

**In this Issue**

- [Message from the Dean](#)
- [Remembering Dr. Maria Dworzecka](#)
- [College of Science Annual Report](#)
- [Message from COS Alumni Chapter President Mark Monson](#)
- [Alumni News](#)
- [Mason News](#)
- [Events and Announcements](#)

**A message from the Dean**  
**FERNANDO R. MIRALLES-WILHELM**

**Dear Alumni and Friends,**

The spring 2023 semester is underway and campus is abuzz with a contagious energy. I find it inspiring and invigorating, and I know students, faculty, and staff at Mason—and at other academic institutions—share this enthusiasm for the “fresh start” feeling of a new semester. Granted, this enthusiasm is tempered by tragic recent events in our nation and world; part of our struggle as people is to not lose sight of the positive amid the seemingly constant stream of violence and death from wars, ethnic strife, and natural disasters around the world.

Mason is not unique in this time of conflicting energies and experiences—yet, I am convinced that we are, as is said, “All Together Different.”

One of the differentiators is the value, as a Carnegie R1 Institution, that we place on teaching, mentoring, and support for the success our students. The College of Science Alumni Chapter has recently launched a mentor program; students can be individually mentored by alumni and friends of the College. You can learn more about the program in COS Alumni Chapter President Mark Monson’s message in this newsletter.

Other differentiators within our College include the 2022 achievements of our Mason Science community. From our sustainability efforts locally and beyond to awards and research that reflect the expertise and perseverance of our faculty, staff, and students, we are grateful for our science community that exemplifies what it truly means to understand, innovate, and succeed. Take a look through the [College of Science’s 2021-2022 Annual Report](#) that reflects the strengths and accomplishments of our College.

Despite troubling recent events, our College’s past year’s many achievements—combined with the fresh energy of a thriving campus—serve as a light in dark times, and combine to create the formula for an exciting year of discovery and growth for our College of Science.

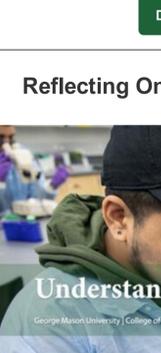
In 2023, I wish the same for you, and for our world.

Warm regards,

Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm, Dean

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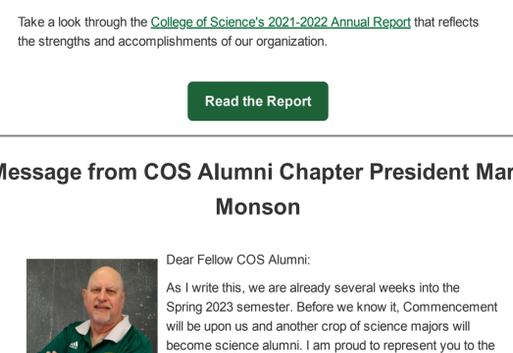
**Remembering Dr. Maria Dworzecka**

 “Dr. Maria Dworzecka, born Marysia Rozenszajn on June 19, 1941, died peacefully on January 16, 2023 at the age of 81. A Polish American, Maria was a Holocaust survivor, mother, grandmother, friend to many, nuclear physicist and physics educator... Maria was proud of being one of the few female physics chairs in the nation, and she was instrumental in hiring and mentoring other female faculty. In 2006 she was appointed the Senior Associate Dean of the newly formed College of Science. On her retirement from George Mason University in 2017, she was awarded professor emerita.”

Our college is planning a special event this spring to celebrate Dr. Dworzecka’s extraordinary life. We will share details soon.

[Dr. Dworzecka’s Obituary](#)

**Reflecting On Our Mason Science Impact**



**Understand. Innovate. Succeed.**

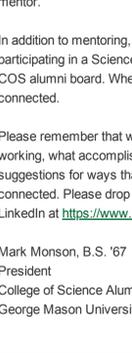
George Mason University | College of Science | Annual Report 2021-2022

As we start this new semester, let us take a look back at the achievements of our Mason Science community during the 2021-2022 academic year. From our sustainability efforts locally and beyond to awards and research that reflect the expertise and perseverance of our faculty, staff, and students, we are grateful for our science community that exemplifies what it truly means to understand, innovate, and succeed.

Take a look through the [College of Science’s 2021-2022 Annual Report](#) that reflects the strengths and accomplishments of our organization.

[Read the Report](#)

**Message from COS Alumni Chapter President Mark Monson**

 Dear Fellow COS Alumni:

As I write this, we are already several weeks into the Spring 2023 semester. Before we know it, Commencement will be upon us and another crop of science majors will become science alumni. I am proud to represent you to the broader GMU alumni community, acknowledged leaders in all the science fields, whether through conducting research, teaching, working for and running businesses large and small, working for and participating in governments at all levels, and a myriad of other activities – not just here in the US, but across the globe as well. Mason alumni lead the way.

Like so much in life, however, maintaining the success of our science programs, students, and alumni requires effort. Part of that effort is keeping our alumni engaged with the University to help our current science students succeed.

An important and extremely meaningful way to stay engaged and support our current science students is through our mentoring program. Our vision is one of flexibility, to have a program that enables both our alumni and our students to engage in ways that works best for them. If that means meeting online occasionally or getting together face-to-face on an established schedule, we want the program to work for both the mentors and the mentees. It doesn’t matter what degree you have (or how many), what field you are in, or how recently you graduated. You have something invaluable to share with a student – experience.

