

THE (PETRI) DISH

Faculty of Science Newsletter



The move to the new Core Science Facility has begun! In this photo boxes of glassware and equipment line the side of the new Chemistry teaching lab.

In the News

Can't remember that movie you just watched? Dr. **Kathleen Hourihan**, Psychology, lends her expertise to this story that explains why. [Jioforme](#)

Dr. **Scott Harding**, Biochemistry, talks about the salt and sugar hidden in our foods. [Saltwire](#)

Dr. **Eric Vander Wal**, Biology, discusses the reasons a female moose might bring her young family to the same St. Anthony home each summer. [Saltwire](#)

Yes, men CAN experience pregnancy symptoms - featuring the research of Psychology professor emerita, Dr. **Anne Story**. [The Citizen](#)

Dr. **Amanda Bates**, Ocean Sciences, speaks with The Current on how the pandemic has impacted nature. [The Current](#)

Dr. **Uta Passow**, Ocean Sciences, weighs in on sea snot. [Atlas Obscura](#)

Psychology's Dr. **Sheila Garland** on how the effects of cancer can impact your sleep. [CBC's Cross Talk](#)

Moose pellets are 'brown gold' for Biology student **Makayla Swain**. [CBCNL](#)

Dr. **Lev Tarasov**, Physics, says while melting in Greenland may bring an influx of icebergs in the near future, we may eventually stop seeing them altogether. [CBCNL](#)

Dr. **Luise Hermanutz**, Biology, talks about the impact of climate change in Nunatsiavut. [CBCNL](#)

Dr. **Fran Kerton**, Chemistry, on the development for a process of making polyurethane plastic from fish waste. [Quirks and Quarks](#).



DEAN'S MESSAGE

As the fall semester approaches—only two months away—it looks more and more like we are pulling out of this pandemic and that our plans for a more normal semester with in-person learning will be a reality.

I had a tour of the Core Science Facility in June as construction nears an end and the University is set to take the keys. Departments are beginning to move in, starting with the teaching labs to ensure they are ready to accept students in September. I know we are all very excited to welcome students back to campus and into this new building.

The Dean's Office is excited to begin working on a new strategic plan to guide us through the next five years. As we begin preparations to consult with staff, students, and faculty, it is worth having a look at Memorial's new strategic plan, [Transforming our Horizons](#), which will act as a guide for our strategic planning process.

Finally, I hope everyone has a chance to relax and enjoy the Canada Day holiday. Our country's history has some very dark moments and we should also take this time to learn about and reflect on the atrocious actions taken against Indigenous Peoples, such as the residential school abuses, as one small step toward reconciliation.

In the News (continued)

Dr. **Bill Montevecchi**, Psychology, answers a question about the impacts of tagging on animal and bird behaviour. [Quirks and Quarks](#)

Dr. **Tom Chapman**, Biology, is asked about swarms of March flies in central Newfoundland. [VOCM](#)



Much work is also happening outside the New Core Science Facility as staff from MUN Botanical Garden add the first plants. (Photo credit: Tim Walsh)

FACULTY NEWS

Dr. David Pike, Math & Stats, has been named a Fellow of the Canadian Mathematical Society. [Read](#)

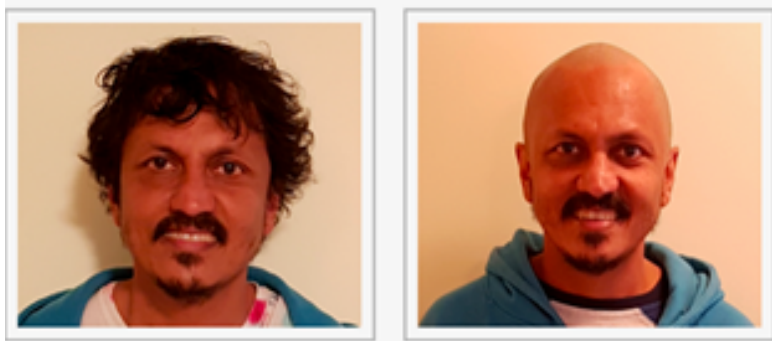
Rebecca Newhook, Co-op, is winner of the MindLeap Poetry Competition. [Read](#)

Dr. Christopher Lively, Psychology, is the inaugural recipient of the Graduate Psychology Society Award in Academic Excellence.

Dr. Ian Fleming, Ocean Sciences, has been named a School of Graduate Studies ROCKStar Supervisor

Dr. Joshua Rash, Psychology, is the recipient of the Canadian Psychological Association President's New Researcher Award. [Read](#)

Dr. Jie Xiao, Math & Stats, is contact organizer for MCA2021 - Special Session: Geometric Potential Analysis. [Read](#)



Dr. Anand Yethiraj, Physics, is sporting a new look after participating in Shave for the Brave. The decision was inspired by a friend of Dr. Yethiraj's son and honours his spouse and a graduate student, both of whom are cancer survivors.



Have you missed any of our On the Menu presentations? You can find recordings of past sessions [here](#).

STUDENT AWARDS

Dr. Amrita Ghosh, Biology, Chancellor's Graduate Award/Fry Family Foundation Graduate Leadership Award.

Tegan Padgett, Biology - Weresub Award in Fungal Biology from the Canadian Botanical Association.

Maria Esther Nieto-Blazquez, Biology - Porsild-Consaul Award in Plant Systematics and Phytogeography, Canadian Botanical Association.

