



JMU Research, Scholarship & Creative Endeavors

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Thank you for taking a few minutes out of your day to read our final newsletter of 2017.

We are excited to report that JMU's Industrial Hemp research program continues to grow. Partnering with farmers in and around the Shenandoah Valley, the research team grew 30 acres of hemp during the 2017 season. We expect to partner with at least 14 farmers in 2018, as we continue researching the optimum growing conditions for this crop, as well as potential market applications.

Congratulations to Esther Nizer who was recently appointed by Governor McAuliffe to the Commonwealth's Board of Conservation and Recreation. This Board functions to conserve, protect, enhance and advocate wise use of Virginia's natural, historical, recreational, scenic and cultural resources. Nizer is a 2003 graduate of the Adult Education / Human Resource Development program and currently serves as JMU's IT Training & Development Manager.

On a lighter note, Research & Scholarship had a blast lending a helping hand during VA Momentum's 2017 Turkey Trot. More than 1,500 festive community members braved a cold Thanksgiving morning to mix fun and fitness in support of the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. Founded by two JMU alumni, VA Momentum organizes active events that support community organizations. Since their launch in 2012, this social enterprise has raised more than \$78,000 for local nonprofits and charities.

Best wishes for a happy holiday season!

Yvonne Harris

Vice Provost for Research & Scholarship
James Madison University



Runners at the ready for the *Gobble, Gobble Kids Dash* at the 2017 Turkey Trot.
Photo credit: Aubrey Griffin

Faculty Grant Awards

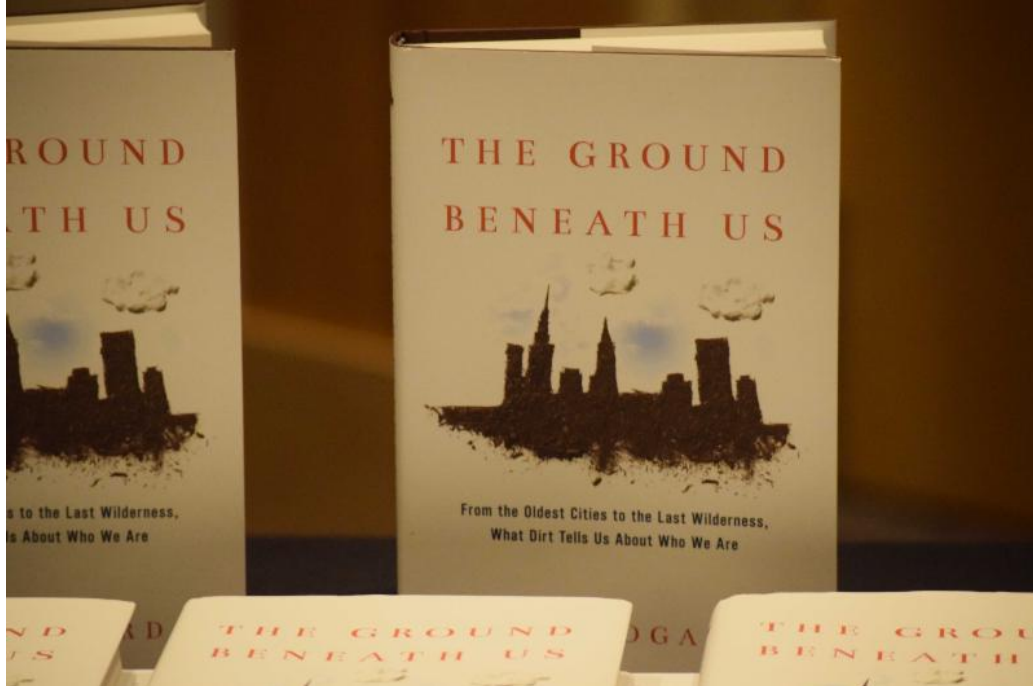
For a monthly listing of recent faculty grant awards, please visit the [Madison Scholar website](#). Here are some notable awards from October 2017:

Dr. Nancy Barbour (Accreditation and Special Projects, College of Education; Professor, Early, Elementary and Reading Education) received \$185,000 from the International Research & Exchange Board for the International Leaders in Education Program.

Dr. Hossain Heydari (Professor, Computer Science) and Dr. Brett Tjaden (Professor, Computer Science) received \$129,676 from the Department of Defense for the Department of Defense Information Assurance Scholarship Program.

Michael A. Maurice (Director, Office on Children & Youth, Institute for Innovation in Health and Human Services) received \$303,210 from the Virginia Department of Health for the "Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program."

