

Learning, challenge, and community are invaluable



Becky Pengelley

College: Education

Program: Science Education

Degree: PhD

Why FSU?

I chose to attend FSU for a graduate degree because I met my major professor, Dr. George Boggs, through youth gardening work in the community. After earning a master's degree in agricultural education, I was an active volunteer with iGrow, a Frenchtown-based youth empowerment and urban agriculture program of the Tallahassee Food Network. Dr. Boggs, an English education professor, encouraged me to consider a [degree in science education](#) as a way to continue developing pathways for young people to learn through engagement with the natural world.

Motivation to pursue a graduate degree

I was motivated to pursue a graduate degree for three primary reasons. First, I love learning and was excited about an opportunity to go back to school one more time. Second, I was impressed by the science education faculty and their ethos of care and rigor. Third, I would like to use my doctorate degree to explore and advance information in this world about topics that often receive little attention within mainstream culture.

Importance of research and work

My research is currently focused on the science identity of middle school girls, which is critically important because this is the time when girls typically lose interest in science. Science is a powerful tool that supports discovery and growth; however, this tool is not accessible to all people. The way that science becomes inaccessible is through cultural stories that turn people away from it.

Advice for anyone considering graduate school

Find a team to work with that you truly enjoy and respect. I am loving my experience.

Career aspirations

I hope to run an environmental center that develops and engages in innovative practices to support us as we move into a world with increasing challenges, particularly around climate change.

