

## Letter from the Special Issue Editor

This journal, *Journal of Contemporary Water Research and Education*, has a vested interest in research, education and extension related to water resources science, engineering, management, and policy. Within this broader interest, the journal also puts value on publishing manuscripts from undergraduate research projects, class projects, and honors thesis with a focus on water research and education. The challenge with these types of manuscripts is the focus and depth should be narrow, time and resources are often limited (e.g., one semester or the equivalent of a 3 student credit hours), and peer-reviewed publication is often not the common standard nor goal for undergraduates (Fenn et al. 2010). The latter might be the most pressing challenge, unless the undergraduates have an interest in pursuing advanced degrees, particularly graduate school where the students will be doing research for theses and dissertations. Undergraduates need opportunities like this to frame their water research within broader scientific literature (Fox et al. 2017), especially if the next step in their career is graduate school.

The faculty advisors, mentors, and teachers also play an important role in pushing these types of undergraduate manuscripts forward, while maintaining the undergraduates as the lead author. Faculty can look at publishing undergraduate research with students as the lead authors as an innovative educational opportunity in water resources (Habib and Deshotel 2018), explaining how coauthors are selected and ordered, how to craft a readable story in science (e.g., see Mackay 1995), how you handle the peer-review process, and how to write acknowledgements. However, faculty including myself often fall into the trap of writing our stories in a complex nature, which limits the manuscript's ability to always tell a readable story.

The *Journal of Contemporary Water Research and Education* has provided and continues to provide undergraduates and faculty mentors with an opportunity to publish these manuscripts, while navigating the peer-review process. I personally find this a valuable contribution to scientific literature, as well as valuable educational opportunities in water resources. These undergraduates are part of the future workforce which will be tackling the pressing water problems and issues that we face locally, regionally and across our Nation. I hope you enjoy this Special Issue on undergraduate research.

Cheers,

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