



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

OUR NEW VISION

This issue's cover image is a photograph of Sheiry Dhillon, a third year undergraduate student, in the midst of a discussion with women of the Indian village Chola. We chose this photograph as the face of Issue 18 because it captured the immersive nature of her research experience: as Sheiry discusses in our feature article, she spent several months of her summer studying rural health institutions in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. This image reflects a new vision for *The Meducator*: a platform for research articles that are student centered. As students, we recognize that the opportunity to conduct research at the undergraduate level can be an exciting experience – the process of discovery is both rewarding and stimulating. We also realize that there are few opportunities for undergraduate students to express the nature and significance of their research in an open forum. We want *The Meducator* to provide you with that opportunity – to share with the student community the aspects of your research that excite you.

In order to facilitate this vision, we have introduced a new article format that we call *Research Insight*. The *Research Insight* article allows students to discuss the nature of their work, while reflecting on its significance and implications in the broader context of their respective fields. In this issue, Matthew Chong, working in the lab of Dr. Lori Burrows, discusses his research on biofilm development by the opportunistic pathogen *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, while Mustafa Ahmadzai, working in the lab of Dr. Luke Janssen,

discusses his research on the electrophysiological properties of lymphatic smooth muscle cells in the lungs. If you have a strong interest in a particular topic in the health sciences, we have introduced another article format that we call *Critical Review*. The *Critical Review* article allows students to take a critical look at a particular issue or topic. In this issue, Vithooshan Vijayakumaran and Neil D. Dattani discuss how variation in the gene for an important cholesterol transport protein may yield significant health benefits.

The variety of topics in this issue reflects our goal of expanding the scope of *The Meducator* to include all subject matter within the broad, interconnected realm of health sciences: global health, medical science, epidemiology, health policy, health ethics, and everything in between. Thus, our new tagline: **McMaster University's undergraduate health sciences publication.**

The Meducator would like to stay in touch with you, our readers, throughout the year. In order to do so, we have created a Facebook page that is updated daily with *MedWires*, short updates (250 characters) on advances in the health sciences. I encourage you to subscribe. We have also launched a new website with a professional archive, so that your written content remains open to the public in the years to come. Visit the website at www.meducator.org or search for "The Meducator" on Facebook.

I would like to thank Hiten Naik, Vice-President, and the remainder of *The Meducator* team for their tireless work in making the above changes possible.

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