



Dear Friend,

We are so excited to celebrate the [10 Year Anniversary of our Galapagos Initiative!](#) We have accomplished great things in the past decade thanks in large part to the leadership and vision of our Founding Director, Steve Walsh. In this newsletter you will hear about our new interim co-directors, cutting edge research, student impact stories, and creative partnerships as we enter our next phase.

This year we plan to bring the Galapagos to Chapel Hill with a variety of events, such as a Galapagos photo exhibit launching end of February at UNC's FedEx Global Education Center, and in early March we are partnering to show 'My Octopus Teacher' at [Carraway Drive-in](#) (March 6th) as well as a [virtual wine tasting event](#) focused on sustainability (March 9th)! Please register to be part of the fun and, in the meantime, whisk yourself away to the Galapagos in our latest newsletter!

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UNC's Galapagos Initiative Welcomes Interim Co-Directors



Hear how Founding Director Steve Walsh built the foundation of UNC's Galapagos Initiative over the past 15 years by building key relationships, and how new interim co-directors, Amanda Thompson and Diego Riveros-Iregui, plan to carry the torch forward. In [this article](#), Amanda and Diego share about conducting research in a foreign country, how research impacts the Galapagos, and what they hope to achieve in the years ahead!

How One Tar Heel Merged Science with the Great Outdoors in the Galapagos



Will Larson's love of science and the outdoors – combined with initiative and perseverance – led the Tar Heel to the UNC Center for Galapagos Studies and fieldwork on these remote islands. As a UNC undergraduate, Larsen was able to publish a paper on his research and describes his work in the Galapagos as the most impactful experience in his scientific career. [Read the full article](#) to hear how this experience has shaped him moving forward!

GSC Researcher, Daniela Alarcon, and Team First to Tag Blue Whales in Galapagos



GSC researcher Dani Alarcon and team worked in conjunction with the Galapagos National Park and recently became the first researchers to ever successfully tag a blue whale in Galapagos! The research team managed to tag 10 blue whales in total, enabling a variety of data to be collected to better understand migratory patterns of the largest animal to ever exist. [Hear about Dani's experience](#) and her goal to better understand the population of blue whales in Galapagos through understanding their diet, genetics, and movements.

In Galapagos, Conservation Science Finds Startup Solution



A creative collaboration between our Galapagos Science Center and the sustainable clothing startup Sula means new investments in conservation research and programs for the Galapagos Islands. Learn how Sula will give 20% of its profits back to support our GSC to bolster interdisciplinary research that furthers science and contributes to Galapagos conservation [here!](#)

Thanks to UNC and the Galapagos, UNC Alum Ready to Take on Medical School



Studying abroad can be a pivotal experience for an undergraduate. For Jack Leland, he recently opened his letter of acceptance to an undergraduate. For Jack Leland's Class of 2026 and, in [this article](#), spent some time reflecting on how his transformative adventure as a Tarheel studying abroad in the Galapagos led him to this very moment.

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I hope you enjoyed reading these impactful stories from Galapagos and look forward to sharing more 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 reach out to me at weaverk@email.unc.edu to arrange a phonecall or Zoom to learn more!

Kind regards,

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