



Dear Friends,

While this year has remained challenging, we are excited for Spring and are eager to resume our research, teaching, and community service in Galapagos when it is fully safe to do so. Take a moment to escape to these enchanted islands and learn how we have remained busy these past few months!

**Support UNC Center for Galapagos Studies**

### Preserving a Natural Treasure



After a trip to the Galapagos in 2019 where Nicci and Martin Gafinowitz not only immersed themselves in the famed wildlife and biodiversity of the islands but also witnessed troubling scenes like plastics washing ashore from the ocean, they were inspired to make an unrestricted gift to UNC Center for Galapagos Studies. We are incredibly appreciative for their support which will continue to manifest their passion and commitment to conservation and stewardship of sensitive environments, and will facilitate the continued engagement of UNC scientists in this vital endeavor. Learn more about the inspiration behind the Gafinowitzes' gift [here](#), and their hope to encourage others to give as well.

### Partnership with Morehead Planetarium on Virtual Science Expo – April 16th



UNC Center for Galapagos Studies is excited to be collaborating with Morehead Planetarium and Science Center on its first ever Virtual Science Expo – April 16th – as part of UNC Science Week! Audiences of all ages can be whisked away to the Galapagos to learn about sharks and conservation as well as new citizen science projects to document biological life in Galapagos. Learn more about all four webinars offered [here](#) and [register now](#) to follow in the footsteps of Darwin and better understand challenges to island sustainability!

### Reactivating the Galapagos Community Through Science



This last year has shown the importance and power of community. In August 2020 we launched REACTT as a way to reactivate the Galapagos economy while advancing research topics around areas such as food security, nutrition, and invasive species. Learn more [here](#) about the positive impact these projects had on the Galapagos community to create ecofriendly income and educate families on the environment in which they live – all while advancing science.

### Celebrating Influential Women of the Galapagos Initiative



The Galapagos Initiative is home to incredible female leaders and scientists at UNC, USFQ, and at the Galapagos Science Center. March 8th marked International Women's Day and provided an opportunity to celebrate the social, professional, and cultural achievements of women all over the world. We interviewed and showcased seven influential women who are key members of our Galapagos Initiative to better understand their journey thus far and advice they would give other women looking to pursue a career in science. You can view all the interviews [here](#)!

### Out of Sight, Out of Mind



With an interdisciplinary focus on population, health, and environment, the Galapagos Initiative is well positioned to tackle the world's most challenging issues – such as climate change. About 71% of Earth is water. Of that water, 96.5% is oceans. So why do most air pollution and emissions studies focus on terrestrial research? Learn [here](#) how an interdisciplinary team of UNC researchers traveled to the Galapagos Islands to uncover how emissions released from the ocean impact human health and the earth.

### The Galapagos Initiative: Saving the Enchanted Islands



The Galapagos Islands are facing increasing danger. Local and global forces – including tourism and climate change – threaten the fragile island ecosystems. Learn how Co-Directors of the Galapagos Science Center, Dr. Stephen Walsh and Dr. Carlos Mena, strive to save the Galapagos Islands with an innovative, sustainable strategy incorporating a robust mapping and modelling program. The full feature article in *Scientia* can be viewed [here](#).

### With Love, from Galapagos

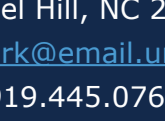


This past February we celebrated Valentine's Week by showcasing the many reasons why researchers and students love Galapagos! Hear first-hand why so many at UNC – including Rameses! - love these precious islands and can't wait to get back to the Galapagos to continue their research and adventures [here](#)!

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I hope you not only enjoyed learning more about our recent work but will be able to join us on April 16th for some amazing content as part of the 2021 Virtual Science Expo! I look forward to continuing to share impactful stories with you in the future. If you would like to support our Center to allow us to continue making an impact in this way [please click here](#) or feel free to continue out to me at [weaverk@email.unc.edu](mailto:weaverk@email.unc.edu) to arrange a phonecall or Zoom to learn more!

Kind regards,  
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