

***Greetings from sunny Central Florida:*** Natalie Ocampo lives in Orlando with her husband, Rob. Their lives revolve around their rescue dogs, Noel and Bourbon, and having fun in Florida's great outdoors anytime they can. Outside activities include kayaking Florida's fabulous springs, riding bikes and "[glamping](#)," a new mainstay of outdoor recreation.

Natalie graduated from the University of Central Florida in 2014 with a B.S. in Environmental Studies. She started her environmental career at Orange County Environmental Protection Division (EPD) as an intern, assisting Lori Cuniff, former EPD Manager, with outreach and education for [Back to Nature Wildlife Refuge](#).

We asked Natalie what she's been doing since graduating, besides recently getting married, and her experience as an EPD intern.

**On what she has been up to:** After graduation, the experience I gained from my internship led me to a position with EPD's Compliance Support and Strategic Engagement Program from 2015 - 2016. In 2017, I joined the Pollution Prevention Program, conducting inspections of businesses known to be [small quantity generators](#) of potential and identified hazardous waste.

Later, I moved to Atlanta and worked for the [Georgia Environmental Protection Division's](#) Lead & Asbestos Program.

However, I missed Orlando dearly, so I applied for a position with Orange County EPD's [Petroleum Restoration Program](#) (PRP) and was fortunately hired!

**On notable projects:** The goal of the PRP is to protect groundwater (the source of 90% of Florida's drinking water) from petroleum discharges and spills. I learn something new and cool almost every day. It's very rewarding when a site makes progress.

**On how the EPD internship influenced her career path:** Without my internship, I may have never learned about the wonderful services EPD provides to the community nor gained real-world experience. I'm very thankful for the path my internship carved out for me.

**On memorable moments at EPD:** I met and educated hundreds of citizens at events, hiked through knee-deep water, worked with Back to Nature Wildlife Refuge (and carried a three-legged possum), rode in boats, learned to identify wildlife droppings and had many laughs.

**On advice for future interns:** It's never too early to begin interning or volunteering. Get out there, ask questions and give it your all. My favorite part about interning was "shadowing" staff of various EPD programs and soaking up knowledge from the many experienced, intelligent and caring individuals at EPD.