Mason SCIENCE

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Dean's Blog: Science PRIDE

by Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm

As we enter the month of June, I wanted to devote this blog post to Pride month, share a bit of my personal experience with colleagues and friends in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTQ+) community, some of the LGBTQ+ scientists' contributions, and Mason's decades-long and current efforts to provide resources for the LGBTQ+ faculty, staff and students.

Any graduate student remembers what it is like to start school in a new place, feeling a bit disoriented, disconnected and looking for any kind of grounding. Over 30 years ago, that graduate student was me. At that time, one of my classmates, Barbara, who was one year my senior, took the time to welcome me in my lab and showed me the ropes of my new academic environment. As I got to know her better, she introduced my wife Monica and I, newlyweds at the time, to her partner Cecilia, and they quickly became the first of our "couple friends".

Cecilia introduced Monica to a couple of her friends, Donna and Evelyn, who were looking for a babysitter for their adopted baby boy, Nicolas. Nicolas came from Peru, and Donna and Evelyn hit it off with Monica

very quickly. They liked the fact that Nicolas would be able to grow up next to someone who spoke the language from his native land. We've all remained friends since that time.

Over my career, I have interacted with many colleagues in the sciences who are LGBTQ+, ranging from students to junior to senior scientists, located all over the world, working across science disciplines in all sorts of challenging problems. I have learned a great deal from many of them and they make me proud of their contributions and achievements. In my mind, for personal and professional reasons, there are a myriad reasons to celebrate LGBTQ+ Pride month.

Read full message

MASON SCIENCE COMMUNITY

Solomon recognized with NSF Career Award

by John Hollis



Lee Solomon, the first junior faculty member in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry to receive the NSF Career Award, is designing a series of biomaterial-based wires that will pave the way for new medicines and energy technologies. *Fairfax County Times* recently highlighted Solomon's achievements.

Find out more about his research



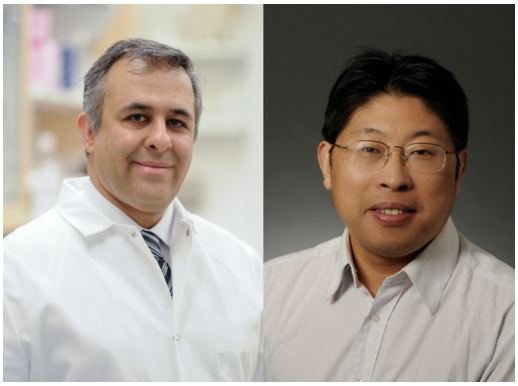
Future learning pier named in honor of Don Kelso

by Christopher Bobo

On May 22, Mason colleagues and alumni gathered at the Potomac Science Center to celebrate Professor Emeritus Don Kelso and kick off a campaign to fund a pier in his name that will expand research capabilities at the center.

Find out more about the naming

RESEARCH & DISCOVERY



Mason scientists explore herbal treatment for COVID-19

by Elizabeth Grisham

Could an over-the-counter health “shot” help fight COVID-19? George Mason University researchers think it just might. *Cell and Bioscience* recently highlighted research led by School of Systems Biology Professor Yuntao Wu and Associate Professor Ramin Hakami, in which they examined the potential anti-coronavirus activities of an over-the-counter drink called Respiratory Detox Shot (RDS). Their work was recently highlighted by both *Bioengineer.org* and the *International Business Times*.

More on their study

IN THE NEWS

UFO sightings in the US: What you need to know

Physics and Astronomy Assistant Professor Peter Plavchan discusses the UFO sightings and the search for extraterrestrial life with Fox5 at the 1:10 mark.

View the segment





Amy Fowler discusses environmental hazards of the bait-worm industry

Environmental Science and Policy Assistant Professor Amy Fowler spoke to *The Atlantic* on the invasive organisms found on bloodworms, a common worm used for bait, and the negative effect this has on the environment.

Read the article

Happening at Mason

Opportunity to promote your book publications



The *Mason Spirit* would like to highlight faculty-authored books recently released and to-be released this year. If this applies to you, please email tmason11@gmu.edu by **July 1, 2021** with book details so she may submit for possible inclusion in the next issue.



COVID-19 safety requirements for fall 2021

President Gregory Washington announced updated policies regarding COVID-19. Those who have been fully vaccinated will be required to upload vaccination documentation into the Health Services Patient Portal **before August 1**.Review these updates in order to prepare for the fall 2021 semester.

What you need to know

Events

Master Plan Engagement Session
June 10, 2021 | 1 to 2:30 p.m.
Mason consultants will begin conversations around the physical systems needed to support Mason's emerging campus identities including transportation, campus ecology, sustainability, and public/private development opportunities. Register to join the conversation.

CMAI Summer School featuring Professor Thomas M. Surowiec
June 18, 2021 | 9:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Hear Professor Thomas Surowiec of Philipps-Universität Marburg in Germany speak on "An Introduction to Risk-

Averse PDE-Constrained Optimization: Theory, Numerical Solution, and Open Problems." *Registration required*.

STEMNoire 2021

June 24, 2021 to June 26, 2021

Get your tickets for the 2021 STEMNoire research conference and holistic wellness program intentionally curated to connect, uplift, and empower women of the African diaspora in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

Smithsonian Associates Lecture: "Our Deceptive Universe"

July 12, 2021 | 6:30 to 8 p.m.

In trying to understand our deceptive universe, Astrophysicist Hakeem Oluseyi examines spacetime, the illusion of mass, the large-scale structure of the universe, dark matter, and dark energy. *Tickets required*.

See Full Calendar

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