Mason SCIENCE

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In this Issue

- Message from the Dean
- Mason Science Community
- Research & Discovery
- In the News
- Happening at Mason
- Events



Time to choose

by Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm

What do NFL teams and graduating seniors have in common?

This past week, both analyzed and agonized over a series of decisions that could determine their successful future. After years of hard work, dedication, and sacrifice, it was time to transition to the 'next level.'

The National Football League held their annual draft, when aspiring professional athletes sat poised on social media to capture the moment of 'the call' that would tell them what team had selected them for their roster. Some knew where they wanted to go, while other athletes had to wait through all seven rounds to see which city they'd be calling home.

Likewise, on May 1, across the country, high school seniors had to make their own selection. It was College Decision Day. Each had to choose which university could provide the academic and community forming experiences to best position them on the professional path of their dreams. This year was

especially challenging; the graduating class of 2022 spent two of its four high school years in pandemic mode. Some took the big tests while others decided to go ‘test optional’ to identify their opportunities. It made the application pool even murkier and the decision even more important.

Such stress. Tremendous pressure. But wait, there’s another interesting relevancy in this analogy.

What if I said that students have the potential to be the greatest, wherever they might choose to learn, as long as the support team was just as fully committed to ALL students’ success as they were.

Athletes and students could share the mindset—‘I will be my best self wherever I go.’ I need to find the place that is the best fit for me. A place that has the right respectful, inclusive, and nurturing learning environment. Just ask one of the NFL’s greatest quarterbacks of all time, Tom Brady.

Tom Brady had a solid career playing football at the University of Michigan. But no one picked him the first day of the draft. Nor the second round of the draft. He was selected in the third round by the New England Patriots. And he decided he’d make his mark there. Perhaps in his mind he said, ‘I’ll show those teams who didn’t pick me what they passed up.” Or maybe he just said, “These teams don’t validate who I can be as a player—I do.” Ideally, he had achieved a milestone on his path to success. I’m a pro football player and now it’s time to learn and work to be great. (An aside, I don’t know Tom Brady and I don’t know what he thought).

However, people who follow the sport know, he very quickly established his ability, making the most of the supportive environment and opportunities he had. The coaching staff and team worked together with him in a partnership to build a football dynasty. Brady led the Patriots to many championships, winning Superbowl after Superbowl along the way.

Read full message



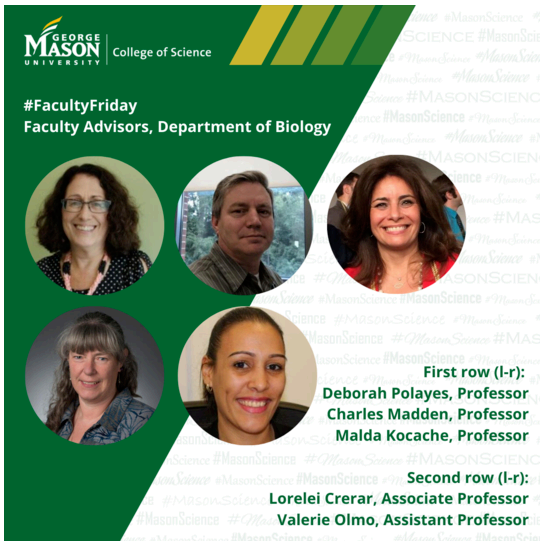
Mason PhD student is changing how the world views HIV/AIDS

by Pam Shepherd



Biosciences doctoral student Gifty Mensah lived in Ghana until she was 14. It was common to see people there die from preventable diseases such as HIV/AIDS due to a lack of medical resources. Mensah is now in a place where she can make a difference by studying extracellular vesicles, which carry substances in and out of the cell, serving as a snapshot of what is happening in that particular cell. *Photo by Sierra Guard/Creative Services*.

Read her story



#FacultyFriday highlights Mason biology advisors

#FacultyFriday highlights our Mason Biology advisors: Lorelei Crerar, Associate Professor, Malda Kocache, Professor, Charles Madden, Professor, Valerie Olmo, Assistant Professor, and Deborah Polayes, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor. In addition to conducting innovative research and teaching rigorous science courses, these faculty members go the extra mile to ensure our students receive the necessary support to succeed here at #MasonScience.

