



## dear reader,

*The Birth of Venus* is one of the world's most celebrated paintings. Painted by Sandro Botticelli in the mid-1480s, this masterpiece has inspired many generations. Artist Candy Niu reinterpreted this classic work from an anatomical perspective to showcase how underneath it all, Venus, the goddess of love and beauty, is the same as the rest of us. Even when reduced to her basic biology, Venus retains her grace. This cover is a testament to the profound beauty often found in the sciences. We are very proud to present more pieces highlighting the inherent creativity of the health sciences in the 30th issue of *The Meducator*.

In this issue, contemporary health sciences issues are explored from an international perspective. Staff editor Devin Roshan reports international health sciences news across the globe an innovative Medpulse piece with graphic artist Kelsie Ou. Delving deeper into recent breakthroughs, Devin Roshan, Eva Liu, Angela Dong, and Jim Xie discuss superbugs, Zika virus, gene technology, and multiple sclerosis in *Medbulletin* articles. Continuing our tradition of collaboration with *McMaster Health Forum*, Steven Cho, Malcom Hartman, Ahmad Firas Khalid, Janice Mok, and Padmaja Sreeram highlight the recent healthcare disparities faced by female Syrian refugees through a *Forumspace* review.

Furthering our longstanding focus on original undergraduate research, Caberry (Weiyang) Yu, Owais Mian, and Annie Wu share *Research Abstracts* of their work investigating cancer prognostication, knee arthroplasty, and macrophage response, respectively. Staff editor Ashley Lam and graphic artist Tony Chen collaborate to create an *Infographic* on the risks of sugar overconsumption. In our *Opinion* feature, Ahmed Abdelaal and Kelvin Ng challenge current perceptions on over-the-counter statin approval. This issue's *Research Insight* investigates the relationship between neural crest cell specification and anterior segment dysgenesis by featuring the work of Jeong Won Park, Vanessa Martino, and Judith West-Mays.

A series of critical reviews analyzes novel developments and controversial topics within the health sciences. Shawn Khan analyzes the role of the gut microbiome and regulatory B cells in allergic asthma. The factors that influence patient decisions to undergo preventative mastectomy are elucidated by David Bobrowski in his analysis of BRCA1/2 genetic testing. The *Meducator* dives into the world of novel technology as *iSci's* Aakash Shaw describes potential applications of virtual reality in our healthcare system.

As our 30th publication cycle draws to a close, we wish to thank our phenomenal team for their invaluable contributions throughout the year, particularly Creative Directors Maine Bing and Michael Sun, Managing Editors Ishan Aditya and Arshia Javidan, and Video Manager Faizan Bhatia. The immense creativity and dedication demonstrated by contributors and our Editorial, Graphics & Design, and Video teams are testaments to our staff's passion for the health sciences, as well as all that can be explored through the vibrancy of writing, multimedia, and art.



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