From: Office of the Provost

STAFF-CLASSIFIED-AA-L@LISTSERV.JMU.EDU To:

Subject: Academic Affairs Highlights

Date: Friday, October 31, 2025 2:51:40 PM

Dear Colleagues,

Somehow October has raced by – I hope you have a chance to enjoy some Halloween festivities. Having grown up in a place where our costumes often had to go over our coats, I've always had just a small bit of envy for trick or treating in the Valley.

I had a chance to host a number of provosts from Virginia schools this week. It was intriguing to see we're all talking about and working on very similar issues, and I think there are more opportunities for us to productively collaborate. It was a pleasure to share (and show off) some of what we do here at JMU. On to this week's highlights – see you in November!

- Learning isn't limited to the classroom! Matt Trybus, coordinator of Peer Assisted Study Sessions, recently presented "Trailblazing Success: Peer Coaches at the Frontier of a New Learning Center Initiative" at the International College Learning Center Association Conference, in tandem with a JMU student peer academic coach. Their session highlighted JMU's new Peer Academic Coaching (PAC) program, which fosters student self-efficacy, motivation, and flourishing through evidence-based, relationship-driven coaching. By centering students as partners in learning, the program models how peer leadership cultivates belonging, purpose, and holistic wellbeing, core elements of JMU's mission to prepare educated and enlightened citizens.
- Congratulations to Dr. Colleen Moore, associate professor in the Department of History, on the publication of her first monograph, "The Peasants' War: Russia's Home Front in the First World War and the End of the Autocracy," published by McGill-Queen's <u>University Press</u>. Based on research conducted in Russian archives now inaccessible to foreign scholars, the book investigates how peasants leveraged their wartime service to negotiate with the state for improved rights and privileges and how they used this power to shape the contours and legitimize the authority of the world's first socialist state.
- Last year, the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry was one of eight chemistry programs to be awarded a Jean Dreyfus Lectureship for Undergraduate Institutions. This grant supports chemistry research at JMU and provides funding to host a worldrenowned chemistry expert.

Now, the entire JMU community can benefit from the grant. Dr. Polly Arnold (OBE, FRS), a professor of chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley, and director of the Chemical Sciences Division at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, is globally recognized for her pioneering research in actinide and rare earth chemistry, which advances sustainable catalysis and the safe management of nuclear waste. She will be on campus next week to give talks and interact with our students. She'll also give a public talk, "Nuclear Now: Time to Look Again," on Monday, Nov. 3, at 5:30 p.m. at Court Square Theater.

- Prs. Tom Moran, Executive Director of Empowerment3, and Sara Snyder, associate professor of Educational Foundations and Exceptionalities, received a five-year Interdisciplinary Training Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The E3 Training Academy will recruit, educate, equip, and empower graduate scholars across the disciplines of physical education/adapted physical education, special education, and applied behavior analysis to improve services provided to students with disabilities/high intensity needs. In addition to their course work, those enrolled in the academic will engage in K-12 school and community-based apprenticeships, receive mentorship from parents of students with disabilities, and participate in an interdisciplinary learning community with educators and service providers across the commonwealth.
- Congratulations to Dr. Hilary Campbell and her team in the <u>College of Education</u> on their successful CAEP (<u>Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation</u>) Virtual Site Visit for Educator Preparation Provider <u>re-accreditation</u> this week. The program was reaccredited with no areas for improvement, and the review team praised their narratives and evidence as strong proof of quality and alignment with CAEP standards.

The team was impressed by the College of Education's involvement during the visit. The lead visitor initially expressed skepticism about the reliability of the large session attendance lists. Most sessions were fully attended, and the unusual level of commitment did not go unnoticed. The visitors were equally impressed by our students and praised JMU faculty and staff for prioritizing student success. Well done CoE!

Don't let the rest of the semester pass you by without submitting to provost@jmu.edu. Be sure to add highlights for your colleagues, too!

Sincerely,

Bob

Bob Kolvoord, Ph.D.
Professor and Interim Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs
James Madison University
(540) 568-3429
He/Him/His

To unsubscribe from the STAFF-CLASSIFIED-AA-L list, click the following link: http://listserv.jmu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=STAFF-CLASSIFIED-AA-L&A=1