

**From:** [Office of the Provost](#)  
**To:** [STAFF-CLASSIFIED-AA-L@LISTSERV.JMU.EDU](mailto:STAFF-CLASSIFIED-AA-L@LISTSERV.JMU.EDU)  
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Dear Colleagues,

It seems September has come and gone in a blink, and we're nearing the midpoint of the semester – I'm not sure how so much time has passed so fast! I did get the chance to attend the [Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering and Mathematics conference](#) on AI this week. It was fascinating to hear from scholars from a variety of different fields exploring different aspects of AI. I'm looking forward to wrapping up the week at the 2025 Madison Celebration of Research and Scholarship this afternoon, hosted by our friends in [Research, Economic Development and Innovation](#) (REDI), recognizing our colleagues' research and scholarship. One of the many things I appreciate about JMU is the opportunity to learn about the innovative research happening all over campus.

There are, once again, many examples of your research and involvement to highlight. I hope you enjoy them and enjoy the upcoming weekend.

Ŷ Looking for some new ideas to liven up classes for the second half of the semester?

Dr. [Viki Kelchner](#), associate professor in the Department of Graduate Psychology's Counseling & Supervision program, co-published "[High Five to Thrive: 5 Proven Practices to Unleash Your Passion for Teaching](#)" with colleagues Drs. Donita Grissom and Debbie Simoes with [Soro Publishing](#). The text was recommended in [Education Week's Savvy Principal's Book Club](#).

Ŷ Dr. [Kara Dillard](#), director of the Civic Leadership minor and executive director of the Madison Center for Civic Engagement; Dr. [Maryam Sharifian](#), associate professor of Education and executive director of JMU CARE, and Dr. [Abigail Amoako Kayser](#), associate professor of Education, were [awarded a \\$2.1 million U.S. Department of Education grant](#) to support training K-12 students and teachers in civic discourse skills for deliberation about America's 250th commemoration. The grant builds on the strength of the Madison Center's nationally recognized [work in civic discourse](#) and [JMU CARE's](#) strength in education development assessment. The grant will be highlighted this spring during JMU's kickoff to the [VA250 celebrations](#).

Ŷ Dr. [Elena Savina](#), professor in the Department of Graduate Psychology, recently published an innovative new curriculum she co-authored with C-I program alumnae Drs. Jennifer Moran, Christina Beaton and Emily Pogue. [Empowered to Flourish: A Curriculum Promoting Well-Being and Resilience in Adolescent Girls](#) (Research Press) fosters adolescent girls' self-awareness, healthy use of social media, positive sense of identity, healthy lifestyle, positive body image, adaptive emotion regulation and self-confidence.

Ŷ Congratulations to Dr. [Dayna Henry](#), Assistant Director of the Center for Faculty

Innovation's Scholarship Area and associate professor of Health Sciences for a recent recognition. She received the 2025 [Distinguished Service to SSSS Award](#) from the [Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality](#) (SSSS). The award is given annually to recognize a member's outstanding service to the organization.

Y Associate director for Research and Public Health in the Institute for Innovation in Health and Human Services Dr. [Suzanne Grossman](#) was recently published in [Public Library Quarterly](#). The article, "[Connecting the Public Library with Immigrant-Serving Community-Based Organizations in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley Region](#)," focuses on her research related to the role of libraries in supporting immigrant communities. This study used semi-structured interviews with staff from immigrant-serving community organizations and the public library in a small city in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley region. Findings indicated that public libraries have significant opportunities to strengthen their engagement with community organizations to better understand and address the needs of their immigrant residents.

I know our faculty and staff have many more achievements to share and want to get the word out! Send updates and highlights to [provost@jmu.edu](mailto:provost@jmu.edu).

Sincerely,

Bob

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