

# Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to Volume 16, Issue 1 of the *Journal of STEM Education: Innovations and Research*. With the close of the past year and the end of another semester, we have much news to share. We welcome a new editorial assistant, Sarah Russell, who is an undergraduate senior studying journalism here at Auburn University. She has been a joy to work with and I expect that she will do very well on our staff. Our previous assistant Virginia has left to pursue a master's degree, and I wish her the best of luck! We look forward to hearing of her assured successes.

We are excited to share our authors' new research in STEM education and career preparation, and this issue features six excellent articles that describe innovations in the world of education. To kick off the issue, in "Comparing traditional versus alternative sequencing of instruction when using simulation modeling," authors Bradley Bowen of North Dakota State University and William Deluca of North Carolina State University explore how simulation modeling and content sequences affect student achievement and learning in STEM education.

Another interesting article, "Benefits of Informal Learning Environments: A Focused Examination of STEM-based Program Environments" by Cameron D. Denson of North Carolina State University and Chandra Austin Stallworth, Christine Hailey, and Daniel L. Householder, all of Utah State University, details the beneficial characteristics of an informal learning environment for underrepresented STEM students.

Authors Mary Goldberg, Rory Cooper, Maria Milleville, Anne Barry and Michelle L. Spomer, all of the University of Pittsburgh, give an intriguing look into veteran STEM education in their article "Ensuring Success for Veterans with Disabilities in STEM Degree Programs: Recommendations from a Workshop and Case Study of an Evidence-Based Transition Program."

A fourth article, "Fueling Chemical Engineering Concepts with Biodiesel Production: A Professional Development Experience for High School Pre-Service Teachers" by Anju Gupta, relays the successes of a one-day workshop for high school teachers who would implement a chemical engineering curriculum for their students.

Next, Shaobo Huang of South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, Joel Alejandro Mejia of West Virginia University, and Kurt Becker and Drew Neilson of Utah State University describe an innovative method of physics education through the understanding of engineering and design models in their paper "High School Physics: An Interactive Instructional Approach that Meets the Next Generation Science Standards."

In our last article, entitled "Special Populations At-Risk for Dropping Out of School: A Discipline-Based Analysis of STEM Educators," authors Thomas O. Williams Jr., Jeremy V. Ernst and Toni Marie Kaui of Virginia Tech underscore the importance of maintaining enrollment of at-risk students and investigates the service capacity of students with disabilities and limited English proficiency.

We are so proud to put out another issue and hope that our authors' research provides you with new and exciting ways to further the community of STEM educators. As always, we welcome comments, questions, and suggestions related to the journal. Please email your suggestions and comments to [jstemed@gmail.com](mailto:jstemed@gmail.com). From all of us here at the journal, we wish you a beautiful and relaxing summer!

Regards,

P.K. Raju

Editor-in-Chief