Mason SCIENCE

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Wednesday, April 26, 2023 **science.gmu.edu**

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Cultivating spring STEM community connections

by Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm

Living near Virginia's largest public R-1 university can be a tremendous benefit beyond just experiencing the countless sporting and cultural arts events Mason offers. And there are many! For starters, just consider how our faculty, staff, students, and their families support local businesses and the economy. Yet beyond those connections, we also demonstrate an ongoing commitment to impactful STEM outreach as an important element of the college's mission.

Over the past few weeks, we've been fortunate to have many opportunities to share and strengthen science connections with members of our community. And we are collaborating with many local elected officials to explore ideas.

For example, City of Fairfax Mayor and Mason alum, Catherine Read recently met with me on Mason's Fairfax campus to get an overview of our strategic direction, and brainstorm ways to collaborate with her constituents to collectively support our shared community. She also met with Mason AOES professor Jim Kinter, who co-directs the VA Climate Center, to learn about how we are helping communities build

resilience to Virginia's changing climate. (Jim also discussed this in a broadcast with PBS/WETA that aired last week – his section starts at about the 8-minute mark).

Read full message

MASON SCIENCE COMMUNITY

Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger visits Potomac Science Center



On Wednesday, April 12, Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger visited George Mason University's Potomac Science Center in Woodbridge, which is now part of the congresswoman's district. Mason President Gregory Washington met with the congresswoman to introduce her to the research and education programs at the Potomac Science Center and share the contributions the center is making to the preservation of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. She also met and spoke with Mason Science faculty including Dr. Cindy Smith, Associate Professor, Environmental Science and Policy and Dr. R. Christian Jones, Professor, Environmental Science and Policy (pictured here). *Photo by Evan Cantwell/Creative Services.*

More on her visit



#FacultyFriday highlights ESP assistant professor

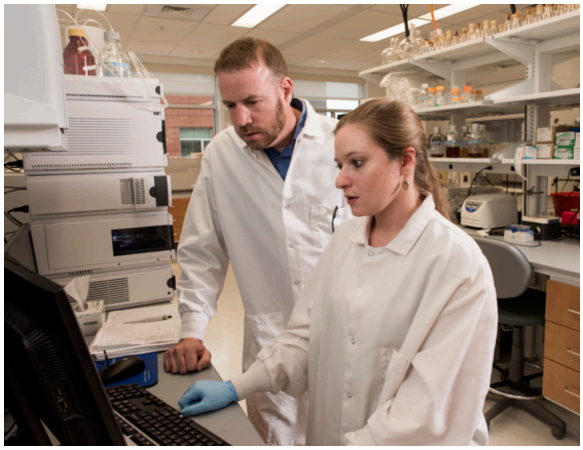
Last week's #FacultyFriday featured Dr. T. Reid Nelson, Assistant Professor, Environmental Science and Policy. Nelson is a fisheries ecologist with research interests in basic fields of ecology, applied aspects of fisheries and aquatic resource management, and the intersection of these two avenues. View the original Instagram post.

See recent faculty highlights

RESEARCH & DISCOVERY

Study finds probiotics are not only good for the gut, they affect other organs too

by Katie Maney



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 40 percent of Americans are classified as obese, leading obesity to be considered a significant public health threat. Dr. Robin Couch and Dr. Allyson Dailey, researchers in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and the Institute for Biohealth Innovation, are interested in the correlations between dietary intake and overall health. In a recent study, Couch and Dailey partnered with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to explore the influence of probiotic supplementation on a higher fat diet, using pigs as model organisms. *Photo by creative services*.

Get the results



Mason researchers explore techniques to successfully reintroduce captive birds into the wild

by Laura Powers

Studies show that some species may require breeding in captivity within the next 200 years to avoid extinction. This reality places heavy importance on the reintroduction practices used to successfully transfer species from captivity to the wild. A new study from biology professor Dr. David Luther and PhD in Environmental Science and Public Policy student Jessica Roberts looks at some of the most popular conservation techniques and identifies which have the highest likelihood of success for the reintroduction of bird species back into the wild. *Photo provided*.

More on their research

IN THE NEWS

Mason's forensic science program prepares next generation of women scientists

by NBC 4 Washington



A recent segment on *NBC 4 News* highlighted the women in Mason Science's Forensic Science Program, including Director Dr. Mary Ellen O'Toole and Associate Professor Kelly Knight. Both spoke to the quality of Mason's education and the important role women increasingly play in the sciences. The segment also featured two forensic science students and their academic preparation for a career in forensics.

Watch the news segment



PBS airs segment on the dangers of climate change

by PBS VPM News Focal Point

Atmospheric, Oceanic and Earth Sciences Professor Jim Kinter recently spoke to *PBS* about threats facing various Virginia areas as a result of climate change and what the Virginia Climate Center is doing to help. The Virginia Climate Center hosts an interdisciplinary team of Mason experts who will conduct research on Virginia's vulnerability and risks to the impacts of climate change in order to provide local decision makers with actionable climate information.

Full video

Happening at Mason



Mason President Gregory Washington announces launch of $1 billion campaign

A new chapter in the Mason story began last week. Joined by students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, and elected officials from around the Commonwealth, President Gregory Washington announced the launch of **Mason Now: Power the Possible** — a $1 billion campaign for George Mason University. Visit the Mason Now campaign website to view the campaign video and to learn more about the campaign priorities, which focus on: student success, research, innovation, community, and a sustainable future.

View the President's full message

New funding opportunity available for Anti-Racist and Inclusive Teaching

The Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning announced exciting news in the Anti-Racist and Inclusive Teaching space. New grant money is available for efforts supporting Faculty Capacity Building projects and also for Course/Curriculum Impact Grant projects for the 2023-2024 academic year. **Proposals must be submitted by April 28, 2023**. Funding will provide support and opportunities for faculty to improve curriculum design, teaching strategies, and pedagogical resources supporting anti-racist and inclusive teaching (ARIT).

Submit your proposal



NSF GRFP Information Sessions

April 28, 2023 | 1 to 2:30 p.m. | Register for location details

Are you planning to pursue a graduate degree in STEM? Are you a first-year STEM student? If so, you may be eligible for the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program, which provides funding for three years of grad school. Attend an upcoming information session hosted by the Office of Fellowships. Register to attend.

Mason Day 2023

April 28, 2023 | 3 to 10 p.m. | Lot A and L, Fairfax Campus

Get ready for an exciting time at Mason Day. Featuring a HUGE carnival with rides, games, delicious treats, food trucks, inflatables, novelties, student performances all day, of course, our lovely Mason Day T-shirts and goodies (while supplies last). Event is open to all Mason faculty, staff, and students.

Spring into STEM

April 29, 2023 | 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. | Hybla Valley Community Center

The College of Science has partnered with the College of Engineering and Computing to host the upcoming Spring into STEM community outreach event. Spring into STEM is a free Saturday event for K-12 students that will expose students to team building, collaboration, and using their creativity to learn more about STEM. The event will also incorporate an information fair, where parents/guardians can learn about the different academic programs and resources available to them in the DMV area.

Mason Emergency Preparedness Training Deadline

April 30, 2023 | MasonLeaps

In accordance with the Commonwealth of Virginia Office of the Governor, Executive Order 41 (2019), this training is required annually for all Mason faculty and staff. Training will take approximately 45 minutes. If you must step away from your computer or device during training, please save/bookmark training to ensure credit upon completion.

Save the Date: College of Science Degree Celebration

May 19, 2023 | 10 a.m. | EagleBank Arena

See Full Calendar

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