



Thursday, September 29, 2022

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A message from the Dean

FERNANDO R. MIRALLES-WILHELM

Finding your fit

by Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm

Over my life and my career, I have heard the word “fit” so many times in the context of being part of a community. Probably the times that resonate the most are those related to feedback after job interviews. I would be told things like “We didn’t feel you were a great fit for us,” or “We found someone who was a better fit.” At first, I felt this feedback reflected that I had some sort of shortcoming(s), that there was something inherently wrong or perhaps that I was missing something. Then of course, were the times where I actually got the job and was told things like “You’re a great fit for what we are looking for,” or “We think you’ll fit very well into your new position.” In these cases, I felt vindicated, validated.

But somewhere inside me, I still feel that this whole “fitting” thing is misplaced. I keep hearing the “fit” in all of its varieties all the time. I have heard it here at Mason when we interview individuals for faculty or administrative positions. I hear it in conversations about whether a particular research or curriculum initiative fits within our portfolio. And the list goes on.

Does this happen to you, too?

MASON SCIENCE COMMUNITY

Mason researchers partner with Indigenous nations to promote environmental resilience

by Mariam Aburdeineh

In 2018, U.S. legislation granted federal recognition to six tribes in Virginia. A George Mason University team has been partnering with two of them, the Upper Mattaponi and Chickahominy nations, as they embark on being sovereign nations.



“What really has been an honor to be a part of is building the capacity and the sovereignty of native tribes,” said [Jeremy Campbell](#), an [Environmental Science and Policy](#) professor co-leading the Mason team with School of Integrated Studies professor Tom Wood. “This is a wonderful opportunity for us, as a university, to build a sustainable and respectful relationship that has the potential to last for decades.”

[More on the project](#)

#FACULTYFRIDAY



Brian Eckenrode
Associate Professor,
Forensic Science Program



Steven Burmeister
Associate Professor,
Forensic Science Program

#FacultyFriday highlights forensic science professors

Last week's #FacultyFriday highlighted two of our elite Forensic Science professors: [Brian Eckenrode](#), Associate Professor, and [Steven Burmeister](#), Associate Professor.

Eckenrode is a former research analytical chemist with the FBI's Research Support Unit in Quantico, VA. He dedicated 23 years of his life to the FBI and went on to earn the FBI Director's Award for Scientific Achievement. At Mason, Eckenrode researches canines, early disease

detection, human living and deceased chemistry, and field instrumentation for drug interdiction. Recently, he contributed two chapters to the book, “Canines: The Original Biosensors.”

Burmeister spent the first few years of his career in different crime and toxicology laboratories. He later entered the FBI as a Special Agent, where he focused on explosive analysis in terrorist cases. Currently, Burmeister spends his time teaching forensic trace analysis and drone photography to aspiring scientists. He also is a part-time police officer for Mason Police.

[View full post](#)

RESEARCH & DISCOVERY

Mason researchers receive funding for Murtha Cancer Center Clinical Proteomics Platform

by Elizabeth Grisham



[Emanuel Petricoin](#) and [Lance Liotta](#), Co-

Directors of Mason's Center for Applied Proteomics and Molecular Medicine ([CAPMM](#)), received funding for: "Murtha Cancer Center Clinical Proteomics Platform – RPPA Assessment in the APOLLO Program." The researchers received \$281,319 from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences on a subaward from the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for this project. Funding began in May 2022 and will end in late April 2023.

[Find out the study's goals](#)

IN THE NEWS

Biology research helps determine ten national parks with best fall foliage

by Erica Jackson Curran

National Geographic reports on this year's fall foliage, citing Mason Biology research from [Rebecca Forkner](#) on why we experience delays in the leaves changing color. The study of maples shows that the fall foliage may be falling behind in schedule due to a number of factors including extreme weather, drought, and insect infestations. *Photo by Melissa Askew on Unsplash.*



[More on the best locations](#)



Mason professor helps explain the science behind light pollution at local town hall

by Brian Trompeter

[Peter Plavchan](#), Associate Professor, [Physics and Astronomy](#) recently attended the Great

Falls town hall this September to help explain the science behind light pollution and the negative effects a single light bulb can create. Those in attendance discussed the dark-skies-preserve ordinance now being drafted by Fairfax County government officials. *Photo by Ryan Hutton on Unsplash.*

[More on the discussions](#)

Happening at Mason

Mason Core: Share your thoughts on courses with Just Society attributes

George Mason University is enhancing the Mason Core curriculum and one proposed enhancement is the inclusion of two required courses which have a Just Society attribute. The goal of courses with this attribute will be to enable students to directly address questions about diverse perspectives and inequity as they engage with one another and to identify how they can participate in processes for making change.



Faculty and student input will be a critical component to incorporating these requirements into the curriculum. Forensic Science Associate Professor [Kelly Knight](#), who serves on the ARIE Curriculum and Pedagogy Implementation Team, is assembling Mason Science faculty who may already have courses that possibly fulfill the requirement and also faculty who may be interested in contributing their thoughts to the development/modification of a course to fulfill the requirement. To have your voices heard in this process, [contact Kelly](#) by **Friday, September 30, 2022**.

[Learn more](#)

Events

Biology Seminar Series

September 30, 2022 | 2 to 3 p.m. | Exploratory Hall 3301

Join Brian Griffiths from Georgetown University for a lecture on "Soil-eating in the Amazon: Assessing the Drivers of Mammal Geophagy."

Mathematics Colloquium: The Secret Algebraic Lives of Graphs

September 30, 2022 | 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Join Keri Sather-Wagstaff from Clemson University and the National Science Foundation for a lecture on "The Secret Algebraic Lives of Graphs."

SSB Colloquium Series: New Roles of HIV-1 Nef and Tat in neuroHIV

October 4, 2022 | Noon | Virtual

Join Johnny He, the Director of the Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology and Infection located at Rosalind Franklin University.

Resetting Our Future

October 12, 2022 | 4 to 6 p.m. | Merten Hall 1204

Hear a panel of climate science experts discuss how strengthening our capacity to look ahead is key to effective preparation and maintaining stability in the global economy and society. [Register today.](#)

The State of the College Address

October 19, 2022 | 1 to 2:30 p.m. | 3301 Exploratory Hall

Staff, faculty and students, [register](#) to join Dean Fernando Miralles-Willhelm as he provides this important annual update.

Second Annual American Society for Intercellular Communication Meeting (ASIC)

October 21-23, 2022 | Bolger Center, Potomac, MD

Join this national exchange of ideas on emerging questions and cutting-edge developments in the field of Extracellular Vesicles (EVs), Extracellular Particles (EPs), and particulate carriers of extracellular RNA (exRNA) as biological mediators, regulators and diagnostic analytes. [Abstracts/registration due by September 30.](#)

Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence Conference: Vision and Action for a New Era

October 24, 2022 | 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. | Mason Square, Arlington, VA or virtual

[See Full Calendar](#)

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