A transformation year

Jennifer Salerno

A year ago, I was eager to move over to campus. 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 taking the lives of many we hold dear.

Around this time last year, I had just accepted the position of Dean for Mason’s College of Science and the first day of Spring 2020. I believed that the semester would conclude on campus, with the usual activities, learning, and interactions with our Mason community. This is the very reality we are all experiencing today.

What a difference a year makes!

Jennifer Salerno
Environmental Science and Policy Assistant Professor

Jennifer Salerno specializes in environmental microbiology and coral reef ecology. Her current research includes a study on “Diversity and function of deep-sea microbiology.” A second study is “Distribution of Soil Microorganisms” (in collaboration with Mason’s Department of Geography and Geosystems). Her work has led to numerous publications and awards.

Visit her website.

In the News

NASA recently announced the release of a new tool that farmers, researchers, and meteorologists can now access for information on soil moisture. Mason’s Patrick Flynn and colleagues developed a tool to help farmers make the best decisions about irrigation and water use.Flynn and his team worked with researcher Jessica Huggins, who led the team involved in developing a new way to map the shape and depth of each soil layer. Mason recently received a $1.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and NASA.

Mason’sorrendered landscape and campus environments are a hub of activity, with numerous research projects and a growing number of students pursuing their studies on campus. The landscape includes a diverse range of habitats, from urban to rural, providing a unique opportunity to study the interactions between humans and the environment. Mason helps develop a tool that makes this data accessible and useful for decision-making and research.

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