**ALEXANDER J. LOCASTRO**

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**EDUCATION**

**University of Florida**, Gainesville, Florida Fall 2012-present Major: Entomology & Nematology ― Biosecurity

* Organizations: Golden Key International Honor Society, National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Alpha Zeta Honors Fraternity (Nominated), Delta Epsilon Iota Academic Honor Society (Nominated).
* Awards & Scholarships: Florida Academic Scholars Award (Fall 2012-present), Coca-Cola Scholarship (Fall 2013), Earl Dixon Jr. Scholarship (Fall 2013), John A. Mulrennan Sr. Scholarship (Fall 2013), Lawrence Hetrick Scholarship (Fall 2014).

**EXPERIENCE**

**UF Natural Area Teaching Laboratory**, Undergraduate Teaching Assistant August 2014-present

* Work with NATL Operations Committee as a team to maintain the aesthetic integrity of self-guided nature trails in four distinct environments. Includes mowing nature trails, trimming vegetation to meet Americans with Disabilities Act safety standards, removal and proper disposal of litter, among other miscellaneous tasks.
* Manage invasive weed populations using mechanical and chemical control methods.
* Develop educational information in the form of nature trail photosigns, kiosk signage and social media posts (Facebook and Twitter).
* Work overtime to lead students (K-12 and college) in educational tours and supervise volunteers at community service events.
* Obtained training in operating chainsaws and driving utility vehicles.

**UF Miller Lab of Evolutionary Ecology,** Undergraduate Research Assistant March-September 2013

* Helped with an entomological research project studying sexual selection in squash bugs, run by Dr. Christine W. Miller and Dr. Jennifer Hamel of the UF Entomology & Nematology Department.
* Assisted a graduate student with an independent research project on harlequin bugs.
* Gained experience rearing over 1,000 immature hemipteran insects (*Anasa spp.*) and dozens of parasitoid flies (*Trichapoda pennipes*) into adulthood.
* Planted and raised over 900 cucurbit plants as an insect food source. Daily tasks included watering, fertilizing, transplanting, and staking zucchini, squash, and pumpkin plants. Also trimmed diseased leaves and sprayed plants with insecticidal soap several times a week to fight aphids, whiteflies, and other greenhouse pests.
* Gained experience routinely scoring behavioral data during experimental trials.
* Constructed lab protocols for many of the above tasks.

**OTHER SKILLS**

* Extensive experience working with computer programs on both Mac and PC, such as Microsoft Office 365, Adobe Photoshop (Elements, CS6) and various video editing programs (Windows Movie Maker, iMovie).
* Well-developed interpersonal skills with people from all walks of life from many years of volunteering with non-profit organizations and cooperating with others to work as a team.
* Have basic conversational skills in Spanish from over 10 years of training in reading and writing.