Mason SCIENCE

Understand. Innovate. Succeed.

Wednesday, February 3, 2021 **science.gmu.edu**

In this Issue

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



A message from the Dean

FERNANDO R. MIRALLES-WILHELM

Understanding the past to build a brighter future

by Dean Fernando R. Miralles-Wilhelm

President Ronald Reagan once said, “Understanding the history of Black Americans is a key to understanding the strength of our nation.”

Monday, February 1 marked the start of Black History Month, a celebration that every U.S. president has officially designated since 1976 as an opportunity to highlight significant contributions by the African American community.

Did you know the commemoration’s start had local origins? First celebrated as Negro History Week since 1926, the concept of promoting achievements by Black Americans and other peoples of African descent was created in part by noted Virginia-born and Harvard-trained historian, educator and publisher, Carter G. Woodson, (yes, nearby Woodson High School’s namesake). This History article describes how it evolved from the second week in February to the month-long commemoration we have today to help expand our understanding and build a more inclusive culture.

This year, the College of Science will honor and celebrate prominent African American scientists from the past, present, and future. Throughout the month, in addition to highlighting prominent historical figures, we are sharing achievements of African Americans from across scientific disciplines as a way to inspire our scientific community while highlighting opportunities across the Mason campus to engage and build connections.

Read full message

MASON SCIENCE COMMUNITY



College of Science faculty working to improve campus safety

On the latest "Access to Excellence" podcast, President Gregory Washington talks with scientists Lance Liotta and Virginia Espina about their work using rapid-result saliva testing to help make Mason safer during the global pandemic.

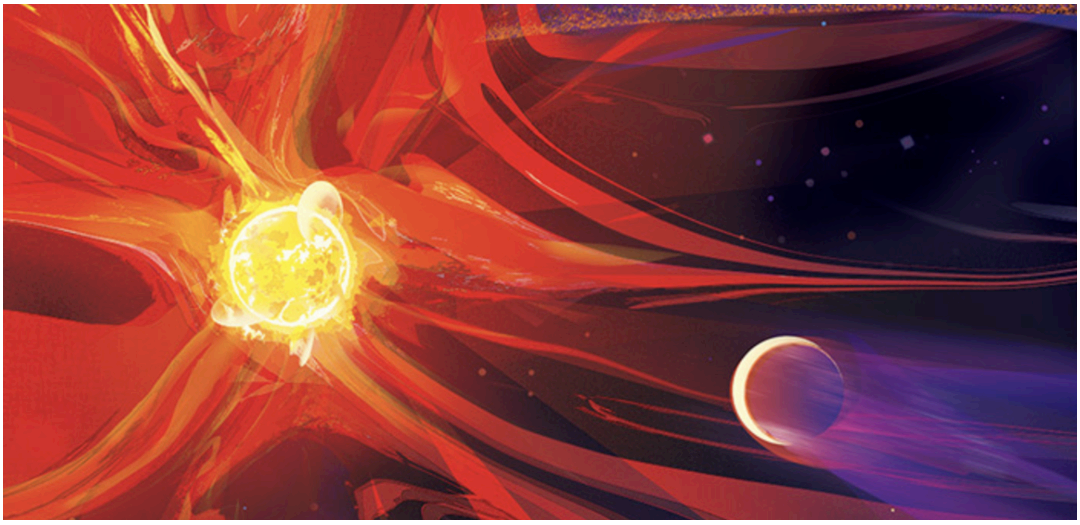
Listen to the podcast

Faculty encouraged to apply for new College of Science Seed Awards



Applications are open for three new seed awards offered by the College of Science for up to $50,000. The awards aim to strengthen the scientific connection between the investigators in the college and enable investigators to explore new areas of research. Interdisciplinary projects are highly encouraged. Applications must be submitted to cosseed@gmu.edu no later than **COB March 1.** Refer to your email for the application and further guidelines.

RESEARCH & DISCOVERY



SPIRou Stares at a Young Rebel: the AU Mic Planetary System

By Mary Beth Laychak and Tracy Mason

Mason astronomers, including Physics and Astronomy's Peter Plavchan, are part of a global effort to search for planets orbiting AU Microscopii, a nearby star still surrounded by a disk of debris left over from its formation.

Full story

SSB professor studying effects of cocaine on production of extracellular vesicles

By Elizabeth Grisham



Fatah Kashanchi, School of Systems Biology Professor, Laboratory of Molecular Virology, received $66,065 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (National Institutes of Health) and Harvard University for the project: "Cocaine induces production of infectious large extracellular vesicles (IEV) and regulates neuro-inflammation."

Full story

IN THE NEWS

Mason's expanded COVID-19 testing and tracking gaining attention.

Mason announced last week that it is introducing a rapid-result, saliva-based COVID-19 test that will greatly expand testing capabilities on its campuses this spring. Both Science Codex and News Medical highlighted the effort, led in part by Center for Applied Proteomics and Molecular Medicine Professors Lance Liotta and Virginia Espina, as well as Senior Associate Dean Ali Andalibi.



Full story

Happening at Mason



Multidisciplinary Opportunity at Mason

Schar School's Terrorism Center joins the International Union for Conservation to combat wildlife and conservation crimes, an effort that will include Environmental Science and Policy Chair A. Alonso Aguirre and others across the university.

Learn more

Events

Galileo Science Cafe: Toward a Model of Interpersonal Trust Drawn from Neuroscience, Psychology, and Economics

February 4, 2021 | 6:45 to 9 p.m.

School of Systems Biology's, Frank Krueger, sketches out an integrative NPE model that explains how the interactions of psychoeconomic components engage domain-general large-scale brain networks in shaping trust behavior over time.

Center for Mathematics and Artificial Intelligence (CMAI) Colloquium

February 5, 2021 | 10 a.m.

Attend Friday's CMAI event to hear Georg Stadler from New York University discuss estimation of extreme event probabilities in systems governed by PDEs. Register to attend.

Colloquium on Computational Social Science/Computational Data Sciences

February 5, 2021 | 10 a.m.

Hear Hector Pollitt, Director and the Head of Modelling at Cambridge Econometrics and Bence Kiss-Dobrony, Economist at Cambridge Econometrics discuss the economic impacts of COVID-19.

Save the Date: ScienceConnect 2021
February 25, 2021 | 1 to 3 p.m.
Registration will open next week

See Full Calendar

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