



Greetings from the Department Head

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, this year UConn's Department of Physics put on notable events, celebrated recent achievements, and welcomed new personnel, [writes Professor and Head Barrett Wells](#).

Department News



[Efforts of Many Made Distance Learning Possible](#)

The remarkable work of faculty, graduate TAs, and our teaching staff proved to be instrumental in guaranteeing the successful completion of the spring semester.



Professor Participates in PPE Research

Using dummy heads from a medical school simulation lab, Associate Professor **Jason Hancock** tested aerosolized particles that could lead to mask alternatives.



In Memoriam: Cynthia Peterson

The beloved physics professor, who joined the UConn faculty in 1968, passed away in July. She is [remembered by her former colleague, Emeritus Professor Winthrop Smith](#), and for her [impact at UConn and in the community](#).



New Faculty Members Join Physics

The Department welcomes [Chris Faesi](#), an astrophysicist specializing in observational work and modeling; and [Erin Scanlon](#), who specializes in physics education research.



Physics Department Joins Nationwide Diversity Efforts

The Diversity & Multiculturalism Committee was accepted into the American Physical Society's Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity

Alliance, which includes teams from more than 90 organizations.

More Department News

Alumni Spotlight



Physics Alum Receives NSF CAREER Award

Hyewon Pechkis '10 Ph.D., an assistant professor of physics at the California State University-Chico, recently earned this prestigious early-career award from the National Science Foundation.

Noteworthy Achievements

Professor **Kyungseon Joo** has been [named chair of the CLAS Collaboration at Jefferson National Laboratory](#), one of the largest international collaborations in nuclear physics.

Assistant Professor **Jonathan Trump** was one of seven faculty members from UConn to earn an award from the [NSF Faculty Early Career Development](#)

[\(CAREER\) Program](#) in 2020.

Assistant Professor **Luchang Jin** won an [Early Career Award from the Department of Energy's Office of High Energy Physics](#). Jin and Professor **Tom Blum**, along with colleagues, also completed a first-ever [calculation of the hadronic light-by-light scattering contribution to the muon's anomalous magnetic moment](#) with all errors controlled.

Former graduate student **Razib Obaid '19 Ph.D.** and his mentor, Professor **Nora Berrah**, [recently reported in the journal *Physical Review Letters*](#) that a single x-ray can unravel an enormous molecule. Their findings could lead to safer medical imaging and a more nuanced understanding of the electronics of heavy metals.

The Geophysics Research Group, led by Professor **Vernon Cormier**, operates a seismic wave station that continuously monitors vibrations in the earth's crust. Their stations [detected earthquakes in Puerto Rico](#) on January 7, 2020.



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UConn Department of Physics
196A Auditorium Road, Unit 3046
Storrs, CT 06269-3046

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