

## SciComm Workshop Presenter Bios

### **Alberto López**

School Outreach Coordinator

Florida Museum of Natural History

Alberto López is the School Outreach Coordinator at the Florida Museum of Natural History (FLMNH) where he provides educational outreach programs in natural history to school aged audiences. He is especially committed to inspire underserved populations and minorities to value the biological richness and cultural heritage of our diverse world and make a positive difference in their future.



Alberto has more than 12 years' experience in informal science education and research for non-profit organizations. Prior to joining the FLMNH, Alberto worked as a Park Naturalist at Meadowside Nature Center in Maryland, where he provided interpretive and educational programs in natural history and encouraged public appreciation of the natural environment. Prior to that he worked with the Smithsonian Science Education Center where he developed teacher professional development workshops to engage teachers in the Next Generation Science Standards. He has also led one of the strategic initiatives at the SciCenter, a science museum in Ithaca NY, as the Youth Programs Manager. This initiative, called Future Science Leaders, focused on empowering youth to shape the future through leadership, understanding of science, critical thinking and communication with impact. As part of this program, Alberto has developed innovative programming and new ways to engage this audience, including citizen science projects in collaboration with local research organizations.

### **Chelsea Collison**

Museum Educator

Florida Museum of Natural History

Chelsea is currently in her fifth year as a full-time Museum Educator at the Florida Museum of Natural History. She is responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of new and existing public programs for diverse target audiences such as SciArt Meetups, Fieldworks Fails, Science on Tap, Girls Do Science!, and Starry Night (to name



a few). She holds a bachelor's degree in Anthropology from the University of Florida and a master's degree in Museum Studies from Johns Hopkins University. Her interests include breaking down barriers between art and science and using storytelling as a way to bring science and scientists to the general public.

### **Taylor Williams**

Creative Director

Guts & Glory GNV



Taylor Williams is the creative director of Guts & Glory GNV, a live storytelling organization in Gainesville, Florida. She is an adjunct lecturer for a live storytelling class through the College of Journalism at the University of Florida. Taylor's consulting and coaching practice focuses on skills from storytelling, improvisational comedy, and public speaking to help corporate groups and NCAA athletic teams improve their communication skills and work more efficiently together. She also

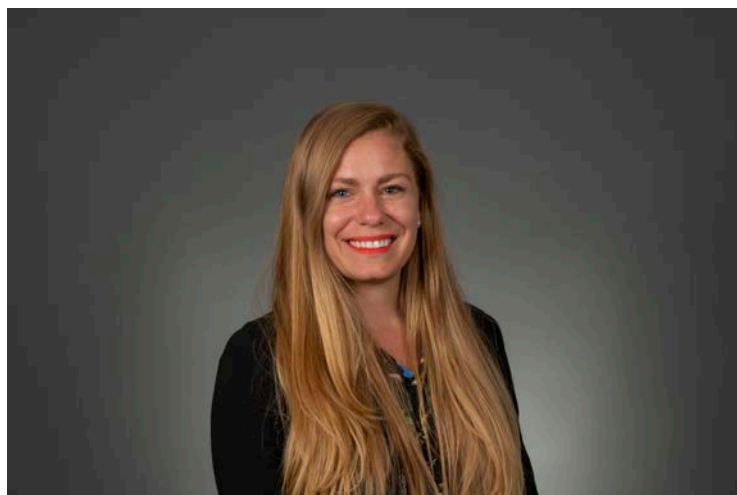
hosts various events, including Sofar Sounds concerts and TEDxUF in Gainesville. Her academic background is in business and mental health, and she has received extensive training in comedy and performance in New York City and Washington, DC.

### **Rebecca Burton**

Communications Manager

Thompson Earth Systems  
Institute

Rebecca Burton is responsible for helping the institute communicate Earth systems-related research from UF's more than 60 centers, institutes, departments, and related organizations.



A native of Pensacola, Burton previously served as the communications coordinator for Florida Sea Grant and has reported for Health News Florida, The Gainesville Sun, The Miami Herald and The New York Times Student Journalism Institute. She has previously served on the Florida Outdoor Writers Association's board of directors and is a member of the National Association of Science Writers. She received her bachelor's degree in journalism from Florida International University and a master's in science and health communication from UF.

