

Department of Physics and Materials Science

Spring 2026 Newsletter

Dear friends, colleagues, and alum,



It is once again time to reflect on the past semester(s) and celebrate all the amazing work that my faculty and students have done. This is the best part of my job! Please read on. This is only a snippet of what has happened—reach out if you would like to come visit or connect with us virtually!

It was wonderful to spend time with Fulbright Fellows **Dr. Patrina Paraskevopoulou** and **Dr. Antonios Chatzigeorgiou** from

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens, Greece and work on collaborative research. Thank you both for spending time with us and I look forward to our future work.



APS-Cu*iP in Memphis!

Thank you to all who supported our event! We hosted a very successful **APS Conference for Undergraduate Women and Gender Minorities in Physics**. It was very rewarding and great to meet the next generation of physicists!

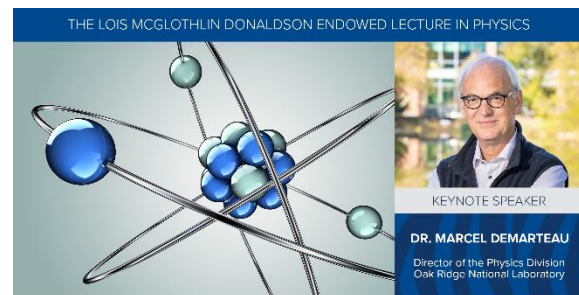


The future is bright: Look at this great group of physics majors attending our conference and eagerly getting ready for the future.

Two New additions to our program, starting Fall 2026:

The Physics and Materials Science Department is offering a new **undergraduate Minor in Astronomy**! We are also excited about the **MSc Health Physics** program for graduate students! Reach out if you would like more information (Dr. Thang Hoang/ Dr. Xiao Shen)

2026 Lois McGlothlin Donaldson Endowed Lecture – Dr. Marcel DeMarteau



FROM FISSION TO VISION

THE ORIGIN, POWER, EVOLUTION AND PROMISE OF

NUCLEAR ENERGY

We had an exceptionally successful Lois McGlothlin Donaldson Endowed Lecture this year with our guest speaker **Dr. Marcel DeMarteau**. He gave a riveting lecture about the history of nuclear energy, how it works, and what we can expect in the future. Check in with us for next year's lecture!

Celebrating Faculty Excellence!



Congrats to a few of our faculty members on their achievements this semester: **Dr. Jahan** has

dedicated **45 years** of excellent service to the department and the UofM. Thank you! **Dr. Keller** and **Instructor Wade** both received the **2026 Distinguished Teaching Awards** for showing their consistent dedication to their students and being the stellar teachers that they are. Congrats!

Student Awardees

Congratulations and job well done to our amazing Undergraduate students!



Chi Beta Phi Science Award: Jacob Steward. **Outstanding Physics Student Award:** Elizabeth Mulhearn. **Highest Physics GPA Award:** Charles Peck (GPA 4.0). **Best Undergraduate Researcher Award:** Jacob Steward. **Albert Woollett Award:** Enoch Santana. **Marchini Scholarship:** Charles Peck. **Physics Merit Scholarship:** Charles Peck. **Also, a big thank you to our donors! You** made this happen!

New Department Faculty Member



Please join us in welcoming **Kenneth Rymanowicz** to our department as faculty. Many of you may already know him, since he received his B.S. and M.S. here at the UofM. He still

performs research as a PhD student under the guidance of Dr. Muller-Sanchez.

APS-Funded Astrophotography Outreach Program Launches



We held the first session of *Bringing the Cosmos to the Community*, an APS-funded outreach program created by our graduate students. The program is open to the public and is offered once a semester. For more information, please feel free to contact us at: kmrymnwc@memphis.edu

2025 Physics Summer Camp



We had a very successful Physics Summer Camp in 2025. What a turnout! Participants engaged in a wide range of activities throughout the week, ranging from lab tours to experimental activities. **We are looking forward to welcoming the 2026**

cohort shortly!



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