Dear Sunday, Pride of our team

I am very excited to announce that five Mason faculty members have been named recipients of the 2021 Mason Presidential Medals. These awards are given each year to recognize outstanding contributions to the university, and it is always an honor to celebrate the achievements of our faculty members.

This year’s recipients are:

- Dr. Deepa Sinha, Department of Civil Engineering
- Dr. Shabana Ahmed, Department of Human Development and Family Studies
- Dr. Patricia Bigaran, Department of Mechanical Engineering
- Dr. James L. Wexler, Department of Chemistry
- Dr. Leticia Marques, Department of Communication Studies

These faculty members have demonstrated exceptional dedication and leadership, and their contributions to Mason and the broader community have been invaluable.

In addition to the Presidential Medals, we are also honoring our College of Science faculty for their impactful career work. Congratulations to the following faculty members:

- Dr. Rhonda V. Sharpe, president of the Women’s Institute for Science, Equity, and Race
- Dr. W. Eric Kauflin, School of Public Policy
- Dr. Robert S. Baffert, School of Business
- Dr. Jennifer Salerno, School of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
- Dr. Gerald Weatherspoon, School of Systems and Enterprises

As if that wasn’t exciting enough, we have three of the five Presidential Medal recipients in attendance at the university-wide commencement ceremony. All the Lot L Mini Ceremonies will be live-streamed on Mason’s main YouTube channel.

The resilience badge initiative, which is an asynchronous program for faculty and staff to work through the science of resilience, has been updated. Participants who complete the six modules will receive a digital badge. These badges can be added to formats like LinkedIn and posted online. The Resilience Badge initiative is a joint effort between the Center for the Advancement of Well-Being and the Mason School of Education. More information is available here.

Thomas Lovejoy, who coined the term “biodiversity” in 1980, recently interviewed with the media and discussed his work on biodiversity and climate change. Lovejoy has been a leader in the field of environmental research for over fifty years and is among the world’s foremost experts on biodiversity. In recent years, Lovejoy has focused on the role of biodiversity in the context of climate change and global sustainability. He has worked extensively in the Brazilian Amazon, where he has studied the ecosystem and its role in regulating the carbon cycle. Lovejoy has been a leader in the field of biodiversity and climate change, and his work has been recognized by many organizations, including the United Nations Foundation, which awarded him the 2015 Momentum for Change Award.

Jennifer Salerno, an Associate Professor in the Department of Biology, recently received the Seeds of Change Award from SAIL (Science, Agriculture, and Innovation for Life) at George Mason University. This award recognizes outstanding contributions to the field of science and agriculture and acknowledges the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration.

Doris Qin, a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Biology, was recently interviewed by CBS News for her research on the role of RNA in catching COVID-19 outbreaks early. Qin’s research focuses on the use of RNA as a way to catch COVID-19 outbreaks early. She has conducted research on the use of RNA as a diagnostic tool for COVID-19 and has developed a method for using RNA to detect the virus. Qin’s work has been recognized by several organizations, including SAIL, which awarded her the 2021 Outstanding Partnership, Project and Collaboration Award.

We encourage you to check Mason’s main YouTube channel for live-streamed events and updates. In this Issue, you’ll find information about upcoming events, including the university-wide commencement ceremony and the Mason Presidential Medals. You can also read more about the Mason Science highlights ESP (Aparicio) Professor innovative work on Biodiversity and Climate Change, and the significance of the Presidential Medals and College of Science faculty awards.

Thank you for your continued support of Mason Science. If you have any questions or feedback, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,
[Signature]
David L. Tidwell, Ph.D.
Dean of Science