

STEM Scholars Summer Field Site Experience University of Florida IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center

Participating School Districts



Panhandle Area Educational Consortium

Patrick L. McDaniel, Executive Director

Calhoun
Franklin
Gadsden
Gulf
Holmes
Jackson
Jefferson
Liberty
Madison
Taylor
Wakulla
Walton
Washington



Heartland Educational Consortium

Dr. Debra Elliott, Executive Director

DeSoto
Glades
Hardee
Hendry
Highlands
Okeechobee



North East Florida Educational Consortium

James Surrency, Ph.D., Executive Director

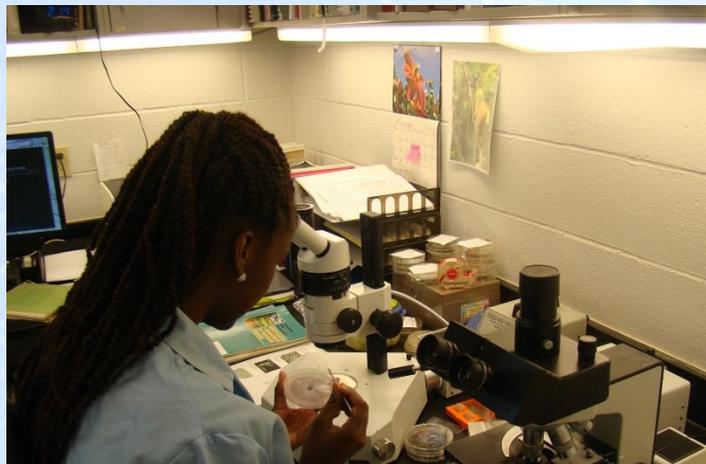
Columbia
Flagler
Gilchrist
Lafayette
Levy
P.K. Yonge
Putnam
Union

Summer STEM Field Site/Workplace Experiences, across the districts served by the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium, have allowed STEM Scholars to learn about STEM-related careers in their communities through personal experiences with STEM Talent Development Partners. This has been a valuable experience for participants and has contributed to their development which will help them to meet the demands of Florida's future economy.

Through the *FloridaLearns STEM Scholars* Project's Talent Development Program, high school juniors and seniors from small districts across Florida participated in eight-day Field Site/Workplace Experiences this summer. These experiences are made possible through partnerships with leaders in STEM industries such as local businesses, agencies, the military, and higher education faculty. The experiences offered by these STEM Talent Developers are preparing STEM Scholars to become STEM-ready by demonstrating the value of real world interactions with STEM.

Gadsden County students Alisson Avelar from West Gadsden High School and Kyla Robinson from East Gadsden High School spent six days at the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, North Florida Research and Education Center in Quincy. There students worked alongside researchers in the areas of wildlife biology, soil science, entomology, agronomy, plant pathology, and plant breeding. Students were afforded the chance to learn what scientists in the field do to plan and carry out experiments and gained an understanding of the importance and practical applications of the work done at the center. STEM Talent Development opportunities, such as this are invaluable because they help students understand the relevance of the math and science courses they are taking, as well as give them valuable insight into potential career choices and the post-secondary preparation they require.

Nicholas Comerford, Ph.D., Center Director coordinated the experience and Danielle Anderson, East Gadsden High School teacher, served as the field site team leader. Scientists who worked with the students were Holly Ober, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Wildlife Ecology, Cheryl Mackowiak, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Soil Nutrient Management, Russ Mizell III Ph.D., Professor of Entomology, Ann Blount, Ph.D., Professor of Agronomy, David Wright, Ph.D., Professor of Agronomy, and Mathews Paret, Ph.D., Director, Plant Diagnostics Clinic.



STEM Scholar Kyla Robinson from East Gadsden High School, identifies an unknown sample in a culture during a field research experience in one of the labs at the North Florida Research and Education Center in Quincy.