

Tessa Marie Schulmeister was born at home, in the small town of Dothan, Alabama. When Tessa was five years old, she either wanted to become a teacher or a veterinarian due to her love of children and animals. Tessa began college courses at the local junior college in 2001, however the terrorist attack of 9-11 compelled Tessa to join the U.S. Navy, where she enlisted for five years. After an honorable discharge from the U. S. Navy, she obtained an AA with emphasis in psychology from Blackhawk Junior College, and a BS in biology from Northern Illinois University, where she was an undergraduate research assistant to Dr. Bethia King. After graduation in 2012, Tessa moved to Florida to be closer to family, and was employed by Dr. DiLorenzo. During employment, Tessa obtained a MS and PhD from the University of Florida in Animal Sciences. Tessa's research has focused on the novel crop, *Brassica carinata*, and its potential use as a protein supplement in beef cattle. Tessa is also a full-time mom to two wonderful, not-so-little boys.