A Transformation Year

In the spring of 2020, things looked bright.

What a difference a year makes.

Around this time last year, I had just accepted the position of Dean for Mason’s College of Science and the excitement of moving to a new role was clearly visible on my face. Little did I know, perhaps like many of you, that a ‘novel coronavirus’ would upend our world, forever changing the face of higher education, the virtual work environment, and even miniaturizing many of our notions of how to live.

But what a year it has been! What a difference a year makes!

Volunteering and Service

Mason Outreach and Engagement (MOE) programs, led by Dr. Ylenia Chiari, are an example of how Mason has remained engaged in the community. MOE works with different local communities to identify needs and create opportunities for students to engage, learn, and make a difference.

The Spring 2021 Patriot Learning Pod will hold an EcoEquinox program for K-3 students to run during the spring break of most area school districts (March 30 – April 2). Cost is $199 for those affiliated with Mason and $219 for those outside of the Mason community. This is a great Mason resource for families during spring break! Check out Mason’s upcoming events.

Mason Helps Develop Tool That Provides Access to High-Resolution NASA Data on Soil Moisture

NASA recently announced the release of a new tool that farmers, researchers, and meteorologists can now access for information on soil moisture. Mason’s Beth Studies develops an innovation that translates data from NASA’s Terra satellite into user-friendly information that can be used for various purposes, such as crop management and groundwater policy.

Mason scientist Michael Summers, Professor of Physics and Astronomy, discusses how the use of space resources could propel human colonization throughout the solar system in the coming decades and beyond.

Mason's Patriot Pantry is a local food pantry that serves Mason faculty, staff, students, and members of the Mason community. The program aims to support community members in need by providing emergency food assistance.

Mason’s Office of Community Engagement (OCM) offers a variety of programs and initiatives designed to foster collaboration, engagement, and support for community partners.

Mason Chancellor Verona axle promotes the importance of student engagement and community service, emphasizing that Mason is a place where students can make a difference in the world.

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Spring 2021 Biology Researcher Panel

On March 24, 2021, the Department of Biology will host a panel discussion with current biology researchers at Mason, providing insights into their work, research, and career paths.

Science Maker Lab: Braving Pandemic

Brave healthcare workers identified symptoms and treated those infected. Our Math Maker Lab and Science Maker Lab were very busy during the pandemic trying to figure out what to do with kids that were back to school and now home for break.

IN THE NEWS

Jennifer Salerno.

Jennifer Salerno specializes in environmental microbiology and coral reef ecology. Her current research focuses on understanding the roles that microorganisms play in maintaining and destabilizing the health of coral reefs.

Mason has recently introduced a new tool developed with the help of Jennifer Salerno and spectral imaging to assist with the study of coral-associated microorganisms. This technology allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the complex interactions between coral and their microbiome.

Jennifer Salerno is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at George Mason University, where she conducts research on the distribution of soil microorganisms. Her work has led to important findings in the field of microbiology and coral reef ecology. Salerno focuses on understanding the diversity and function of deep-sea microorganisms, coral-associated microorganisms, and microspatial models.