

Newsroom

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Georgia Southern University

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Biology graduate student receives National Science Foundation fellowship

DECEMBER 18, 2017



Jose Sanchez

Jose Sanchez, a graduate student in the Georgia Southern Department of Biology, has been awarded a highly competitive National Science Foundation (NSF) fellowship to conduct ecological research in South America.

Sanchez is one of only three students selected to participate from a competitive, nationwide search. The fellowship is funded by a NSF International Research Experience for Students grant. The grant, administered by the University of North Texas, is designed to fund interdisciplinary research and biocultural conservation in the world's southernmost forests.

"I'm proud to represent Georgia Southern University as part of this program," said Sanchez. "I will get the chance to apply my research to the conservation of an important ecosystem and the local culture that depends on this system."

Sanchez will travel to the Cape Horn Biosphere Reserve in southern Chile in December for a two-month research expedition. The fellowship will pay all expenses, including a weekly stipend. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work with international collaborators to conduct cutting-edge research in a unique setting.

The program's goal is to integrate science with sociocultural issues. Thus, Sanchez will conduct independent research on the ecology of freshwater streams and the importance of these aquatic ecosystems to local people. This sub-Antarctic region is home to several threatened indigenous cultures.

Being awarded this prestigious fellowship will contribute to Sanchez's development as a scientist, says Checo Colon-Gaud, Ph.D., director of the Department of Biology graduate program.

"I'm proud of him for pursuing this opportunity and thrilled that he will be representing not only the biology graduate program, but also the University as a whole," said Colon-Gaud.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers 118 degree programs serving 20,418 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu

Georgia Southern alumnus Nick Wiley named chief conservation officer of Ducks Unlimited

DECEMBER 18, 2017



Nick Wiley

Ducks Unlimited (DU) announced in November the hiring of Georgia Southern alumnus Nick Wiley ('83) as its new chief conservation officer, effective January 2018.

Wiley is currently the executive director of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). He rose through the ranks from a wildlife resource biologist to his current position, and he served as president of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies during 2016-17.

"While I've been honored to be a part of the FWC for nearly 30 years, I'm excited to join Ducks Unlimited and look forward to leading their conservation programs," Wiley said. "I strongly support DU's conservation mission, and I'm eager to join their excellent professional team working for the largest wetlands and waterfowl organization in North America."

A certified wildlife biologist, Wiley's work has been published in journals including the *Journal of Wildlife Management and Conservation Biology*. He has more than 31 years of experience in fish and wildlife management, and he also serves as the current chair of the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports.

Wiley received a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Georgia Southern in 1983 and a Master of Science degree in wildlife management from Auburn University in 1986. Wiley is chair of the Georgia Southern College of Science and Mathematics Advisory Board, a National Conservation Leadership Institute Fellow, a member of the Boone and Crockett Club, a member of the North American Wetlands Conservation Council, and he has served on the State and Federal Joint Task Force on Endangered Species Act Implementation.

In his new role, Wiley will report to DU's CEO and serve as a strategic leader and member of DU's executive leadership team. He will also lead a national/regional department with approximately 215 employees. In addition, Wiley will oversee a conservation program operating budget of more than \$100 million.

"The role of chief conservation officer is vital to our growth and success," DU CEO Dale Hall said. "To date we have conserved more than 14 million acres of waterfowl habitat across North America, but there is much work yet to be done to fulfill our vision of skies filled with waterfowl today and for future generations. Nick's experience, enthusiasm and leadership will strengthen our ability to conserve and restore habitat in the landscapes that are most important to our continent's waterfowl."

Ducks Unlimited Inc. is the world's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving North America's continually disappearing waterfowl habitats. Established in 1937, Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 14 million acres

thanks to contributions from more than a million supporters across the continent. Guided by science and dedicated to program efficiency, DU works toward the vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever. For more information on our work, visit www.ducks.org.

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Courtesy of Ducks Unlimited