Mason SCIENCE

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Wednesday, March 10, 2021 **science.gmu.edu**

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A message from the Dean

FERNANDO R. MIRALLES-WILHELM

Time to educate and act

by Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm

To be able to grow, we need to better understand the challenges and define the culture we seek, using examples along the way to build awareness.

According to a recent article in the Harvard Business Review, “microaggressions are incidents in which someone accidentally (or purposely) makes an offensive statement or asks an insensitive question.” They “are defined as verbal, behavioral and environmental indignities that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group.” Here’s a recent Chronicle of Higher Education article describing microaggressions in academia.

What behavior are we looking to remove from our culture? Here is an example of a microaggression:

Last week in Montgomery County, MD, according to CNN, “a Latina councilmember’s discussion on Zoom about racial disparities was interrupted by people laughing about her accent.” After hearing of the incident, councilmember Nancy Navarro shared in a memo that “This sort of commentary is completely

inappropriate and uncalled for." She further echoed my sentiments, "It is a loud commentary on the toxicity and culture of disrespect directed at leaders and community members of color."

This behavior is unacceptable. I was outraged to hear of this activity and commit to creating a culture where it is not tolerated here at Mason. Not just because Navarro is from my native Venezuela, but rather because it is the right thing to do.

What does it mean to be anti-racist. And how can I learn more?

Read full message

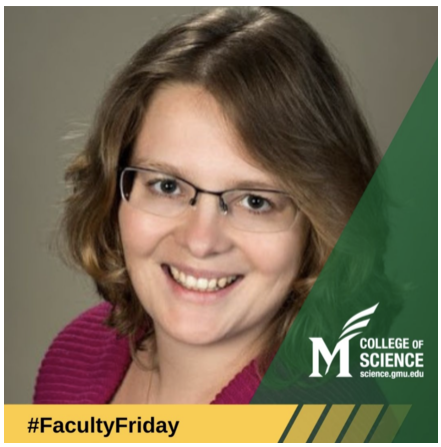
MASON SCIENCE COMMUNITY

Mason GGS students partner with local organizations to assess risk, address digital equity

By Laura Powers

Mason's Web Mapping (GGS 462/692) class lets students go beyond learning the techniques for taking data and creating data-driven interactive web mapping applications that help explain key findings. Students go one step further. Splitting into groups and working with real organizations who provide real data provides students with a true opportunity to find solutions to a real-world challenge.

Read full story



#FacultyFriday highlights the work of Maria Emelianenko

Meet #MasonScience Mathematical Sciences Professor Maria Emelianenko. Emelianenko is an interdisciplinary mathematician who applies mathematical theory to a wide range of problems across the sciences. She directs Mason's Industrial Immersion Program and advises the Women in Mathematics student organization George Mason University. She is also the Director of Graduate Studies for the Department of Mathematical Sciences. Additionally, Emelianenko researches the interface between mathematics and other areas of science and engineering, such as materials science, chemistry, and biology.

Read Emelianenko's bio

RESEARCH & DISCOVERY

DiZinno and Falsetti receive funding for national center to increase numbers of medical examiners and coroners

by Elizabeth Grisham

Joseph DiZinno, Associate Professor, Forensic Science Program, and Anthony Falsetti, Associate Professor, Forensic Science Program, received $2,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice for a project aimed at: (1) Providing medico-legal learning opportunities for medical students to train as deputy medical examiners/coroners in underserved rural areas; (2) Providing forensic science and legal training to district attorneys, judges, and law enforcement; (3) Developing opportunities, as appropriate, among the designated partners to benefit current and future practitioners in the field.

Full story

IN THE NEWS

Biophysical Journal highlights the work of Mason faculty and students

The cover of a recent edition of *Biophysical Journal* highlighted the research of Interdisciplinary Program in Neuroscience Director Saleet Jafri, School of Systems Biology Professor Dmitri Klimov, as well as Mason Science students. Their study identifies a method to successfully predict the specific disease caused by a gene variant and ranks its severity with more accuracy.

Read the study

United States Courts highlights use of smoke test to

protect courtrooms from COVID-19

Physics and Astronomy's Rainald Löhner demonstrated for the United States Courts how the smoke trails from a smoke test can identify the best ways to keep court goers safe during the pandemic.

Read full article

Happening at Mason

President Washington: A promising outlook for the fall

President Washington recently addressed Mason's plans to expand campus activities in the fall.

Full message

Events

Galileo Science Cafe: Creating the Next Generation of Practicing Physicians and Medical Researchers - The Role of Physics in Medicine and Medical Education
March 11, 2021 | 7 to 9 p.m.
Join us for the next Galileo Science Cafe presented by affiliate faculty member, Edward Szuszczewicz.

Roundtable Dialogue: Energy policy and decarbonization
March 15, 2021 | 12:30 to 2 p.m.
Join the Institute for a Sustainable Earth for a roundtable discussion on a broad range of topics concerned with energy policy.

Call for Proposals: The Role of Cybersecurity in the Spread of Disinformation and Misinformation
Deadline: March 15, 2021
Virginia's Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI) is offering seed funding for multi-disciplinary teams to address a research question that requires the combination of technical expertise in areas such as cybersecurity, autonomous systems, and data.

The Future of Humanity in Space

March 17, 2021 | 6:45 to 10 p.m.

Michael Summers, Professor of Physics and Astronomy, discusses how the use of space resources could propel human colonization throughout the solar system in the coming decades and beyond. Register to attend.

See Full Calendar

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