More on biology's advising support

RESEARCH & DISCOVERY

Student research addresses community-based solutions to the effects of road salt

by Mariam Aburdeineh

Road salt has been touted as a lifesaver when it comes to combatting icy roads. Yet using this snow-melting mineral has a dark side once it enters waterways. Graduating biology senior Maggie Walker,

through the Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation (SMSC), is gathering data at local streams to influence change. *Photo by Evan Cantwell/Creative Services/George Mason University.*



More on this research

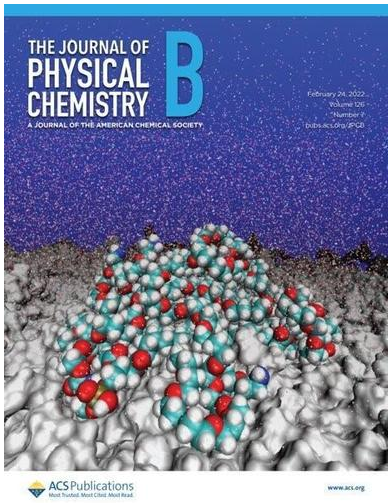
IN THE NEWS

Forensics expert weighs in on Alabama prison escape



Mary Ellen O'Toole, Director, Forensic Science Program, spoke to *CBS Morning News* about the Sheriff Deputy who assisted an inmate escaping from an Alabama jail. O'Toole said she believes that over time, the relationship between these individuals changed and the lines between offender and correctional officer blurred.

Watch the segment



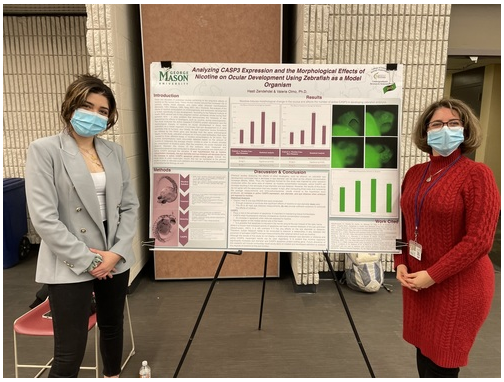
Mason Science study featured on cover of Journal of Physical Chemistry

James Andrews, former Mason student in the Center for Simulation and Modeling (now a postdoc researcher at Clemson University) and Estela Blaisten-Barojas, CDS full professor and dissertation director, as well as director of the Center for Simulation and Modeling, have co-authored a paper. "Distinctive Formation of PEG-Lipid Nanopatches onto Solid Polymer Surfaces Interfacing Solvents from Atomistic Simulation" was accepted by The Journal of Physical Chemistry, which also chose the story as its cover feature for the issue.

Read the study

Happening at Mason

Attend the OSCAR Celebration of Student Scholarship and Impact



OSCAR's celebration of student scholarship and impact will take place May 9 through 13, 2022. College of Science students will have the opportunity to showcase their work Friday, May 13. Learn more about the week's activities.

View Mason Science participants

Celebrate Mason Science Learning Assistants at upcoming poster session

On Tuesday, May 10, from noon to 2 p.m. in Exploratory Hall atrium Mason Science Learning Assistants (LAs) will present posters reflecting their teaching experiences, their students' learning, and new instructional initiatives that they have implemented. Find out how their experiences have affected them as teachers and learners. LAs could choose one of three different types of projects: Synthesis (bringing together topics from the LA seminar with their teaching experiences), Design (creating and implementing an active-learning activity for their students), and Research (investigating a research question about teaching/learning). Contact Ben Dreyfus with questions. If the poster session is moved to a virtual format, all registrants will receive an email with access information.

Register to attend

Events

Climate Dynamics Seminar: Barry Klinger, Current Climate Conversation
May 6, 2022 | Noon to 1 p.m. | Virtual
Quasi-monthly AOES discussions of recent climate and weather events. Come with an interesting news item. Come to add your two cents. Or just come to listen. Climate Dynamics Seminar: Barry Klinger, Current Climate Conversation

College Degree Celebration Staff Volunteer briefing
Monday, May 9 | 2:00 p.m. | Eagle Bank Arena
There's still time to volunteer -- we need your help. On Saturday, May 21 at 10am we will celebrate the

accomplishment of over 800 graduates; your participation is important to them and their families as they commemorate this achievement. Join the celebration and RSVP to volunteer at cosevent@gmu.edu. You can attend this session to learn more details.

Reminder: 2022 Faculty and Staff Experience Survey
Deadline Monday, May 9 | 11:59 p.m.
On Monday, April 18, and today you received an email from Gallup inviting you to participate in the 2022 Faculty and Staff Experience Survey. Share your voice by completing the survey before it closes at the end of the day on Monday, May 9.

Thomas Lovejoy Symposium
May 19, 2022 | 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. | Fairfax Campus
Join us for a symposium honoring Thomas Lovejoy, hosted by George Mason President Gregory Washington and Smithsonian Under Secretary for Science and Research Ellen Stofan.

College of Science Degree Celebration 2022
May 21, 2022 | 10 a.m. | Eagle Bank Arena
Join us for this year's spring Degree Celebration and celebrate the accomplishments of the class of 2022. Register to attend.

See Full Calendar

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