

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Caption: Michaela Arndt and Bryan Marquardt will be assisting the refuge with visitors services and its 75th anniversary activities this year.

‘Ding’ welcomes two new interns

Two visitor services interns joined the team effort at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge in January. Michaela Arndt and Bryan Marquardt will be working fulltime with supervisory refuge ranger Toni Westland this year.

Arndt, from Green Bay, Wisc., last interned at the Aldo Leopold Nature Center in the field of development. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in December, where she studied wildlife ecology and environmental conservation.

“My favorite part of the island so far is the warm weather and the beautiful birds here,” she says. “I really enjoy following the volunteers on programs, I’ve learned so much already. I’m looking forward to learning more about the refuge, especially the wildlife and flora. This is my first time working at a U.S. wildlife refuge, and I’m grateful to gain this new experience at ‘Ding’ Darling.”

Marquardt hails from Stillwater, Minn., and last worked at Rio Grande Del Norte National Monument near Taos, N.M.

“I am thoroughly enjoying the weather, the birds, the beach, the sunny days, the food, and the diversity of wildlife found here,” says Marquardt, who graduated from North Dakota State University in 2012 with a bachelor’s degree in zoology. “I am excited to be a part of the staff at ‘Ding’ Darling for the 75th anniversary.”

The “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS) provides living stipends and other benefits for about a dozen interns each year. The refuge supports interns with free housing.

“We welcome our new interns’ energy and enthusiasm,” said Westland. “We thank our friends group for making their internships possible. With our shrinking staff, due to federal budget cuts, this sort of partnership is crucial to keep the refuge running.”

For more information about the refuge’s internship programs, contact Westland at 239-472-1100 ext. 237. To learn about supporting the refuge intern program, contact Birgie Miller, DDWS executive director, 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 profits.

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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