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A message from the Dean

FERNANDO R. MIRALLES-WILHELM

Summertime Livin' at Mason Science – Super busy, not easy

by *Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm*

Everyone thinks summertime is when faculty and administrators get to take a break. (I'm sure all in higher education academia reading this just laughed out loud). Although that may be true for some K-12 teachers, and only a smaller fraction of students are taking our classes in the summer months, this assumption is far from the truth. In fact, we are having the busiest summer outreach season in my tenure as Mason Science dean and possibly in the history of our college. And there are many staff, faculty, and students pitching in to make these activities happen.

Of course, the extremely popular [Aspiring Scientist Summer Internship Program \(ASSIP\)](#) is occurring across a number of Mason's campuses. Our college leads this program, where a record 200+ students and almost 100 mentors connect to perform impactful research, learn about science educational, career, and innovation opportunities. The Pathways to Quantum camp, this year a weeklong residential offering, provided high school students from more than seven area high schools the opportunity to tour quantum labs on three area campuses, including the [Quantum Science and Engineering Center \(QSEC\)](#) at Mason, and sessions with Mason Science partners, MITRE and NASA. Registration for this year's high-demand [Females of Color and those Underrepresented in STEM \(FOCUS\)](#) camps was filled to capacity within moments of opening to the public. And our annual [STEM Bridge Camp](#) coordinated by the Mason Science STEM Accelerator, this year expanded to a two week residential effort to help orient incoming Mason first years to fundamental science academic and research expectations while meeting new friends and our Mason Science faculty.

[Read full message](#)

MASON SCIENCE COMMUNITY

Mason Science Series highlights the work of Mason's Virginia Climate Center

On June 28, George Mason University College of Science Dean [Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm](#), U.S. Representative Gerry Connolly, and [James Kinter](#), director of Mason's [Center for Ocean-Land-Atmosphere Studies](#), discussed how



the Virginia Climate Center is helping communities increase resilience to the impacts of climate change.

[More on the event](#)



#FacultyFriday spotlights microbiology lab leaders

Last week's #FacultyFriday highlighted Microbiology Lab leaders, [Elisabeth Epstein](#) and [Bonnie Madden](#). These two are currently investigating the capacity for interspecies crosstalk by natural microbial communities using quorum-regulated bioluminescence of *Vibrio campbellii* and other screening methods. They also work together in Microbial Diversity (Biology 407), an ever-evolving course that gives

undergraduates the opportunity for hands-on exploration of microbes from the environment (often with unpredictable results). [View the original Instagram post.](#)

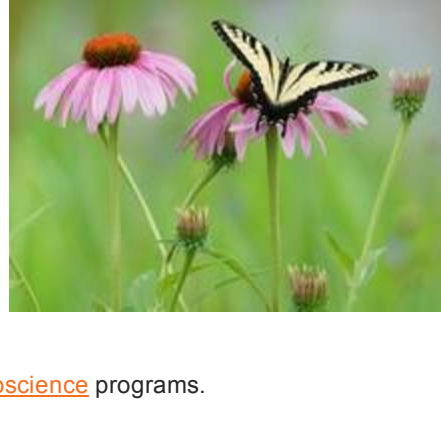
[See recent faculty highlights](#)

RESEARCH & DISCOVERY

Bugs, insects, and invertebrates of the Mason Nation

by *Lauren Reuscher*

The Marvel universe isn't the only place where insects and other invertebrates have superpowers. Mason faculty, staff, and students are studying and explaining the many roles these creatures play on our planet, learning more about a bug's life—and the big world surrounding them—every step of the way. Here's a recap of some of those stories which includes the Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation as well as Mason's [forensic science](#) and [neuroscience](#) programs.



[View full stories recap](#)

IN THE NEWS

Forensics uses drone technology to train students

In 2020, Mason Science's Forensic Science Program unveiled its new Research and Training Laboratory that became the eighth location in the world capable of performing transformative outdoor research in forensic science using human donors. Now, the lab is once again receiving attention for its use of diverse technologies to solve crimes. Check out stories by [WLSL 10](#), [News4JAX](#), and [Newsbreak](#).



Mason Science student among volunteers at dig site of unearthed dinosaur bones

Mason Science [geology](#) student Madison Mateo spoke to the associated press on her experience with Prince George's County's Dinosaur Park after helping unearth a bone belonging to an apex predator of the early



Cretaceous Period. The story was later picked up by the [Caledonian Record](#) (New Hampshire and Vermont news), [Phys.org](#), and the [Killeen Daily Herald](#) (Texas). *Photo by Ryo Tanaka on Unsplash.*

Happening at Mason

U.S. Air Force and George Mason University partner to modernize warfighter mission training, education and research

U.S. Air Forces Central (AFCENT) formalized a partnership with George Mason University for joint research, rapid capability development, warfighter training, and education to support the mission readiness of the Ninth Air Force. The Educational Partner Agreement (EPA) was signed on July 14, 2023, at Mason's Fairfax Campus by Mason Provost Mark Ginsberg and Lieutenant General Alexis Grynkeiwich, Commander, Ninth Air Force. *Photo by William Gallagher/Powell Media Concepts.*



[More on the partnership](#)

Events

STEM Bridge Camp

July 24 to August 4, 2023

This is a newly revamped residential two-week camp that meets in person on the Fairfax, VA campus, incoming first-year students will experience science courses and the college lifestyle before the fall semester. Students will also get specific and daily guidance in mathematics.

VALHEN Hispanic STEM Academy

July 26 to July 28, 2023

George Mason University is partnering with the Virginia Latino Higher Education Network (VALHEN) to proudly offer the VALHEN Hispanic STEM Academy designed for rising Virginia high school sophomores and juniors from Hispanic/Latine and other underserved communities.

Females of Color and those Underrepresented in STEM (FOCUS)

July 31 to August 4, 2023

The FOCUS camp for middle school students is a week-long camp where participants engage in four different interactive and hands-on STEM workshops and, on the last day, present what they learned in these workshops in a conference-style setting.

Math Boot Camp

July 31 to August 4, 2023 9 a.m. to 12 noon, Fairfax campus

With a goal to improve math placement scores and prepare for math coursework, Mason math professors, graduate students, and undergraduate learning assistants will provide guidance and support to incoming Mason students sorted into groups based on skill level. On the first day (if needed) and last day of the half-day camp, students will have the opportunity to take the math placement test.

Save the date: mark your syllabus for ScienceConnect 2023

September 12, 2023 | 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. | Fairfax Campus

September 14, 2023 | 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. | SciTech Campus

Encourage your students to attend. Meet Mason Science students while discussing your programs and sharing research and professional opportunities with free food and chances to win Mason Science SWAG.

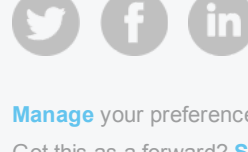
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