



INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
AGENDA ITEM
Parks, Recreation & Conservation Department
UF/IFAS Extension

Date: May 28, 2024
To: The Honorable Board of County Commissioners
Thru: John A. Titkanich, Jr., County Administrator
Michael C. Zito, Deputy County Administrator
Beth Powell, Parks, Recreation & Conservation Director
From: Andrea Lazzari, County Extension Director
Subject: Recognition of UF/IFAS Extension Indian River County Volunteers

The success of cooperative extension programs heavily relies on the dedication and contributions of our volunteers. At UF/IFAS Extension Indian River County, our volunteers play a crucial role in delivering educational programs, supporting community projects, and enhancing the overall effectiveness of our services. These volunteers, including 4-H volunteers and Master Gardener volunteers, bring invaluable expertise, enthusiasm, passion, and commitment to our mission of extending knowledge and improving lives.

In 2023, our volunteers made a significant impact through their dedicated service. The combined efforts of our 59 volunteers amounted to a notable 9,149 hours of volunteer time. This equates to 4.4 FTE, effectively doubling our office's workforce, and illustrating the impressive contribution our volunteers provide.

The monetary value of these volunteer hours is estimated at an impressive \$269,073, reflecting the extensive expertise, effort, and cost-savings our volunteers contribute to our programs.

Highlights of their service include:

4-H Volunteers: Our 4-H volunteers include club leaders, co-leaders, and other dedicated adults who lead and support our 4-H community clubs, in-school and after-school programs, and state 4-H events. They work tirelessly mentoring and guiding young people in various educational endeavors, competitive events, and community service activities. Their involvement helps foster leadership skills, community awareness, and personal growth among our county's youth.

Master Gardener Volunteers: These volunteers provide crucial support in horticultural education, assisting with public workshops, community gardens, outreach events, and individual consultations in our office plant clinic and at local libraries and other community hubs. Their expertise in Florida-Friendly gardening practices helps enhance the environmental stewardship and horticultural knowledge of our residents.

Staff thanks the Board for their assistance recognizing the invaluable contribution of our UF/IFAS Extension Indian River County volunteers. Acknowledging their efforts will underscore the importance of volunteerism and encourage continued community engagement and support for our extension programs.