



Dear Friends,

We hope that you’ve been enjoying your spring and are excited to bring you a new round of stories! In this newsletter, we introduce our new partnership with the analytics and AI leader SAS and the collaborative research projects we’re conducting with them, celebrate five new recipients of Galapagos Seed Grants gearing up for summer research at the Center, show off our Galapagos Barcode project – the most ambitious citizen science project on the Islands to date – and more. Enjoy!

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for Galapagos Studies**

SAS Partnership with the Center for Galapagos Studies



We're excited to share that the Center for Galapagos Studies is partnering with analytics and AI leader SAS on three research projects about marine life in the Islands – specifically [sea turtles](#), [hammerhead sharks](#), and [phytoplankton](#). [Learn more](#) about the partnership and projects, which include the development of a new app that will empower citizen scientists to join our research and help protect endangered sea turtles!

Seed Grants Enable Research to Grow in Galapagos



Five research projects, led by researchers from the Institute for the Study of the Americas, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the School of Education, have received Galapagos Seed Grants for their development at the Galapagos Science Center this summer. We are excited to fund a [wide range of research topics](#), from climate adaptation strategies to biodiversity conservation to the art of place-based learning!

Galapagos Barcode: A Citizen Science Project



During the pandemic, international researchers at the Galapagos Science Center led the most ambitious citizen science project developed in the Islands to date: [Galapagos Barcode](#). This project trained locals who had lost

their jobs during the pandemic – mainly from ecotourism, fishing, and agriculture – in genetic barcode techniques. Galapagos Barcode not only helped catalog the biodiversity of Galapagos but also contributed to the economic revitalization of the Islands, aligning with our commitment to both the local Galapagos community and biodiversity.

SAS Joint Research on Phytoplankton Populations



As part of the new partnership between CGS and SAS, a team from SAS and the Center have set out to [map and model](#) changes in the phytoplankton ecosystem around the Islands. Phytoplankton form the foundation of the food web for marine life and are highly sensitive to the environment's changes, so mapping how the environment affects phytoplankton enables researchers to model how climate change will impact the overall ecosystem!

UNC Undergraduate's Summer Abroad Adventure



Recent UNC graduate Sahil Sethi studied abroad last summer in the Galapagos with the goal of becoming conversational in Spanish to reduce language barriers in his future medical practice. He practiced full immersion in his classes, but the most helpful experience for his Spanish – and one of

his favorite parts of the trip! – was watching telenovelas with his host mother every night. [Read more](#) about Sahil's trip.

International Women's Day



March 8th was International Women's Day, so we interviewed Leidy Apolo, who has led GSC community outreach for over five years and is one of the many incredible women at UNC, USFQ, and the Galapagos Science Center! [Hear from Leidy](#) as she shares how living on the islands is both a privilege and responsibility and how she approaches conservation and community in her work.

Global Plastic Pollution Crisis: the Galapagos Islands Under Threat



A new collaborative study, involving researchers from the Galapagos Science Center and [Consortium partner](#) University of the Sunshine Coast, is the first comprehensive assessment to quantify and map the magnitude and risks of plastic pollution in Galapagos. [Learn more](#) about the study and how this research can help generate solutions for the global plastic pollution crisis.

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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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