

letter from STACEY RITZ

My heartiest congratulations on reaching these milestones —the 20th Anniversary and 40th Issue of *The Meducator*! It's so exciting to witness the ongoing success and evolution of this enterprise over the years, giving undergraduate students an outlet for communicating findings and ideas in the health sciences, and as a showcase for the impressive work of many folks in the BHSc community, the FHS, and the larger McMaster community who are committed to the university's mission to advance human and societal health and well-being.

The Meducator is truly an interdisciplinary enterprise, calling not only on health research, but also the skills and talents of students as writers, editors, graphic designers, illustrators, coordinators, and knowledge translators, to produce a professional, accessible, and informative publication. As time and technology have advanced, the dedicated team behind *The Meducator* has continually aimed to advance its scope and mandate to include students from multiple programs, and to expand beyond the limits of the printed page into the dynamic world of social media, podcasting, and media production.

Science is often framed as an objective, empirical approach to building knowledge, but I think the role of story-telling in science is often underappreciated. The narrative line that connects the initial research question, to the design of the study, data acquisition, analysis and visualization, interpretation, and ultimate conclusions is not simply a descriptive process. It is an interpretive one, emerging not only from the material conditions of the research and the data themselves, but also from the purposes, commitments, and goals of researchers. Unlike scientific and scholarly journal publications that can be somewhat opaque for non-specialist readers, publications like *The Meducator* take up a valuable role in the knowledge ecosystem, not only disseminating knowledge, but deliberately doing so in ways that are engaging, accessible, and enjoyable for readers from a range of backgrounds.

I want to commend the editorial teams from across the years who have done such an exemplary job of not only sustaining *The Meducator*, but continually advancing it, and mentoring incoming contributors to ensure its continuing viability. Student-led initiatives can often have a short lifespan if the leaders of the project don't pay attention to succession planning and mentorship. *The Meducator* has managed to avoid this fate not only thanks to collaborative and forward-thinking leadership —the evolution of the journal over the years shows that not only do you “think outside the box,” you are always thinking about how you can grow and expand the box, and rethink the nature of the box itself! As an enterprise, *The Meducator* embodies and manifests some of the most important values of the BHSc (Hons) Program itself —collaboration, growth, critical thinking, community-mindedness, information literacy, and always, ALWAYS asking questions.

Congratulations on your big 2-0!



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