



JMU Research, Scholarship & Creative Endeavors

Volume 5, Issue 6

Thank you for taking time out of your day to peruse another issue of the *Research, Scholarship & Creative Endeavors* newsletter. As a reminder, you can view faculty and student highlights from any of the previous 30 issues by visiting our [newsletter page](#) on the R&S website.

COVID-19 UPDATE: After a transition to remote learning for four weeks to de-densify campus, JMU will resume a mix of hybrid, in-person, and online instruction on October 5th. Please visit the [Stop The Spread website](#) to stay informed of the latest COVID-19 operational updates.

We'd like to recognize the incredible work of the JMU faculty and staff, who continue to deliver a world-class educational experience and safe learning environment for students. Also, we again send our thanks and appreciation to all of the workers keeping America running during the pandemic, including JMU alumna Clair Blacketer, associate director and epidemiologist at Janssen, who is [leading an international charge](#) to ensure that researchers and health officials have reliable data to fight COVID-19.

Please join the Office of Research & Scholarship in welcoming Nick Swayne (executive director of 4-VA and director of JMU X-Labs), Debbie Perrone (director of strategic research support), and Meredith Malburne-Wade (director of fellowship advising) to the R&S team! Brief bios for Nick, Debbie, and Meredith are at the end of this issue. Additionally, R&S recently moved offices to Foundation Hall at 1031 Harrison Street. Our new location is about a tenth of a mile south of the Forbes Center for the Performing Arts.

ISSUE UPDATE: Do you recall our earlier issues highlighting George Vidal's NIH grant ([vol. 5, iss. 5](#)) and Ray Enke and Oliver Hyman's Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CURE) funding award and workshops ([vol. 5, iss. 4](#) and [vol. 4, iss. 2](#))? [4-VA](#), a collaborative partnership among eight Virginia universities, provided critical early stage funding and support for these efforts and many others, enabling faculty to demonstrate capacity and compete for funding awards from national agencies. The function of 4-VA is to put ideas into action—inviting innovative collaboration across disciplinary boundaries, among Virginia universities, and between educational and business sectors while achieving the following 4 initiatives: Collaborative Research, Course Redesign, Course Sharing, and Degree Completion.

Office of Research & Scholarship
James Madison University



Fri. Sept. 11 | 2pm EST
Diamond Forde



Fri. Sept. 25 | 2pm EST
Avery Young



Fri. Oct. 9 | 2pm EST
Gabriel Ramirez

Fri. Oct. 23 | 2pm EST
Chet'la Sebree



Fri. Nov. 6 | 2pm EST
Cedric Tillman



Fri. Nov. 20 | 2pm EST
Rachel Eliza Griffiths



Don't miss the remaining poets participating in the Facebook Live Reading Series hosted by [Furious Flower Poetry Center](http://FuriousFlowerPoetryCenter), the nation's first academic center for Black poetry. The series is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Faculty Grant Awards

For a monthly listing of recent faculty grant awards, please [visit the JMU Office of Sponsored Programs website](#). Here are some notable awards from June and July 2020:

Lauren K. Alleyne (Furious Flower Poetry Center) received \$10,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts to support the FFPC's Annual Reading Series.

Kim Hartzler-Weakley (Institute for Innovation in Health & Human Services) received \$956,669 from the HHS Office of Population Affairs to replicate evidence-based sexual health education and positive youth development programs in order to significantly reduce the number of teen pregnancies in the Appalachian region of Virginia.

Jonathan J. Miles (School of Integrated Sciences) received \$17,673 from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory to support the implementation and operation of the Wind for Schools organization, initially focusing on updating and supporting the national Wind for Schools organization in the 12 active states.

John R. Peterson (School of Music) received \$1,250 from George Mason University to expand an existing music theory textbook, *Open Music Theory*, by significantly augmenting the chapters dealing with form and harmony in tonal music.

Daniel L. Robinson and David H. Ehrenpreis (Institute for Creative Inquiry) received \$4,000 from the Virginia Commission for the Arts to capture and communicate the complexity of the immigrant and refugee experience in Harrisonburg.

