



FALL 2025

## From the Chair: Momentum You Made Possible

Entering my second year as chair, I'm energized by the momentum across Biological Sciences. This community's mix of long-standing strengths and fresh ideas continues to inspire me, and the start of the academic year brings renewed purpose and opportunity for us to grow.

In ways big and small, the Clemson Family is making an impact.

We're grateful to Ken Hance '93 and his wife, Dena, whose major gift to the Department will advance student success and high-impact research. Their generosity reflects Tiger pride at its best and raises the bar for what we can accomplish together.

And recently, our Bob & Betsy Campbell Museum of Natural History completed a restoration and long-term loan of a taxidermied African lion to the local D.W. Daniel High School, turning school spirit into a daily learning opportunity. The project embodies our commitment to hands-on education, conservation-minded outreach and meaningful community partnerships.

Keep reading below for more great news on the discoveries led by our faculty, the new faces we've welcomed, the extraordinary accomplishments of our students and more.

Thank you for the many ways you support BioSci — through mentorship, collaboration, philanthropy and advocacy. I'm excited for what we will achieve together this year.

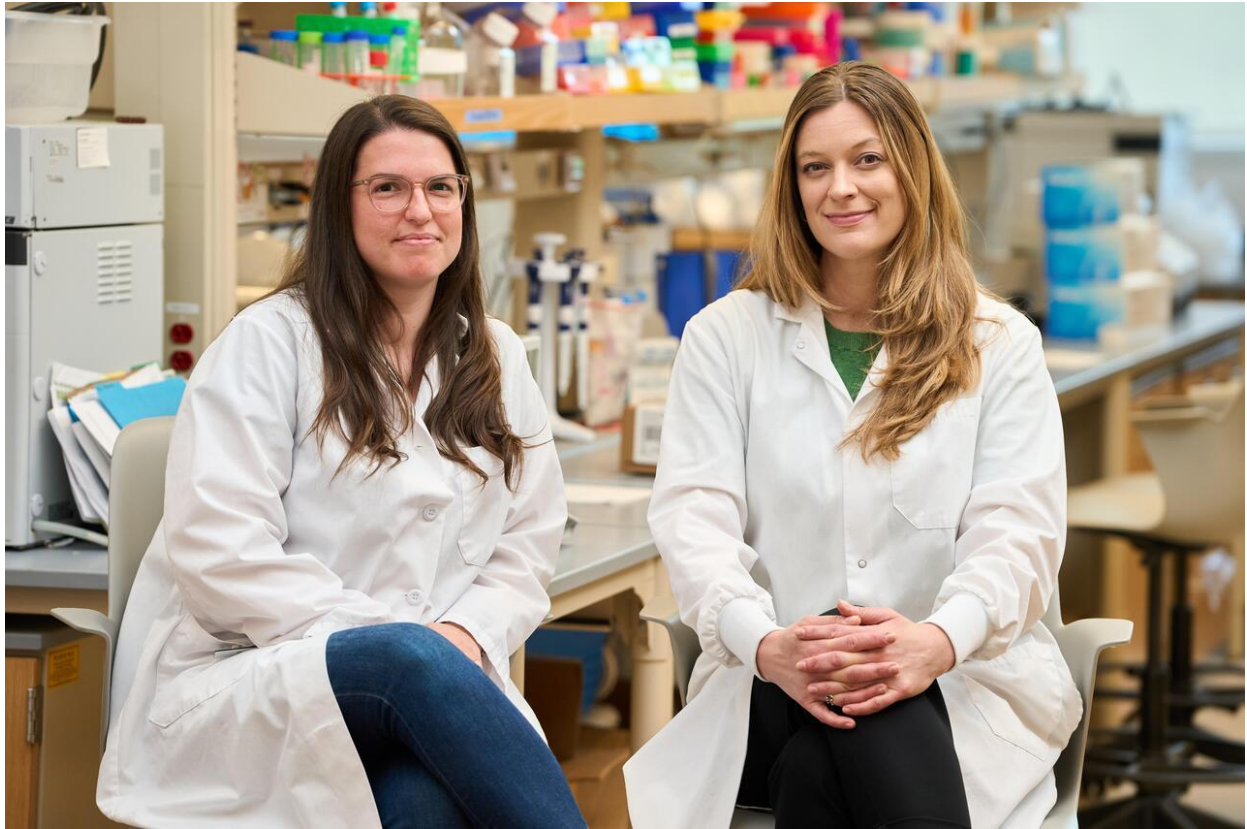
Go Tigers!

