

THE (PETRI) DISH

Faculty of Science Newsletter



The Faculty of Science's first interdisciplinary conference will take place April 8-10. Science alumna Dr. **Janice Fitzgerald**, Chief Medical Officer of Health; and **Karl Kenny**, president/CEO, Kraken Robotics, will be keynote speakers. Awards for undergraduate, graduate and post-doctoral fellow presentations are available. Visit our [website](#) for details.

In the News

Dr. Mykhaylo Evstigneev, Physics and Physical Oceanography, is quoted in this article about a Ukraine solidarity rally held recently in St. John's. [CBC](#)

Dr. **Annie Mercier**, Ocean Sciences, lends her expertise to this article about the Bay du Nord drilling project. [Radio Canada](#)

Marine bird expert **Dr. Bill Montevecchi** says wildlife is at risk after a cargo ship spilled 30,000 litres of an oil-water mixture into the ocean off Newfoundland. [CBC](#)

Dr. **Uta Passow**, Ocean Sciences, was featured in German and French television for her work on the biological carbon pump. [ARTE.tv](#)

The work of Dr. **Amy Hurford**, Math & Stats/Biology, on COVID-19 modelling was featured in this article. [CTV News](#)

Physics and Physical Oceanography alumna, **Anna O'Grady**, now a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto, is featured in this video. [Dunlap Institute](#)

NEW FACULTY

Dr. Chris Quinn-Nilas, Psychology
Dr. Alex Shestopaloff, Math & Stats

NEW STAFF

Anju Anand, Psychology
Tristan Critch, Psychology

BIRTHS

A boy, Robbie McIlroy to Allison Eaton and Dr. **Duncan McIlroy**, Earth Sciences

PASSINGS

Dr. **Chung Won Cho**, Physics and Physical Oceanography



DEAN'S MESSAGE

We are on the other side of reading break with only five weeks left of classes, and hopefully less of our so-called “winter.”

It has been an interesting semester—one that was supposed to be more normal—but we all did what was necessary to make a last-minute pivot to remote learning, then transition back to mostly in-person teaching and learning.

With the dropping of COVID-19 mandates by the province in a week, it is important to realize that, out of an abundance of caution, the university has announced that it will keep mask and vaccine mandates in place until at least into April. This will help to ensure the successful completion of the winter semester.

Thank you to all faculty, teaching and administrative staff, TAs, and students, for your flexibility and your significant and successful efforts in the continuity of teaching, learning and research. As you can see from this issue of the Petri Dish, the people that make up the Faculty of Science have kept busy through the winter months with successful grants applications, winning awards, and public outreach through the media. I urge you to click on the links to learn more about what your colleagues are up to.

I also am very much looking forward to our first annual Scientific Endeavours in Academia conference which will bring together all of the disciplines and sub-disciplines in the Faculty of Science. I look forward to our docket of keynote and highlighted faculty speakers, but especially the presentations from our graduate and undergraduate students.

STUDENT AWARDS

Umanath Sharma, Biology - Jacqueline Sheppard and Randell Pardy Innovation Award, School of Graduate Studies

GSU Graduate Student of the Week

Saman Bazmi, Physics and Physical Oceanography (Feb. 28)

Nhan Duy Pham, Chemistry (Jan. 17)

Md. Ahmed Hossain, Marine Biology (Dec. 14)

Umanath Sharma, Biology (Nov. 30)

Arshad Ali Shaikh, Biology (Oct. 25)

Abul Hossain, Biochemistry (Oct. 18)

Behzad Sadri, Physics and Physical Oceanography (Aug. 30)

Program Completion

Sean Hacker Teper - M.Sc. (Marine Biology)

Nigel Guerra - M.Sc. (Marine Biology)

Sindy Dove - M.Sc. (Marine Biology)

FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Brent Snook, Psychology, has been named University Research Professor.

Dr. Eric Vander Wal, Biology, has received the 2021 President's Award for Outstanding Research.

Dr. Bill Montevecchi, Psychology, is our newest Honorary Research Professor.

Dr. Sukhinder Cheema, Biochemistry, is leading one of the eight work-packages in Memorial's [recently announced](#) \$15M New Frontiers in Research grant. She will lead the health benefits work-package, bringing more than \$1.5M to the Faculty of Science's operating funds. Also involved in the project are Dr. Jacqueline Blundell, Psychology and Drs. Chris Parrish, Matt Rise and Javier Santander, all with Ocean Sciences.

EVENTS

Women in STEM: Celebrate, Connect & Collaborate

March 8 - International Women's Day

4:30 p.m. NST

[Event Link](#)

Women are still underrepresented in fields such as computing, engineering, mathematics and physics. Why and what can we do to address this gender imbalance? Learn about the challenges we still face and the many wonderful organizations working to encourage young women to obtain technical skills vital for the jobs of the future. Hosted by Jillian March (Grenfell Physics Major). Email sbarkanova@grenfell.mun.ca for info.

Ready, Set, Connect

Thursday, March 10, 1-2:45 p.m. via Webex

[Register](#) now.

A science career speed networking event. Get face time with organizations that hire or provide networking opportunities for various science backgrounds. Email jessica.whalen@mun.ca for info.

On the Menu - How Do I Find External Partners?

Wednesday, March 23, 12-1 p.m. via Webex.

[More info.](#)

Featuring Dr. Len Zedel, Physics & Physical Oceanography; Dr. Matthew Hamilton, Computer Science and Dr. Stephen Piercey, Earth Sciences. Also including representatives from Research Grants and Contract Services, Technology Transfer and Commercialization Office and Mitacs. Hosted by the Faculty of Science grants team.

In the Gazette

Exceptional researchers in the Faculty of Science have been recognized by Memorial's president, Dr. Vianne Timmons. [Read](#)

Why is Ocean Sciences graduate student Bill Bigelow interested in a terrestrial animal in the Bahamas? [Read](#)

Three new course-based, master's programs offered at Memorial University will help meet growing demand across technology sectors in the province. [Read](#) and [Read](#) (two articles)

An investment of more than \$345,000 for specialized tools and high-tech equipment will transform cutting-edge projects led by two early-career researchers, including Dr. Lindsay Cahill, Chemistry. [Read](#)

A trio of graduate researchers, including Samlau Kutana, Psychology, have received funding for cancer research from the Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute. [Read](#)

Dr. Chris Quinn-Nilas, Psychology is studying the impacts of mindfulness and self-compassion on relationships. [Read](#)

On the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, The Gazette profiled a number of women scientists at Memorial, including Sara Jobson and Mary Clinton, both PhD candidates in Marine Biology. [Read](#)

Dr. Sue Ziegler, Earth Sciences, has joined an expert panel working towards determining if and how ecological carbon sinks can help Canada meet its greenhouse gas emission commitments. [Read](#)

Lifelong gamer, Dr. David Churchill, Computer Science, used his livestreaming experience to create a rich and engaging online learning environment when the pandemic struck. [Read](#)

A total of 69 current and past Memorial faculty, including those from Science, are included on the World's Top 2% Scientists list. [Read](#)

More than 50 graduate students, including those from the Faculty of Science, are sharing more than \$1.9 million in funding from the federal government. [Read](#)

A novel study led by Dr. Craig Purchase, Biology, has revealed aging might not be inevitable. [Read](#)

Memorial and a consortium of university-affiliated and community-affiliated researchers from Mi'kmaw communities across Newfoundland have been awarded nearly \$15 million through the federal New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF). [Read](#)