



# Protect. Educate. Inspire.

"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society - Friends of the Refuge

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Chelle Koster Walton

239-699-4754

[ChelleTrav@aol.com](mailto:ChelleTrav@aol.com)

Caption: WoW education intern David Iglesias will be helping the refuge with its bilingual outreach for Wildlife on Wheels and overall conservation education.

### Refuge welcomes WoW education intern

David Iglesias recently joined the team at the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island, thanks to funding through the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS). He will fill the role of bilingual interpreter and translator for the refuge's WoW (Wildlife on Wheels) mobile classroom and other educational "Ding" programs.

Born in Rathway, New Jersey, Iglesias has lived the past 25 years in Lima, Peru. He graduated from Peruvian University Cayetano Heredia with a bachelor's degree in biology in 2018 and since has been working in the field of botany, specifically in palynology. Before moving to "Ding," Iglesias was working as a biology teacher assistant for his honor thesis.

"David is fluent in Spanish, so he will be such a valuable resource in helping us fulfill our mission to reach the local Latino community," said "Ding" Darling urban education leader

Melissa Maher. “Our first priority with WoW outreach is to travel to underserved schools and other venues where kids and adults don’t have the opportunity to visit the refuge.”

“The thing I’m looking forward to the most is learning as much as I can, and to be able to help and teach the children with the WoW outreach program,” said Iglesias. “So far, what I like the most about the refuge, it’s the team. Everyone has been so welcoming and friendly. They make you feel like you are at home. Also, I’ve been amazed by the mangrove ecosystem. All the biodiversity and seeing the interactions between the animals and plants is priceless. It is like living inside the textbook.”

DDWS provides living stipends and other benefits for about a dozen interns each year. For more information about the refuge’s internship programs and supporting them, contact Lynnae Messina, DDWS associate director, at 239-472-1100 ext. 233.

DDWS currently stewards two named internships for the 2020-21 year and is accepting donations for three future named intern funds at \$12,500 a year, which is the cost for supporting one intern including stipends, travel, tolls, Sanibel Rec Center membership, and other expenses.

#### 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](http://dingdarlingsociety.org) or contact Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or [director@dingdarlingsociety.org](mailto:director@dingdarlingsociety.org).

###