Erika M. Sawin (School of Nursing) was awarded \$78,571 from the Health Resources and Services Administration to distribute telehealth patient care kits to patients of the Page

County Rural Health Clinics, and to the six shelters served by the Suitcase Clinic in order to prevent new cases of COVID-19 by increasing access to telehealth services, reducing risk for vulnerable patients who will no longer have to enter the clinic environment.

Maryam S. Sharifian (Department of Early, Elementary, & Reading Education) received \$100,013 from the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation to address barriers of quality preschool education within community-based settings, develop shared curriculum and assessment, and enhance teacher qualifications through individualized professional development plans.

Joshua R. Streeter (School of Theatre & Dance) received \$3,600 from the Virginia Commission for the Arts to support two summer institutes focused on integrating theatre and drama pedagogy within the curriculum for both elementary and secondary teachers.

William C. Wood (Center for Economic Education) received \$88,615 from Shenandoah Valley Economic Education, Inc. to continue a partnership with SVEE to strengthen the Center for Economic Education's outreach to teachers in the local school systems, and build closer ties with the business community.

Nathan T. Wright (Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry) received \$665,656 from the National Science Foundation to test and model obscurin's role as a mechanotransducer.

Grace A. Wyngaard (Department of Biology) was awarded \$167,939 from the National Science Foundation to explain the origin and/or adaptive or nonadaptive persistence of DNA elimination vary according to the discipline (e.g., molecular evolution, developmental biology, population biology, ecology) in which the research is conducted.

JMU Industrial Hemp Program Secures State Funding



Faculty from engineering, management, and Research & Scholarship received a GO Virginia grant in support of [advancing industrial hemp research and business opportunities](#) in the Shenandoah Valley. The award will fund an economic landscape analysis, outreach to collect and better understand the experiences of hemp growers and processors, and the establishment of a network and info sharing portal to connect hemp researchers with practitioners.

JMU Earns National Rural Innovation Recognition and Collaborates on \$1 Million Grant

Step 1: Review your "Now" tasks copied below. Add any other tasks you need to do **now**.

Step 2: Add any granular tasks that need to get done to implement your "Now" tasks. Write one task per sticky.

Step 3: Complete the Eisenhower Matrix with the tasks from the box in step 2 (cc)

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Mary Lou Bourne (top right) participates on a Zoom call with colleagues from the Center on Rural Innovation and the Staunton Creative Community Fund.

Research & Scholarship caught up with team member Mary Lou Bourne, director of James Madison University’s Office of Technology Innovation & Economic Development (TI-ED) and executive director of James Madison Innovations, Inc., to learn about her efforts to promote a regional approach toward growing the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Valley.

Mary Lou and a team of economic development professionals developed, submitted, and received a grant award from GO Virginia, a statewide economic development initiative that encourages collaboration between industry, education, and government to create high-paying jobs and grow private sector investment in the Commonwealth. According to a press release from the lead partner -- the Staunton Creative Community Fund -- the Startup Shenandoah Valley project will “fund virtual acceleration programming, infrastructure buildout, and ecosystem builders across the region for an investment total of over \$1 million.”

[Read the full story](#)

In related economic development news, JMU computer science alumnus Chiedo John was recently appointed by Governor Northam to serve on the Virginia Innovation Partnership Authority (VIPA). According to a press release, VIPA will support “research, development, and commercialization, as well as investment and seed-stage funding to help entrepreneurs launch and grow technology companies.”

English Professor Awarded NEH Grant



From University Communications:

Mark Rankin (pictured above), professor of English, [has received a \\$159,005 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities](#) (NEH) to direct a 2021 Summer Seminar for higher education faculty. Rankin will direct a seminar on "Printing and the Book During the Reformation: 1450–1650" in which participants will study the ways in which books were re-formed, or adapted, in response to this turbulent era of religious, intellectual, literary and cultural change. Discussing the contemporary significance of this topic, Rankin notes: "The study of books as material objects, and of the relationship between their physical form and their contents, is extremely timely given the recent shift to digital forms of communication."