Juliana Vidal, Chemistry, Atlantic Biorefinery Conference Graduate Student Poster Competition.

Reilly Smith, Biochemistry, Governor General's Medal, Captain Robert A. Bartlett Science Award.

Renan Danielski, Biochemistry, R.L. Jacobs Graduate Research Award

Marzana Monefa, Biochemistry, represented the university at the Canadian Eastern Regional 3MT competition.

Fellows of the School of Graduate Studies

Emilie Gessinger, Catherine Little, Anne McLeod, Purvikalyan Pallegar, Biology

Timothy Anderson, Aliasghar Golbabanezhadazizi, Hui Hang, Abanoub Mikhael, Chemistry

Alaa Alhowaide, Lian He, Mohammed Abdullhak, Mustafa Yalin Aydin, Shawn Sabraw, Computer Science

Venketesh Thrithamara Ranganathan, Razyeh Behbahani, Physics

Marie Wasef, Psychology

Jenna McDermott, Quinn Webber, Cognitive and Behavioural Ecology

Francisco Cuesta-Valero, Sonal Desai, Mostafa El Halimi, Almudena Garcia-Garcia, Kelly Young, Environmental Science.

Biology Graduate Student Symposium Winners

Sydney Collins, Cognitive and Behavioural Ecology, Best M.Sc. Oral Presentation

Joanie Kennah, Biology, runner up

Gustavo Díaz-Cruz, Biology, Best PhD Oral Presentation

Emilie Geissinger, Biology, runner up

Carlissa Salant, Ocean Science, Best Poster Presentation

Joanie Kennah, Biology, Joe Brown Award for Excellence in Science Communication

Program Completion

Samantha Crowley, Marine Biology, M.Sc.

In the Gazette

Memorial continues to be recognized among the best global post-secondary institutions for a variety of subjects including oceanography, mathematics, earth sciences, geography, ecology, food science and technology, computer science and engineering, environmental science and engineering and psychology. [Read](#)

Drs. **Alex Bihlo** and **John Jamieson** have been renewed as tier 2 Canada Research Chairs. [Read](#)

Researchers in the Faculty of Science are among those benefitting from significant funding from the Government of Canada. [Read](#)

A new study involving 15 international research institutes and led by Dr. **Brad de Young**, Physics, casts doubt on how ocean currents operate and their role in the climate system. [Read](#)

Dr. **Carole Peterson**, Psychology, has concluded the average age of a person's earliest memory is two-and-a-half. [Read](#)

A global group of researchers, headed by Dr. **Amanda Bates**, Ocean Sciences, and including graduate students **Brandy Biggar**, **Mary Clinton**, **Cerren Richards** and **Rylan Command**, studied the halt to normal human activity caused by the pandemic to determine its impacts on animals and the environment. [Read](#)

Amanda Parsons's mental illness presented as 'ferocious' at times over the eight years she was completing a bachelor of science in Chemistry. Now that she's finished, she has advice for others. [Read](#).

A pair of undergraduate Science students, **Willa Neilsen** and **Morgan Davidson**, are looking for volunteers to join a project examining food prices in Newfoundland and Labrador. [Read](#)

Mostafa El Halimi, Environmental Science, enjoyed his first master's degree at Memorial so much he stayed for another one. [Read](#)

Blake Colbran is the 2019 recipient of the Joyce Foundation Bursary at Memorial University. He hopes to major in behavioural neuroscience. [Read](#)

Dr. **Mike Katz**, Chemistry, has been awarded \$655,900 for a proof-of-concept project that would see metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) used to separate carbon dioxide (CO₂) from offshore oil and gas exhaust streams. [Read](#)

ALUMNI NEWS

Earth Sciences alumnus, Dr. **Donald Dingwell** has been named to the Royal Society of London. [Read](#)

St. John's-based disinfectant maker Polyamyna Nanotech has inked a deal with Eastern Health to run clinical trials of its product once it receives Health Canada approval. Polyamyna is led by co-founder, CEO and Chemistry alumnus, Dr. **Ramesh Kumar Mani**. [Read](#)

Chemistry alumnus, Dr. **Ernest Awoonor-Williams** has begun a Novartis Discovery Postdoctoral Fellowship at Cambridge, Mass.

Psychology alumnus **Brad Yetman** has been named head coach of the Huskies de Rouyn-Noranda, a Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. He's the first Newfoundlander and Labradorian to become head coach in QMJL history.

Chemistry alumnus Dr. **Samuel Mungo** is winner of the 2021 Distinguished Research Award at MacEwan University.

Biology alumnus Dr. **Alex Bond**, curator in charge of birds at the Natural History Museum in London, explains how birds sleep while flying in this video for World Migratory Bird Day. [Watch](#)

New issue of *Prescience*



APPOINTMENTS

Dr. **Suzanne Dufour**, Acting Associate Dean, Undergrad & Admin

RETIREMENTS

Eleanor Penney, Geological Association of Canada, Earth Sciences

Dr. **Ross McGowan**, Biochemistry

Dr. **David Heeley**, Biochemistry

Cathy Antle, Biology

Sally Goddard, Biology

Margaret Caldwell, Biology

NEW STAFF

Melanie Fitzpatrick, Dean's Office

Dr. **Jenn Major**, Dean's Office

Phillip MacCallum, Dean's Office

Yuting (Phoebe) Li, Biochemistry

NEW FACULTY

Dr. **Pavan Kakumani**, Biochemistry