**KAROLINA MUKHTAR, Ph.D.**

**CHAIR**

**DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES**





*Sophie Millard and Anna Seekatz.*

## Research could lead to improved treatment for C. diff and other GI illnesses

Anna Seekatz, assistant professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, and Ph.D. candidate Sophie Millard found that even when microbiomes colonize after fecal microbiome transplantation, they may not actually work to eliminate C. diff, a gastrointestinal infection.

[Read more about the C. diff research](#)



*Jennifer Aplan and Matthew Koski.*

## Jennifer Aplan M '23 and Matthew Koski publish two studies on plants with a competitive edge

Jennifer Aplan (M '23 Biological Sciences) and Associate Professor Matthew Koski recently published two studies showing that flowers with traits that help them thermoregulate have advantages over those that don't when it comes to reproduction and ability to attract pollinators. Aplan is now the collections coordinator at the Michigan State University Herbarium.

[Read more about their flower research](#)



**Meet our newest faculty!**





*Daniel Jones*



*Antonino Malacrino*



*April South*



*Karin van der Burg*



*Katelyn Walzer*

**Daniel Jones**, Assistant Professor: Previously at Auburn University where he established his lab group in 2021. The Jones lab focuses on evolutionary genomics in the sunflower family (the largest plant family on Earth) with a particular interest in understanding the developmental genetics underlying their novel floral architecture, the capitulum.

**Antonino Malacrino**, Assistant Professor: Previously led a group at the University of Reggio Calabria (Italy). The Malacrino lab will focus on understanding how microbial communities assemble, function, and can be engineered to improve plant and ecosystem health.

**April South**, Senior Lecturer: A Clemson graduate who completed her Ph.D. at the University of South Carolina where she then taught for 17 years. South has returned to Clemson where her teaching interests focus on human anatomy and physiology.

**Karin van der Burg**, Assistant Professor: Previously a postdoctoral fellow at the University of British Columbia and a NSF postdoctoral fellow at Clemson University. Van der Burg's research focuses on the physiology, genetics and epigenetics of seasonal adaptation in insects.

Katelyn Walzer, Assistant Professor: Previously a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania. Walzer studies the development of the parasite *Cryptosporidium parvum*, which causes diarrheal disease in humans and ruminant livestock worldwide.

---

## Faculty promotions



*Matthew Koski*



*Cassandra May*



*Kara Powder*

At the beginning of the Fall semester, the University announced the tenure and promotion of 22 faculty in the College of Science. Congratulations to our newly promoted faculty in the Department of Biological Sciences:

- Matthew Koski – Associate Professor

- Cassandra May – Senior Lecturer
- Kara Powder – Associate Professor

[Read more about all the promotions](#)



## More good news from Biological Sciences

### Faculty

Antonino Malacrino's research showed that wildfire impacts on soil microbes can cause long-lasting effects to ecosystem.

John Cummings adds high-tech tools to the Libraries' collection, including bat detection devices, a thermal imager and an Anatomage tablet that any student can check out and use.

### Students



*Alyssa Baker, Leila Davis, Jalen Cherry, Annalisa Lewis, Elizabeth Mulligan and Natalia Nortz.*

Alyssa Baker, second year Ph.D. student in Antonio Baeza's lab, recently compiled the first nuclear and mitochondrial genomic portrait of the Juan Fernandez Islands rock lobster *Jasus frontalis*, also known as Robinson Crusoe's spiny lobster.

Leila Davis, a biological sciences and political science double major, has been named a 2025 Dixon Global Policy Scholar. The scholars had the opportunity to examine the history, economics and culture of France, Germany and the European Union during a study-travel trip this summer.

Gilman-McCain Scholar and biological sciences major Jalen Cherry studied abroad this summer in Oaxaca, Mexico, shadowing physicians while building skills in cultural competencies, studying ethics and learning the Spanish language.

Annalisa Lewis, a biological sciences major, has been named a 2025 Breakthrough Scholar. Lewis' academic excellence, passion for discovery and plans to pursue an advanced degree position her as a future STEM leader.

Biological sciences major Mary “Elizabeth” Mulligan has been selected for the 2025 NextGen Service Fellowship that will offer immersive, service-learning experiences that deepen global awareness and foster careers dedicated to international development.

Natalia Nortz, biological sciences, and three other Clemson Honors students have found ways to support their fellow students and the surrounding community.

## Community Outreach



The Bob & Betsy Campbell Museum of Natural History completed a restoration and long-term loan of a taxidermied African lion to the local D.W. Daniel High School, turning school spirit into a daily learning opportunity

Give to the Department



Department of  
**BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES**  
Clemson® University



[Visit the Department of Biological Sciences website](#)



This email was sent to .

To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.