Additional CAL Faculty Scholarship Highlights

Besi Muhonja, professor of English and coordinator of the African, African American, and Diaspora Studies program [published her latest book](#) this past June --*Radical Utu: Critical Ideas and Ideals of Wangari Muta Maathai*.

Associate professor of history, Rebecca Brannon, [authored a perspective piece](#) in the *Washington Post* just in time for the 2020 U.S. presidential election -- "Even George Washington faced questions about his age and mental fitness".

Dennis Blanton, an associate professor of anthropology, was [quoted in a New York Times story](#) earlier this month – "Roanoke's 'Lost Colony' Was Never Lost, New Book Says".

VDOE TTAC @ JMU Receives Funding for Early Childhood Educators and School-based Therapists

Housed in the JMU College of Education, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Region 5 [Training and Technical Assistance Center](#) (TTAC) recently received two funding awards to support professional development activities for early childhood educators and school-based therapists.

An \$8,116.00 award from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association supports coordination with the Virginia Department of Education to offer training and/or funding to enhance professional development for therapists in the fields of speech-language pathology and both occupational and physical therapy. TTAC also assists with the procurement of training materials and physical locations for workshops, which are now operating in a virtual environment due to the pandemic.

The second award, a \$3,815.00 addendum to an early childhood TTAC grant from VDOE, "supports professional development for early childhood educators as they work to increase the number and quality of early childhood inclusive classrooms in Virginia," explained Cheryl Henderson, Co-Director of the Region 5 TTAC at JMU.

TTAC is a VDOE grant-funded office working to provide professional development, consulting, and resources to public school personnel who work with students with disabilities in order to improve graduation rates and life success for students with disabilities. There are seven TTACs in the Commonwealth, and the JMU service area (region 5) assists 20 school divisions, five state operated programs, and six early intervention agencies. JMU has hosted an office since the launch of the program in 1978.

Art Professor Awarded Beck Faculty Fellowship

From CVPA Communications and Marketing:

Susan Zurbrigg, a professor of art and unit head for painting and drawing in the James Madison University School of Art, Design and Art History, has been selected by JMU's College of Visual and Performing Arts [as its first Beck Faculty Fellowship recipient](#).

The Fellowship was established by alumni Phillip ('73) and Christina Updike ('73) in memory of her parents, Paul and Lillieanna Beck, in support of SADAH, where Christina Updike earned a bachelor's in art with teaching certification and then worked as visual resources specialist for 38 years before retiring with the staff emerita designation in 2012.

Zurbrigg is project leader of the Harrisonburg Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) "[Changing the Narrative](#)" project funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Virginia Humanities to redress the cultural erasure of African Americans in the Shenandoah Valley. As part of the project, she led a youth workshop that showcased students' paintings about the black experience in a local exhibition and staged an art intervention with JMU students that memorialized Charlotte Harris, a black woman lynched by a white mob near Harrisonburg in 1878.

Featured on PBS - Integrated Sciences Professor Teaches Students the Importance of Gardening Skills



Amy Goodall (left) participates in an interview for PBS with Jan Sievers Mahon, director of the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum.

From University Communications:

Amy Goodall is an associate professor of integrated science and technology [whose teaching emphasizes the importance of Earth's biodiversity](#).

Whether you're growing flowers, vegetables or both, gardening provides a really good way to learn a variety of science concepts, said Amy Goodall, who has been building gardens at area elementary and middle schools the past several years.

"Something kids can do once they have a garden," Goodall said, "they can measure the plant growth every week, they can watch what happens when it rains or if there's a drought, they can do soil tests and see how deep the moisture goes into the soil."

Gardens also are good for learning about habitat and how to help create habitat for species. "They can do something really nice for the ecosystem, but also learn a lot of science," Goodall said.

[Watch Goodall's PBS appearance](#), which starts at the 27:18 mark.