A Celebration of Faculty Scholarship



Keynote speaker Paul Bogard's latest book: *The Ground Beneath Us: From the Oldest Cities to the Last Wilderness, What Dirt Tells Us About Who We Are*

Research & Scholarship hosted the 7th Annual Noftsinger Celebration of Madison Scholarship in November. Conceived as a celebration of the JMU faculty's scholarly achievements, this event featured a keynote address by *The Ground Beneath Us* and *The End of Night* author Paul Bogard (Assistant Professor of English). Dr. Bogard shared the stage with President Alger, Provost Coltman, and the Furious Flower Poetry Center, represented by Director Joanne Gabbin and Assistant Director Lauren Alleyne. Ms. Alleyne was recently chosen by the New Issues Press as the winner of the 2018 Green Rose Prize for her manuscript *Honeyfish*.

JMU Participates in UN Convention



JMU's seat at the Nineteenth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

Housed at JMU since 1996, the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery (CISR) develops and implements programs with JMU faculty and students, disability rights organizations, and international bodies charged with clearing land contaminated with explosive remnants of war (ERW). Dr. Ken Rutherford, Director of CISR and JMU Professor of Political Science, recently traveled to Geneva to participate in the “Nineteenth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.” The meetings took place at the Palace of Nations (*Palais des Nations*), which is the former home of the League of Nations and current United Nations Office at Geneva. [Read more](#)

Rutherford’s own identity as a landmine victim and survivor has inspired much of his work and passionate advocacy. In addition to international advocacy, Rutherford is working on the first comprehensive analysis of landmine use during the U.S. Civil War – *America’s Buried History: Landmines in the Civil War*.

Alternative Fuel Station Opens in Chesapeake



Virginia Clean Cities (VCC) participated in a grand opening for a new, public access compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling station in Chesapeake, VA. The event provided valuable networking time for current fleet users of CNG vehicles, as well as other interested parties who came for a look at the station’s technology and to learn about the financial benefits of fueling with CNG. Impressively, more than 30% of the City of Chesapeake’s fleet is already made up of alternative fueled vehicles. Mayor Rick West, Clean Energy’s Gary Parker (VCC Board Member), VCC Executive Director Alleyn Harned, and Michael Bisogno with the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Office of Fleet Management Services, all spoke at the event and participated in the ribbon cutting, along with City Manager James Baker and Fleet Manager George Hrichak (also a VCC Board Member).

VCC assists the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) administer the Alternative Fuel Transition Program, which supports clean vehicles throughout the Commonwealth. Chesapeake also added fleet ethanol and electric vehicle infrastructure in partnership with Virginia Clean Cities in 2017, and was ranked number one by “The 100 Best Fleets” and received the Public Green Fleet of the year at the Governor’s Green Fleet Awards.

Biology Faculty Funded to Study Pythons in the Everglades

Rocky Parker, Assistant Professor of Biology, recently received a \$73,000 grant from the U.S. Geological Survey and is working with federal and state agencies to manage a Burmese python scourge in the Florida Everglades. Pythons have been causing trouble in Florida, especially in the Everglades, ever since an initial infestation in the 1990s. Pythons have no native predators and thus, they eat and reproduce as they please, significantly altering the ecology of the Everglades. It has been difficult to track these animals as the environment is nearly impenetrable and the pythons' skin colors and markings provide the perfect camouflage.

Last year, Parker and his students ran experiments to gauge python reaction to male and female scents. Based off of this research, Parker now plans to cause male snakes to smell like females by implanting estrogen, a hormone that will trigger female pheromone production, even in males. If his approach works, Parker said the same could be done with other invasive species given that hormones such as estrogen and testosterone are the same compounds in most vertebrate species. The snakes will be tracked between February and May, which is mating season in Florida. [Read more about Dr. Parker's research in Popular Science](#)

Media Arts and Design Faculty Wins Best Screenplay Award



Crewmembers during the filming of *Eggs and Soldiers*

Imelda O'Reilly, Assistant Professor in the School of Media Arts and Design and an award-winning filmmaker, recently received the Best Screenplay-Tonino Guerra Award for her film *Eggs and Soldiers* at the Blow-Up Arthouse Film Festival. *Eggs and Soldiers* is about broken people trying to stay alive in a broken system. In the film, a single Irish dad forgets to buy the tree on Christmas Eve. Ned, the older son, has his humanity challenged as he risks everything to have his younger brother Marco experience a real Irish Christmas.

O'Reilly says her intention is to "engage viewers, lure them into a world on the surface that appears joyful but underneath I create a subtext that destabilizes the viewer using words and images as counterpoint in aesthetic and tone." The film will screen on the Irish television station on Radio Telefis Eireann on December 18th and will be distributed by Shorts TV Europe. It has screened at 40 festivals in nine different countries.

O'Reilly is hoping to develop *Eggs and Soldiers* into a feature film titled *We're the Kids in*

America. It is a triptych of three generations of Irish fathers and sons. The screenplay was recently selected for a screenwriting workshop for the Moving Picture Institute in New York.



View the trailer for *Eggs and Soldiers*

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