

Editorial

Dear Readers,

We want to welcome to our newest edition Volume 18, Issue 3. In this edition, authors will discuss STEM mentorships in both high school and college as well as STEM major retention through nontraditional avenues. We begin by viewing the various mentorship programs presented in the article and continue by studying the less obvious ways STEM retention and improvement can exist.

To begin this edition, authors Laura S Tenenbaum, Margery K Anderson, Swati B Ramadorai, and Debra L Yourick discuss mentorship in pre-college students in their article, "High School Students' Experience with Near-peer Mentorship and Laboratory-based Learning: In their own words." This program provided thousands of students the opportunity to participate in a week long internship working directly with college STEM majors. The results are presented in the exact words of the interns.

Similar to the previous study, Abby Ilumoka goes a bit deeper by looking specifically at pre-college women and minorities interested in a STEM related major. These students were involved in a mentorship with young engineering professionals that was organized within three different schools. The promising results can be read in her article, "An Effective Industry-Based Mentoring Approach for the Recruitment of Women and Minorities in Engineering."

Next, in the article, "Operation STEM: increasing success and improving retention among first-generation and underrepresented minority students in STEM," authors Susan Carver, Jenna Van Sickle, John P. Holcomb, Candice Quinn, Debbie K. Jackson, Andrew H. Resnick, Stephen F. Duffy, Nigamant Sridhar, and Antoinette M. Marquard discuss their implementation of Operation STEM at Cleveland State University. This program targets freshmen taking pre-calculus who are either an unrepresented minority or a first-generation student and provides different forms of mentorship that equip them for success.

The aforementioned authors are not the only ones to recognize a correlation between a successful math course and retention in STEM majors. Authors Gordon Fox, Scott Campbell, Arcadii Grinshpan, Xiaoying Xu, John Holcomb, Catherine Bénéteau, Jennifer Lewis, and Kandethody Ramachandran performed a study on the incorporation of projects in calculus as opposed to traditional tests alone and the subsequent increase in performance. Their article is entitled, "Implementing Projects in Calculus on a Large Scale at the University of South Florida."

The next article looks at the nontraditional side of STEM education. Authors Fay Cobb Payton, Ashley White, and Tara Mullins performed a study concerning students pursuing STEM majors while also involved in a dance curriculum. Many students expressed the positive impact they recognized in their STEM related classes because of their dance involvement in this article entitled, "STEM Majors, Art Thinkers – Issues of Duality, Rigor and Inclusion."

Finally, in their article, "A Review of Retention Models for STEM Majors and Their Alignment to Community Colleges," authors Jennifer L. Snyder and Elizabeth A. Cudney study STEM retention in community college. Many studies have been performed on this topic in traditional colleges, but these authors note that many students are entering the STEM field through community college and two-year institutions.

I take this opportunity to thank Alexandria Jackson for her help in editing the journal over the past one year. She did an outstanding job. We wish her the very best as she moves into seeking other professional opportunities. I welcome Elizabeth Whitt who joined our group last month and will be taking over the responsibilities of Alexandria Jackson. Please feel free to contact her at egw0009@auburn.edu. Eliza Banu, who was a post doctoral associate in my research group and was helping me with the journal, has recently joined as a faculty member in the College of Engineering at the University of Georgia. I congratulate her and wish her all the best. She will continue to help me and Elizabeth in the publication aspects of the journal.

In closing, we hope that you will share any insight you have obtained from these articles and make an effort to contribute to the success of students aspiring for a career in the STEM field. With that being said, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email us at jstemed@gmail.com. In addition, if you would like to be considered for publication, feel free to submit manuscripts at jstem.org. We hope you enjoy this edition!

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