CoB Learning Complex Nearing Completion



From *The Breeze*:

The complex is designed to be a [one-stop-shop for CoB students](#) and will feature renovated classrooms, plenty of indoor and outdoor seating, and a dining facility with a bakery, coffee and sandwiches so students can come in the morning and stay all day.

Besides the alluring aroma of cinnamon bread and bagels, the new CoB Learning Complex boasts a boardroom for meetings; space for its digital marketing program; a center for innovation, collaboration and entrepreneurship; and a Capital Markets lab with Bloomberg terminals and a ticker-tape running through it.

"It's the closest thing to New York I've ever seen in Harrisonburg," commented CoB Dean Michael Busing.

Showker Hall debuted in 1991 and was designed for 2,400 students. The CoB has doubled in size to over 5,000 students, Busing said, who said he realized about 10 years ago that the CoB was outgrowing Showker. The project went into motion after encouragement from the CoB's Board of Advisers in 2014 and began in May 2018.

COB Showker Shoutouts

Professor and director of the School of Accounting Alex Gabbin had the honor of being featured in a [recent interview with Chicago Booth Magazine](#), the publication of the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. The interview was a celebration of the origin of the National Black MBA Association, now 50 years old, which was co-founded by Gabbin and two other Booth students. The group now has 20,000 members in 39 chapters, and provided \$1 million in scholarships to members in 2019.

Congratulations to professor of accounting David Hayes, who was recently named a "Best

Teaching Innovation Award” recipient by the American Accounting Association (AAA)–Forensic Accounting Section. Hayes’ co-authored paper titled “Solving the ‘Mystery’ of Profiling Fraud: Teaching Students About Occupational Fraud by Examining Episodes of Mystery Diners” won Best Teaching Innovation Paper in the AAA Forensic Accounting Section Best Paper Awards 2020. The teaching uses a popular TV show on ‘mystery diners’ to frame learning about corporate fraud in a restaurant environment, an employment situation that students are familiar with, rather than a more abstract professional corporate fraud scenario.

Professor of economics Joanne Doyle [recently co-authored a publication](#) in *The Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance*. Titled “Estimating the effect of active management and private equity for defined benefit pension funds,” the article provides a refinement in measurement methods characterized as a “new approach to measuring the relative contributions of policy and active management by using squared partial correlation coefficients to control for market movements.” After applying a “Search” method that systematically tests all possible combinations of a limited number of factors (market indices) to find the set with the highest explanatory power of historical returns, the authors found that pension funds show more active management compared to balanced funds.

Health Sciences Alumna Assisting Georgia’s COVID-19 Response



Kat Topf ('19)

From a Creative Services Q&A:

Tell us about the work you are doing with the Georgia Department of Public Health.

I am currently an epidemiology assistant for the Georgia Department of Public Health for the COVID-19 response. In this role, I approve/deny COVID-19 testing requests for Georgia Public Health Labs, enter COVID-19 lab results into the state database, and manage/clean data for cases (i.e. patient address and demographic information). Along with these daily tasks, I have assisted with a summer camp outbreak and Georgia farmworker materials.

While at JMU you worked with health sciences professor Dayna Henry on your Honors Thesis – what was the topic?

For my Honors Thesis, I conducted an exploratory study on the awareness and completion of Advanced Care Planning among college students. The most impactful part of working on the thesis was the mentorship from Dr. Henry. She helped me every step of the way and I still utilize skills she taught me every day. It solidified my love for research and desire to become a professor later in my career. The manuscript from my thesis is currently under

review with one journal.

[Read the full Q&A](#)

Health sciences faculty Dayna Henry commented, “I believe Kat’s success is derived from a combination of her drive to learn about and contribute to the future of public health and the dedication of the health sciences faculty to creating a broad range of opportunities for engaged learning across the curriculum. Senior health science majors complete a course-based research experience, providing them with a strong foundation for understanding and using evidence-based practices in their health careers. Undergraduate research experiences like those offered in the health sciences department, empower students to make contributions to their field through research and prepares them for pursuit of graduate programs in clinical and public health areas. Kat took advantage of every available learning opportunity offered by the department to expand her knowledge and skills. I am thrilled to have had the opportunity to work alongside her as a student and in the future, as a colleague.”