It’s important to note that this is not a staid, structured program. The intent is to be as flexible as possible to meet the needs and expectations of both the mentors and mentees. In some cases, the meetings will be regular, frequent, and long-term. Others will be infrequent and more short term. They can be in-person, online, or both. It’s really up to you and your student. We are also including graduate students, whose need for mentoring may be very different than an undergraduate. More details will be forthcoming. Please keep an eye out for the email and please consider being a mentor.

In addition to mentoring, there are many ways you can stay connected – volunteering, participating in a Science Series lecture, attending an alumni function, serving on the COS alumni board. Whether it’s in-person or virtually, we want to help you stay connected.

Please remember that we want to hear from you. What you’re doing, where you’re working, what accomplishments you want to share. We also want your ideas and suggestions for ways that we can help you and other College of Science alumni stay connected. Please drop us an email at [cosalum@gmu.edu](mailto:cosalum@gmu.edu) or connect with us on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2819973>. We want to hear from you.

Mark Monson, B.S. ’67  
President  
College of Science Alumni Chapter  
George Mason University

**Alumni News**

**Birds of a Feather: Alum’s detective work can improve flight safety**

 The pilot reported that his plane had hit something in the air big enough to knock a hole in the side of the wing. But when Carla Dove, MS Biology ’94, PhD Environmental Science and Public Policy ’98, received the strike sample’s DNA results from the lab, she was stumped. “It kept coming back as whitetail deer...we sent it three times.”

Photo Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution

[Read More](#)

**Mason Science Mentorship Program - Applications Now Open!**

Submission forms for mentors and mentees for the Mason Science Mentorship Program are now open! We are excited to announce that we are now accepting graduate and undergraduate mentees into the program. This means there are more opportunities for alumni and community partners to make an impact. For more information, visit the Mason Science Mentorship Program webpage, or email John Coggdsdale, Assistant Director of Development at [jcoggds@gmuedu](mailto:jcoggds@gmuedu).



[Read More](#)

**Mason News**

 **Alessandra Luchini honored by SCHEV with Outstanding Faculty Award**

George Mason University’s Alessandra Luchini is among the 12 educators statewide set to be formally recognized by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) with a 2023 Outstanding Faculty Award.

[Read More](#)

 **Northern Virginia Magazine highlights Mason’s Forensic Science program**

Mason Science’s Forensic Science Program is making headlines as a leader in forensic education. Northern Virginia Magazine spoke to several of the program’s scientists including Assistant Professor Kelly Knight, Director Mary Ellen O’Toole, and Associate Professor Joseph DiZinno, as well as graduate student Maddie Bowers.

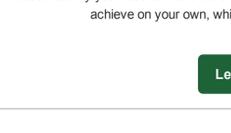
[Read More](#)

 **A Biofilm Epic in the Making**

There are a lot of ways to cut film, as many cinemas and directors can attest. But biofilms—including single skin—can contain harmful bacteria and get in the way of healing wounds.

Assistant Professors Jeffrey Moran in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Rami Veneziano in the Department of Bioengineering at George Mason have a shared interest in using nanotechnology for medical applications, as well as a shared history.

[Read More](#)

 **A greener, healthier future for Virginia**

An analysis recently released by the Virginia Climate Center is shedding a very positive light on the benefits of the Virginia Clean Economy Act. [Dr. Luis Ortiz](#), Assistant Professor, AOES spoke to WUSA9 about the team’s findings.

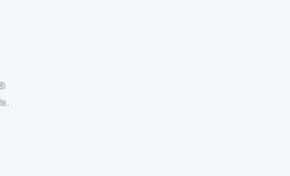
[Hear from Dr. Ortiz](#)

 **Mason scientist explains new clean energy breakthrough to MSNBC**

Dr. Hakeem Oluseyi, Robinson Professor, explains a new nuclear fusion breakthrough that greatly influences the future of clean energy. “This really is the holy grail of extracting energy from matter,” said Oluseyi.

[Watch the Segment](#)

**Announcements & Events**

 **Join us for an Evening Under the Stars!**

Join us for the next Evening Under the Stars for a public talk followed by telescope viewings, weather permitting.

For the foreseeable future, all Evening Under the Stars events will be held both in-person and **virtually**. All Evening Under the Stars events are free to attend, and do not require registration, but [donations](#) are always appreciated.

**Future Evening Under the Stars Events**

- February 21, 2023
- March 7, 2023
- March 21, 2023
- April 4, 2023
- May 2, 2023

**Alumni Career Design Fellowship**

 **George Mason University Alumni Career Design Fellowship**

30 day online program to find a more fulfilling career that fits you.

[GET STARTED TODAY](#)

- Clarity + direction
  - Define what you want
  - Discover working options
- Begins March 25
  - 80+ live Zoom webinars
  - 1:1 15-min career chat

George Mason University Alumni Association is working with the career design experts at [Mission Collaborative](#) to bring you the clarity and confidence you need to create a fulfilling career.

Whether you’re early, mid, or late-career, the Fellowship provides the structure and accountability you need to make the breakthrough progress you’ve been struggling to achieve on your own, while fitting into your busy schedule.

[Learn More](#)

To stay up-to-date on our events, you can follow our [calendar here](#).

[E-mail us](#) for more information.

If you have a question you’d like us to answer in a future newsletter, please write to us!

**Follow us on social media:**



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