

INTRODUCTION FROM RII

The Office of Societal Impact, within the Office of Research, Innovation, and Impact (RII), is proud to support the Arizona Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies (AJIS). We aim to expand equitable access to high quality undergraduate research and inquiry experiences across disciplines and are committed to showcasing the efforts of undergraduate student researchers. Providing a wealth of opportunities ensures that our future is full of a diverse group of leaders forging innovative pathways, forming powerful collaborations, and making remarkable discoveries.

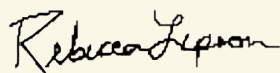
It has been a delight to see this undergraduate-run student initiative take on new life, beginning with its revival in 2020-21 and building greater stability this year to allow for continuity of the journal, leaving it in an excellent position to expand in new directions moving forward. Notably this year AJIS has broadened their team, keeping in place the editor-in-chief position and eight general editors while adding an assistant editor-in-chief, a graphic designer, and an additional general editor position. The journal has also joined the National Undergraduate Consortium for Science Journalism, a prestigious network of 17 STEM-focused undergraduate journals at universities and colleges across the country. Two AJIS representatives attended the National Undergraduate Conference on Scientific Journalism, organized by the Columbia Undergraduate Science Journal editorial board. The leadership, creativity, and dedication shown by the entire AJIS staff has been inspiring!

The papers represented in this 8th issue of the journal display the wide range of innovative undergraduate research occurring at the University of Arizona. Addressing large societal and environmental challenges will require interdisciplinary action, creative solutions, and top-notch scholarship. AJIS and its team of dedicated student editors have ensured that the journal showcases these qualities, providing a forum for undergraduate research while also allowing AJIS staff to develop their skills as an editorial team. In a time when many conflicting ideas and values are wielded like weapons, AJIS provides a scholarly platform to focus on understanding the challenges facing us and the work being done to create solutions.

We are dedicated to continuing our support of AJIS as it gains more solid footing in the UAri-zona community through faculty, staff, and student partnerships. Please join us in congratulating this year's AJIS team on all of their hard work. We'd especially like to acknowledge the commitment of senior Robert Lowell, Editor-in-Chief, who reestablished the journal in the summer of 2020. We wish Robert and all of the graduating seniors all the best in their future endeavors!



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