College of Health and Behavioral Studies Welcomes New Associate Deans



Kevin Apple (pictured left) joins the CHBS Dean’s Office after leading the JMU Department of Psychology as academic unit head for the past seven years. A dedicated leader focused on the student experience, Apple directed the Psychology Peer Advising program, developed a study abroad experience to explore the psychology of the Holocaust, and helped create the psychology department's first Summer Research Experience for Underrepresented Undergraduates (SREUU).

[Learn more about associate dean Apple](#)

Doug Hochstetler (pictured right) may be new to JMU, but he is no stranger to the Harrisonburg area. He began his professional higher education career at Eastern Mennonite University, and most recently served as the Director of Academic Affairs at Penn State Lehigh Valley. Hochstetler brings a track record of success to JMU, having received the Distinguished Scholar Award from the National Association of Kinesiology in Higher Education, among other accolades.

[Learn more about associate dean Hochstetler](#)

Virginia Clean Cities Wins State-wide Environmental Excellence Award

Virginia Clean Cities at JMU [received a Governor’s Environmental Excellence Award](#) during a virtual ceremony in August. The annual awards event recognizes, “successful and innovative efforts that improve Virginia’s environment.” VCC was one of six Gold Medal Winners, honored for advancing clean fuels in Virginia, “By promoting clean fuels education, vehicles and infrastructure, the organization has been the driving force behind

Office of Research & Scholarship Personnel Update

Meredith Malburne-Wade works with undergraduate students, graduate students, and alumni from all majors who are applying for a variety of external (non-JMU) scholarships, fellowships, and awards, including the Fulbright US Student Grant, Gilman Scholarship, Truman Scholarship, Critical Language Scholarship, Goldwater Scholarship, and many more. She helps applicants identify relevant awards, then guides them through the application process, from essay writing and revision to honing interview skills. Meredith was honored to start this work last year under the umbrella of the Honors College and is delighted to transfer her work to R&S where she will continue to build student interest and excitement about possible future paths. In addition to student recruitment and mentorship, Meredith teaches in the Honors College, co-chairs the JMU Fulbright Advisory Committee alongside Ed Brantmeier, chairs multiple fellowship committees, serves as an external reader for several fellowships, and serves on the University Writing Center Advisory Board. Meredith’s work at JMU builds on her previous experience as an English professor and fellowships adviser at several institutions; most recently, she served as an assistant professor of English and the founder/director of the Office of Fellowships and Awards at High Point University.

Debbie Perrone has joined the Office of Research and Scholarship to help advance sponsored research activity and faculty career development. Debbie came to JMU in 2016 as University Advancement’s Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations. She assumed her new role as Director of Strategic Research Support in April, and she will continue to assist faculty members, interdisciplinary teams, academic units, and colleges in their pursuit of external funding, with a focus on public sources of support. Following her Peace Corps service and doctoral studies in applied anthropology, Debbie directed a non-profit public health agency in New Jersey. Before moving to Harrisonburg, she enjoyed a decades-long fund-raising career at Johns Hopkins University, where she led corporate and foundation programs. Debbie has been an active member of the Faculty Research Council and serves on the board of James Madison Innovations.

Nick Swayne is the executive director of [4-VA](#), director of the [JMU X-Labs](#), and a doctoral candidate in the JMU School of Strategic Leadership Studies’ Postsecondary Analysis and Leadership concentration. Nick also serves as co-chair of the Veteran Scholars Task Force, on the Governor’s Advisory Board for Unmanned Systems, and as a member of the board of the Unmanned Systems Association of Virginia. He is a Stanford University Innovation Faculty Fellow and student adviser, the executive director for Virginia-DC FIRST LEGO League, and is completing his third, four-year term on Harrisonburg City Schools School Board. Nick has served as the PI on numerous grants totaling over \$4M in external funding.

