



# Selected Applicants for 2011 Scholarship Program

This year, the Everglades Foundation awarded two \$15,000 scholarships to Ph.D students and one \$10,000 scholarship to a master's degree student.



**JAMES BEERENS**, a Ph.D student from Florida Atlantic University, is studying integrative biology. He received one of the \$15,000 scholarships.

"This award is an enormous thing for me," said Beerens. "Winning it means that my work is recognized and it is significant to the science community."

He is currently modeling wading birds' population responses to hydrological manipulations in the Everglades. Beerens has been an environmental scientist with the South Florida Water Management District for several years. In addition, he was also an environmental scientist for LGP Environmental & Permitting Services, Inc. in Mulberry, Florida. He is a member of the Society for Conservation Biology. Beerens received his bachelor's degree in zoology from Michigan State University and his master's in biology from Florida Atlantic University, where he was a research and teaching assistant.



**RUPESH BHOMIA** is a student from the University of Florida. He is the second recipient to be awarded the \$15,000 scholarship from the Everglades Foundation. Bhomia is presently obtaining his doctoral degree in soil and water science and is working on a project funded by the SFWMD. On this project, he is examining the relationship between the Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) operating age and its phosphorus removal efficiency. The results from this work will improve the optimization, long-term management and operation of STAs.

"This scholarship allows me to expand the project to included research on several more STAs," said Bhomia. "Right now I'm analyzing three STAs and hope to be able to work on all of them."

Bhomia was a program manager for both the Indian Institute of Forest Management and WWF-India. He is a member of the Society of Wetland Scientists and a member of the Soil Science Society of America. Bhomia received his bachelor's degree from the University of Rajasthan in India, his master's degree in environmental sciences from Jawaharlal Nehru University and his second master's degree in biodiversity, conservation and management from Worcester College in the UK.



**DAVID GANDY** of Florida International University received the \$10,000 master student scholarship. Gandy is currently working on a study that is funded by the National Park Service. He is investigating the role of canals as potential dispersal vectors for non-native fishes into the Everglades National Park. This study is particularly important because while restoring the Everglades, managers will change hydrologic patterns and redirect water in ways that would inadvertently result in more non-native fish into sensitive ENP ecosystems.

"This project would not be possible without the funding from this scholarship and several questions would be left unanswered," said Gandy.

Gandy is a member of the American Fisheries Society. He acquired his bachelor's degree in biology and marine science from Coastal Carolina University in South Carolina.

***Thanks to the generous donations of our Everglades Foundation supporters.***