Introduction to Volume 10, Issue 1: 10th Anniversary Issue

The *Undergraduate Research Journal* offers a wide-variety of research that interests our undergraduate student population. In this issue, readers can find research papers, literature reviews, and personal studies all of which demonstrate areas of interest undergraduates pursue in their given fields. In the Fall 2017 issue, the work published ranges from a study on folklore, a paper on the differences between men and women with Antisocial Personality Disorder, and a piece that demonstrates the importance of agriculture. There are a wide range of studies conducted in all majors, each with its unique twist. These pieces selected for publication broadcast the widespread interests and significance that research holds for the UC Merced undergraduate community.

Because this year marks the 10th anniversary of the journal, the editors took efforts to make the publication especially compelling. Since the journal's inception back in 2007, UC Merced has had the honor of representing a myriad of research and writing by exceptional undergraduates. In addition to those topics already addressed, further topics explore the natural sciences and history, with each piece challenging how we see the world and offering us new lenses through which to do so. This fall, we had the privilege of reading and publishing thought provoking research, which is one of the journal's ultimate goals. The editors want our readers to absorb the information in a way that inspires them to conduct their own research, inform others of the current scholarly landscape, and make new discoveries.

In choosing the research selected for this publication, one of the criterion the URJ editors and staff looked for was whether or not the authors and their work pushed any boundaries in their respective fields. The editors also wanted to publish pieces that discussed topics that many people might shy away from and that might challenge views. One example of this aim comes from Melina Villasenor's piece on the negative effects of using dopaminergic drugs to treat symptoms in Parkinson's disease. Villasenor's piece discusses the current treatments for Parkinson's disease and the current medications and physical therapy treatments that are being developed to alleviate some of the physically occurring symptoms of the disease. Villasenor states, "sadly, research in possible cures in promising areas are less likely to be funded due to the higher possibility of finding concrete solutions that may or may not require pharmaceuticals, another obstacle that, although indirectly, can inhibit the progress of finding better ways to treat Parkinson's disease." Stating that concrete solutions may be obscured due to a lack of funding, hinders the course of research in specific areas. Many would shy away from addressing the impact that pharmaceutical companies may have on research being conducted to find effective treatments aside from prescription medications.

Furthermore, the journal is a medium of publication that encourages students to present their research findings creatively. The literature review "How Does Mythical Folklore Create a Framework for Mental Health?" by Maria Puglisi, Asia Reed, Christian Campus, & Kiara Turner, considers how early folklore has helped shape the field of psychology and our current knowledge of mental health by artfully incorporating examples of folklores that provide information on how mental health disorders such as Antisocial Personality Disorder develops. Another research study conducted by a group of students at UC Merced presents their study's findings of viewing certain videos to reduce the stigma that is associated with mental health

disorders such as schizophrenia. There are many papers that showcase innovative research studies being performed in the psychology disciplines here at UC Merced. Similar to the creative studies that are being done in the psychology field, there are also many more fascinating discoveries being made in a variety of other disciplines.

Ultimately, the work published in this issue emphasizes how UC Merced is home to a variety of uniquely creative and critical minds. Also, the UC Merced *Undergraduate Research Journal* represents the diversity of the university and its intelligent students by offering those who have a passion for scholarship to have a platform through which to publish their research. By being published on eScholarship, these students get to experience their work being shared with the world. The extensive hours and the exhausting workloads become worthwhile when students get to have their research be recognized outside of the lab or classroom. We hope that the ideas, research, and writing presented by these diverse students, whose work represents a range of disciplines, encourage others to contemplate ideas, create new ones, and start conversations.

The editors and staff would also like to recognize the following authors whose research and writing was selected for the editors' choice awards for this issue:

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Gurbinder Singh, Schools of Natural Sciences and Engineering, and
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