



Valerie Mendez

Leon County Extension Agent I, 4-H
Northwest Extension District

Profile

I am originally from Colombia but have been in Florida since I was a child. I moved to the panhandle of Florida in 2020 to pursue my masters and fell in love with the ecology of the region.

As one of Leon County's 4-H agents, I plan, implement, and evaluate educational programming for youth and volunteers.

I have a bachelor's in microbiology and cell science and a master's in soil and water sciences from the University of Florida. My passion for science and education was nurtured throughout my childhood by many community leaders. It is my hope now, as an adult, to empower youth to reach their fullest potential in a safe, creative, and inclusive environment.

Contact

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Educational Programs

Volunteer Development Systems:

Research shows that the continuous presence of caring adults is critical to achieving positive youth development. I help to recruit, train, and retain volunteers that can assist in reaching more youth. I am committed to developing youth and adult volunteers, valuing inclusiveness, and increasing the diversity of program participants in Leon County. I also collaborate with local businesses and youth organizations to advertise and promote 4-H and to encourage greater visibility and participation.

Youth Life Skills Development Program:

I provide opportunities for youth that supplement formal education, enhance life skills development, and prepare youth for tomorrow's workforce. Through participation in 4-H clubs and other educational activities, my efforts focus on helping youth develop civic engagement, STEM literacy, a healthy lifestyle, and encourage them to get outdoors to appreciate Florida's natural resources.

Experience

4-H Youth Development Agent
UF/IFAS Extension – Leon County
2022- present

Graduate Research Assistant
UF/IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center
2020-2022

Veterinary Technician
Banfield Animal Hospitals
2014-2022

Food Microbiology Technician
ABC Research Laboratory
2012-2014

Professional Preparation

Master of Science in Soil and Water Sciences
University of Florida, 2022

Bachelor of Science in Microbiology and Cell Science
University of Florida, 2012