50,000

**Author: Dr. Xavier Martini**  
Unit: Entomology & Nematology / North Florida REC  
Title: Factors affecting response of *Orius insidiosus* to herbivore-induced plant volatiles.  
Research Funding: \$49,955

**Author: Dr. Geoffrey Meru**  
Unit: Horticultural Sciences / Tropical REC  
Title: Implementing a genomics-enabled breeding program for *Phytophthora* crown rot resistance in squash  
Research Funding: \$50,000

**Author: Dr. Philippe Moriel**  
Unit: Animal Sciences / Range Cattle REC  
Title: Nutritional manipulation of pregnant beef cows to impact offspring epigenetics, growth, and immunity  
Research Funding: \$50,000

**Author: Dr. German Sandoya Miranda**  
Unit: Horticultural Sciences / Everglades REC  
Title: Identifying Lettuce Cultivars with low input of Phosphorus at high soil ph  
Research Funding: \$49,915

Author: **Dr. Brett Scheffers**

Unit: Wildlife Ecology & Conservation

Title: Evaluating the role of climate and habitat complexity in determining 3-dimensional species distributions at global to regional scales

Research Funding: \$49,137

Author: **Dr. Ulrich Stingl**

Unit: Microbiology & Cell Science / Ft. Lauderdale REC

Title: Opening a potentially hazardous black box: Identifying structure and function of microbial communities in the water column of the Everglades

Research Funding: \$50,000