

# MARCH 1, 2024

## DEPARTMENT NEWS

### STUDENT NEWS

#### Amitesh Singh: CETL Workshop Facilitator

As part of his responsibilities as a Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) Fellow, Amitesh was one of the facilitators for a CETL workshop designed specifically for STEM graduate students. The "Facilitating Active Learning for STEM TAs" was held on February 14 in Brevard 305.

#### Sumeet Kulkarni: News Intern

Sumeet just started a new position as a news intern at [Nature Portfolio](#).

#### Purnima Narayan: UM AGWiS Outreach

Purnima was part of an outreach event for Environmental Day. The event was a collaboration between the University of Mississippi Association of Graduate Women in STEM (UM AGWiS) and the Division of Outreach. The event was held at the Field Station on February 17th where presentations and demos were done for high school students.

#### New Official PhD Candidates: 02/01/2023 - 03/01/2024

Quinn Campagna, Kumar Pandey and Zhengwu Wang have advanced to candidacy for the PhD by passing the comprehensive exam. Congratulations on reaching this significant milestone!

### ALUMNI NEWS

#### Nazanin Omidi: 2016 MS Graduate

Nazanin Omidi recently started a new position as Research Associate III at the Henry Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine in Support of Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Nazanin was a student of Dr. Cecille Labuda.



### General Department News

- Robert Summers has signed a memorandum of agreement to fund an endowment for a faculty position to be called the Dr. Donald Summers Chair of Physics. He will donate \$335,000.00 every year for 10 years. The endowment will be used to fund salary and research for the position. The funds cannot be used until all have been collected and start earning interest. Robert Summers is the brother of the late Donald Summers who was a professor in the department.
- The Department of Physics and Astronomy (along with other STEM departments) will be moving the introductory physics labs into the The Jim and Thomas Duff Center for Science and Technology Innovation to start teaching there in Fall 2024. Building construction is expected to be complete by April 2024 with overall site construction to be completed by May 2024. We expect to start moving in lab equipment starting in July 2024.

### Events

- The Department of Physics and Astronomy research poster session, organized by Dr. Jake Bennett will be held in April, tentatively on the 25th, from 4-5 pm. All students, (graduate and undergraduate) are encouraged to present their research and discuss ongoing projects. Note that you do not necessarily have to have a completed project to participate. The goal is to learn a bit more about what is going on in the department, and in all the research groups. The plan is for this to be an annual event. Contact Dr. Bennett for information.
- The PGSA picnic will be on Saturday March 02 starting at noon, at Price Hill Park, in Oxford. Traditional Mississippi food, halal and vegetarian food will be available. Please indicate attendance by completing the form here: <https://forms.gle/oF3tSK7x5YjJtLHY7>. Directions are here: <https://visitoxfordms.com/place/price-hill-park/>