



Serving Up Knowledge

Interested in the latest scientific advances and breakthroughs? Intrigued by cybersecurity, space exploration, or new medical approaches and therapies? Then take a seat at the new Galileo's Science Café, where hot topics like these, and many more, are discussed by Mason experts.

Once a month, on Thursdays from 7 to 8:30 p.m., a different speaker takes the stage at the Hylton Performing Arts Center on Mason's Science and Technology Campus. Presenters talk about the latest findings in science and medicine that affect our everyday lives, and hold personal discussions with audience members afterward.

On February 9, electrical and computer engineering professor Jim Jones will discuss "Cybersecurity: Sifting through Digital Trash for Fun, Profit, and to Catch the Bad Guys." Jones will explain how the digital traces humans leave behind on computers, thumb drives, and smartphones, and even devices we're unaware of such as networks and surveillance cameras, can help scientists nab criminals.

And on March 2, Professor Mike Summers, a leading planetary scientist who's part of NASA's New Horizons team, will talk about the spacecraft that made an amazingly close flyby of Pluto last July while the whole world watched. New Horizons successfully returned astonishing observations and images of Pluto and its largest moon, Charon. These included an enormous glacier at Pluto's equator, and mysterious "halo craters" on its icy surface.

Other events include "A Geographic Analysis: Individual Decisions to Vaccinate Impact the Entire Community" by Paul Delamater on April 6, and "Nanotechnology: A New Approach to Conquering Lyme Disease" by Alessandra Luchini on May 4.

Sponsored by the College of Science's Center for Applied Proteomics and Molecular Medicine, the Science Café is free and open to all, but an RSVP is required. For more information, visit the center's website at capmm.gmu.edu.

—Cathy Cruise, MFA '93

MIXing It Up

Since its founding a year ago, the Mason Innovation Exchange (MIX) in Innovation Hall has provided students with access to cutting-edge technology for inventive exploration without the pressures of a classroom setting. At the MIX Lab, students have the opportunity to make whatever they can think up using 3-D printers,

programmable microcontroller boards, credit card-sized microcomputers, virtual reality headsets, DIY electronic wearables, and so much more.

"We are a completely free and open resource to students who are interested in making things," says **Jade Garrett**, BS Applied Information Technology '15, director of the MIX Lab and a current graduate student. "You don't have to be in a class, and we appreciate students from all departments and backgrounds to come in and share what they are doing."

By providing George Mason students with all these technological resources in a low-stress environment, Garrett helps students create prototypes of inventions that have the potential to change the world around them. Throughout the year, the MIX Lab hosts Maker Challenges to support friendly competition among students and to foster the development of team communications in research and discovery.

Delving into 3-D printing or programming may seem daunting at first, but student staffers are available in the lab to assist newcomers every step of the way. This holistic approach to learning allows students to learn through hands-on discovery rather than books or lectures.

You can view many of these projects in person by stopping by the MIX Lab in Innovation Hall, Room 318. Introductory workshops are also available. For more information, check out the lab's Facebook page at facebook.com/GMUMIX.

—Arthur Wesley

