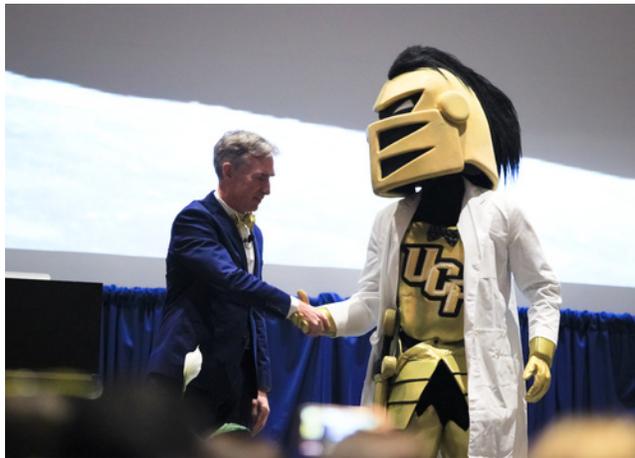


Bill Nye the Science Guy Inspires UCF to “Change the World!”

By: Mia Warshofsky, Alexandra Cousteau Environment and Global Climate Change Fellow

On Tuesday, March 15, 2016, The UCF Global Perspectives Office, in partnership with many campus and community partners, hosted renowned scientist and television star Bill Nye the Science Guy in “An Afternoon with Bill Nye.”



*Knightrö escorts Bill Nye the Science Guy to the stage.
Cherise Clarke/Cherise Takes Pictures.*

Brought onstage by Knightrö and amid animated chants of “Bill! Bill! Bill!” Nye addressed over 1,000 UCF students, faculty and community members in the Pegasus Ballroom about climate change, civic engagement and space exploration. Many more watched his talk via livestream in the Student Union Atrium as well as at regional campuses.

Nye began by discussing climate change. He pointed to a .01 parts per million increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide in the past 20 years, which he said “changes everything.”

He cited two reasons for the global warming phenomenon: Earth’s thin atmosphere and the doubling of the world’s population within his lifetime. “And that is why 2015 was the hottest year on record,” he said, “7 billion humans are burning and breathing [the atmosphere] as fast as we can. This is why we have climate change.”

With great enthusiasm, Nye highlighted Florida’s potential for 100% energy independence through wind, water and solar power. He pointed to Florida’s reputation as the sunshine state and its proximity to water as key resources available for energy independence. He also discussed how the equipment used to extract petroleum from the coasts can be used to drill holes for wind turbines, creating jobs and, along with solar and water power, generating enough sustainable electricity to “distribute to everyone in Florida in the next 15 years.”

Admitting that the 15-year goal might seem steep, Nye noted that similar technological changes have occurred before. He used the transition from horses to cars in the early 1900s as an example, as the problem of tons of horse manure in New York City vanished with the introduction of “the horseless carriages.”

Nye wrapped up his presentation by encouraging the audience to be optimistic about space exploration. The essence of science, he said, was written on every “marsdial” (a sundial used on Mars): “To all who visit here, we wish a safe journey and the joy of discovery.”

Nye also gave guidance to scientists who struggled to articulate their research to a larger audience: learn how to think and then to learn how to write in order to share that knowledge with others. For in writing, he said, one learns “how to express [their] thoughts so the rest of us can understand them and change the world.”

During the question and answer period, Nye took an opportunity to call his colleague and friend, Neil deGrasse Tyson. Over the phone, deGrasse Tyson offered encouragement to aspiring astronauts in the audience.

When asked for advice on inspiring students, Nye said the answer was “easy but quite difficult:” to be passionate. “Let your passion come through,” he said, “and you will change the world.”

This event was made possible due to the contributions of a large number of campus and community sponsors. For a full list of sponsors, please click [here](#).



*Nye on the phone with Neil deGrasse Tyson.
Cherise Clarke/Cherise Takes Pictures.*