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Message from the Dean

We all know the old phrase "April showers bring May flowers" but at Mason, April brings Giving Day! **Mason's fifth annual Giving Day is April 8th**, and I am pleased to announce that this year, we will be highlighting the **College of Science (COS) Fellowship and Research Fund**. This seems especially appropriate given this year of scientific achievements—at Mason, and around the world.

The COS Fellowship and Research Fund provides funding for graduate student support and research initiatives within the College of Science. Graduate students are a critical part of our research mission; at Mason, they often rely on scholarships, fellowships, graduate assistantships and student loans to continue their education and afford the cost of living in the Northern Virginia area.

Together, we can support Mason Science graduate students as they continue to

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Dean Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm

Friends Newsletter, we will be highlighting the stories of graduate students at Mason who are advancing the frontiers of science. We hope that you can join us on **April 8th** to make an impact in the lives of Mason students.

Make Your Gift Early

Mason Students Accepted into the Emerging Contaminants in the Environment Conference

Mason Science graduate students **Batool Murtadha** and **Carissa Hunter** have both been accepted into the **2021 Emerging Contaminants in the Environment Conference**. The conference will feature traditional presentations and lighting talks on the latest in emerging contaminant research, policies, and outreach in the soil, water and air. Batool is a doctoral student and researcher in the Foster Research Lab, and her research centers around the micro-solid phase extraction method of analyzing PFAS in water. Carissa is currently pursuing her PhD under the guidance of Dr. Gregory Foster, and her research focuses on water analysis in the Potomac River for the presence of pharmaceutical and personal care products.

Chemistry PhD seeks sustainable battery solutions

As industries work to advance technologies, many strive to adopt more sustainable approaches (think electric cars). This has led, in many cases, to an increased demand for lithium, the element of choice for batteries the past few decades, powering everything from computers, to phones, and now cars. Yet, sometimes a solution for one problem leads to another. Mason doctoral student Kathryn Holguin is focusing her research on finding sustainable alternatives to lithium-based batteries—looking specifically at sodium ion and potassium ion batteries.

Learn More

Earth Month at Mason

Be sure to mark your calendars for **Earth Day April 22nd**! April is Earth Month at Mason, and we are so excited for the lineup of great events happening throughout April. The **Office of Sustainability** will be posting a calendar of events as well as more information about sustainability at Mason.

Mason Science in the News

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 **Center for Spatial Information Science and Systems**, led by GGS Professor **Liping Di**, developed this tool alonside the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and NASA.

Learn More

Biophysical Journal highlights the work of Mason faculty and students

The cover of a recent edition of Biophysical Journal highlighted the research of Interdisciplinary Program in Neuroscience Director **Saleet Jafri**, School of Systems

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identifies a method to successfully predict the specific disease caused by a gene variant and ranks its severity with more accuracy.

Read the Study

Professors DiZinno and Falsetti receive funding for national center to increase numbers of medical examiners and coroners

Joseph DiZinno, Associate Professor, Forensic Science Program, and **Anthony Falsetti**, Associate Professor, Forensic Science Program, received $2,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice for a project aimed at: (1) Providing medico-legal learning opportunities for medical students to train as deputy medical examiners/coroners in underserved rural areas; (2) Providing forensic science and legal training to district attorneys, judges, and law enforcement; (3) Developing opportunities, as appropriate, among the designated partners to benefit current and future practitioners in the field.

Full Article

Events & Announcements

COS Alumni Chapter April Meeting

On April 22nd at 7:30pm we will be hosting our COS Alumni Chapter Meeting over ZOOM. If you are interested in joining the Alumni Chapter and getting involved, please contact Marie Calle at **mconnole@gmu.edu**.

Spring 2021 Mason Science Series Research Discussions

Shobita Satyapal, PhD
Physics and Astronomy

Seeking the Invisible: Detecting Supermassive Black Holes in Space

Tuesday, April 27, 2021 4-5pm

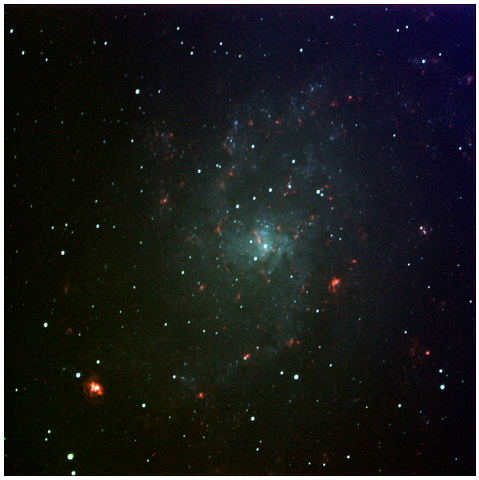
Be sure to register for our third and final Spring 2021 Mason Science Series Research Discussion. For more information about our speakers, and to register to attend go to **science.gmu.edu/MasonScienceSeries**

Mathematics and Artificial Intelligence Friday Series

The Center for Mathematics and Artificial Intelligence (CMAI) virtually meets on Fridays to discuss a variety of academic issues. The

data, control, optimization, anomalous (nonlocal) diffusion, nonlinear partial differential equations, with a broad range of applications.

Future Topics



Evenings Under the Stars

The GMU Observatory is proud to host free public tours on alternating Monday evenings during the academic year, each beginning shortly after sunset.

Unless otherwise noted, expect the scientific talks to last 30 minutes and their content to be appropriate for ages 5+. An approximate hour-long guided telescope tour* of that night's sky will follow the scientific talk. To learn more about how to join Observatory Events please visit the **GMU Observatory website.**

To stay up-to-date on our events, you can follow our **calendar here**.

E-mail us for more information.

If you have a question you'd like us to answer in a future newsletter, please write to us!

Follow us on social media:

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