

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Caption: Images available upon request

DDWS welcomes two new interns

Two interns joined the team effort at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge in September. April Boehnen and Chris Gutierrez will be working fulltime with the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS) until June 2019 to support the refuge.

Boehnen, who graduated from Ohio State University in May 2017 with a major in animal sciences and minors in agricultural communications and wildlife, comes to the refuge from an animal care internship at Safe Haven Wildlife Sanctuary in Imlay, Nev.

“I’m most excited about being able to combine my interests of wildlife and graphic design. This internship allows me to explore a different side of the wildlife field than I’ve experienced,” she said. “I’m also looking forward to learning the behind-the-scenes aspects to a national wildlife refuge.”

A native of Grafton, Ohio, Boehnen is enjoying the warm weather and small-town feel of Sanibel Island.

“The sense of community and support the refuge receives from everyone on Sanibel is amazing,” she said. “My favorite part so far is being surrounded by a small piece of paradise that I am lucky enough to help support.”

Gutierrez hails from Holbrook on Long Island, N.Y., and comes to “Ding” Darling from a summer internship at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia.

“The island is beautiful. It's like living on vacation,” he remarked. “The wildlife is awesome and we’re not even into the peak of bird season yet. Just walking to work I get to see animals that the average person may never get to see in their lifetime.”

Gutierrez graduated in May from Alfred University, a small private college in upstate New York, with a degree in finance and economics.

“What I'm most excited for on the job is the opportunity to learn about the ways nonprofits raise money,” he said. “It is critical to the success of the refuge and conservation as a whole. So, future fundraising events and meeting with donors is what I'm really looking forward to.”

DDWS provides living stipends and other benefits for about a dozen refuge and DDWS interns each year. The refuge supports interns with free housing.

“Our interns bring youthful energy, enthusiasm, and creativity to the refuge team,” said DDWS executive director Birgie Miller. “The internship program is just one example of how the nonprofit and refuge partnership works for the better good of conservation and wildlife.”

To learn about supporting the refuge intern program, contact Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4.

ABOUT DDWS

As a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, DDWS works to support J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge’s mission of conservation, wildlife and habitat protection, research, and public education through charitable donations and Refuge Nature Shop proceeds.

To support DDWS and the refuge with a tax-deductible gift, visit dingdarlingsociety.org or contact Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

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