



College of Sciences & Mathematics Newsletter  
April 2022

CoSM Faculty Spotlight  
**Merten is Author of  
Invited Journal  
Review Article**

An invited review article by Dr. **Jonathan Merten**, associate professor of chemistry, has been published in [\*Spectrochimica Acta Part B: Atomic Spectroscopy\*](#). The article pertained to laser-ablation atomic absorption spectroscopy. Merten also recently presented research posters with undergraduate authors **Hannah Bariola, Shawnda Ethridge** and **Erin Nicholas** at the Conference on Plasma Spectrochemistry in Tucson.

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## CoSM Faculty Spotlight Wijeratne Receives Kays Foundation Grant

**Dr. Asela Wijeratne**, assistant professor of bioinformatics, submitted a successful research grant proposal to the Kays Foundation. Through his project, funded in the amount of \$16,168, Wijeratne is seeking to find a more durable and environmentally friendly solution for sudden death syndrome (SDS), which is a highly destructive soybean disease caused by the fungal pathogen, *Fusarium virguliforme*.

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## CoSM Faculty Spotlight Medina-Bolivar Describes Anti- Cancer Compound

**Dr. Fabricio Medina-Bolivar**, professor of plant metabolic engineering, is co-author of a paper published in the [\*International Journal of Molecular Sciences\*](#). **Sepideh Mohammadhosseinpour**, a Ph.D. student in the molecular biosciences Ph.D. program, is first author. They describe a compound, isolated from peanut roots, and its effects on triple-negative breast cancer cells. They are very optimistic about the potential benefits because triple-negative breast cancer is the most difficult to treat.





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