

# The News Press

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## FGCU grad blazes trails with environmental consulting firm

By Amy Bennett Williams

<http://www.news-press.com/story/money/2015/10/23/fgcu-grad-blazes-trails-environmental-consulting-firm/74335236/>

The 2015 News-Press 12 Under 40 series profiles business people in SWFLA. This month: BearPaws Environmental Consulting, Inc. owner Barrett Stejskal. Sarah Coward/news-press.com

*Each month in 2015, the Sunday Business section will profile a young entrepreneur or businessperson who is changing Southwest Florida's business landscape in a series we're calling 12 Under 40.*

Sure, some days his boots are so full of swamp water he needs help pulling them off. And yes, the occupational hazards include heatstroke, poison ivy and rattlesnakes, but Barrett Stejskal, 35, wouldn't change a thing about his job. "Hey, I get to spend my days out playing in the woods," he says with a laugh.

With his wife, Christina, he started BearPaws Environmental Consulting, Inc., in 2012. The firm conducts environmental evaluations, maps wetlands, surveys for listed species, creates habitat management plans and helps clients with permitting at all governmental levels, from county to federal.

### **Who has been your biggest influence?**

My parents. When I was a young kid, they always pushed me to go outside and play, to enjoy what's out there. I grew up in the woods, over in southwest Cape with the old Rose Gardens all behind me with thousands and thousands of acres with nothing but woods. I would go from sunup to sundown, come home for lunch and leave again. Also my professors at FGCU.

### **What inspires you?**

The environment. I enjoy the green space that we have, the mitigation areas. I don't want us to be one of those places that are paved side to side, north to south, east to west. It's important for everyone to have natural areas.

### **What do you do for fun?**

Hunting, fishing, enjoying time with my two young sons.

### **Your greatest success?**

Building my reputation. Not to pat myself on the back, but if you ask my clients and the governmental entities — the South Florida Water Management District, Army Corps of



Engineers, Lee County — they know that they can trust me and count on me getting good product from me whenever I submit something to them.



**A Florida Bonneted bat, one of the rarest and most endangered species of bats in the world, is what BearPaws Environmental Consulting, Inc. owner Barrett Stejskal is looking for when he checks for endangered species on undeveloped land. (Photo: Dustin Smith/Zoo Miami)**

**Any failures?**

I don't think businesswise I ever have had any.

**Secret of your success?**

Being self-motivated and disciplined. And I just work my tail off.

**BIO BOX**

**Name:** Barrett Stejskal

**Age:** 35

**Occupation:** Co-president of BearPaws Environmental Consulting, Inc.

**Education:** Graduate of Florida Gulf Coast University in Environmental Studies and Biology

**Did you know?** He's also a total meteorology nerd, with his own tropical weather website. [www.bearpawsweather.com/tropical/index.html](http://www.bearpawsweather.com/tropical/index.html)