She is also one of the founders of The Marjorie, an online publication that promotes a greater understanding of issues related to women and the environment in Florida through storytelling, community-building and education.



**Alnycea Blackwell (Allie)**

Project Assistant

iDigBio

Allie Blackwell coordinates iDigBio events along with assisting in their education and outreach activities, graphic design, and social media. Prior to joining the team, Allie spent two years at UF Interdisciplinary Center for Biotechnology Research managing their event planning and creating content for their social media platforms. She received her bachelor's degree in Strategic Communications at Penn State.

**Kristen Grace**

Photographer

Florida Museum of Natural History

Kristen Grace has been the resident photographer for the Florida Museum since 2010. Working in the Marketing Department, she creates visual content for exhibits, public programs, social media and science communication. She launched the Museum's Instagram page in 2013 and continues to collaborate with the social media team to produce dynamic imagery for all of the Museum's social platforms. Kristen also teaches a nature photography camp every summer at the Museum to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders



and has won several awards for her imagery, including a William Randolph Hearst award and several awards through University Photographers Association of America, an organization chronicling the visual history of higher education.



**Natalie van Hoose**

Science Writer

Florida Museum of Natural History

Natalie van Hoose has been the science writer for the Florida Museum of Natural History since 2017. She writes and edits stories about the museum's research and people, a beat that involves rumbling through the Badlands to follow fossil-hunters and swatting mosquitoes in Florida woodlands while waiting for moths to show up to a sheet. Previously, she covered research news at Purdue University's College of Agriculture and taught composition and rhetoric, creative writing and English as a second language.

**Catherine Carey**

Public Programs Coordinator

Florida Museum of Natural History

I have worked in the field of informal science education all my professional career. My original plan was to start as a zookeeper and eventually become director of a zoo but I got sidetracked.

It was as much fun teaching people about the animals as it was taking care of them. With a degree in zoo keeping, I came to UF to work on an interdisciplinary degree in Zoo Education.

I was with the Jacksonville Zoo Education Department for 25 years in charge of an education animal collection, family and school programming, and the docent program.

I have been with the Florida Museum since 2012, returning “home” after interning with Dr. Betty Dunckel when I was a UF student.



My area is public programs -the museum festivals, summer camps, and basically anything not a school program.



**Diane Milner**

Museum Educator

Florida Museum of Natural History

Diane graduated from the Johannesburg College of Education in South Africa and taught fourth grade until she relocated to Florida with her family in 2001. After serving as a docent for a few years, she joined the education team and has been a part-time Museum Educator for the past 15 years. Diane assists with the development, implementation and evaluation of School

Programs offered by the Museum of Natural History. She is responsible for the day-to-day operations of school field trips, adult tours and the development of educational resources for Discovery Carts and Homeschool Day. She assists with the training of Museum Docents and development and implementation of teacher training.

**Kirsten Hecht**

PhD candidate

UF School of Natural Resources

Kirsten Hecht is a PhD candidate in the School of Natural Resources and is co-advised by Dr. Katie Stofer (Agricultural Education and Communication) and Dr. Max Nickerson (Florida Museum of Natural History). Over time her original interests in aquatic ecology, conservation biology, and herpetology have broadened to include the human side of conservation. Her PhD research focuses on the public engagement activities of herpetologists. Kirsten popularized the #HERpers hashtag and also created and manages the @herpetALLogy twitter account for PARC's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Team. She's also managed social media accounts for the Foundation for the Conservation of Salamanders, Southeast PARC's Hellbender Working Group, PARC's Year of the Salamander Campaign, and UF's School of Natural Resources and Environment. She has also been involved in several in-person outreach and engagement programs including Talk Science with Me and the Natural Resources Diversity Initiative.



## **Dianne Behringer**

School Programs Coordinator

Florida Museum of Natural History



Dianne Behringer is the Florida Museum School Programs Coordinator and oversees K – 12 school related educational programming and the Museum docent program. Previously, she served as a Florida Sea Grant marine extension agent and even more previously, taught high school biology. Dianne holds a bachelor's degree in Science Education and a master's degree in Marine Ecology. As a lifelong learner fascinated by the natural world, her job is to provide opportunities that excite students' sense of discovery, foster curiosity about the world around them, and actively engage them in learning that builds their understanding of foundational science concepts.