

Staying true to our roots

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In high school, well-rounded students are often labeled according to their most apparent skills. Other talents—the smart kid's tennis prowess or the athlete's straight As in chemistry—are often overlooked. Likewise, *The Journal of Experimental Medicine* is considered by many to be, first and foremost, an immunology journal. As the new Executive Editor of the *JEM*, I take this opportunity to remind our readers that the Journal is committed to publishing not just immunology research, but any outstanding research that falls within the realm of experimental medicine.

Widening perceptions

The *JEM* is proud of the top quality immunology research we have published and rightly so. We also welcome submission of any paper that provides new insights into the etiology, pathology, diagnosis, or treatment of disease. This includes areas already featured in the *JEM*, such as neurology, vascular biology, skeletal biology, stem cell biology, oncology, infectious disease, and microbial pathogenesis.

A majority of these studies will nevertheless be inextricably linked to the immune system, as inflammation is an important component of many diseases, and immune cells help regulate the function of many other physiological systems. One example of this link is the connection between the skeletal and immune systems. Not only is the bone marrow the birth place of immune cells, but immune cells and their products regulate bone metabolism and drive bone-destroying diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis. In fact, the recent spate of studies investigating bone-immune system links has spawned a new area of research termed osteoimmunology—one of many areas in which the *JEM* is eager to receive papers.

To highlight the diversity of research published in the *JEM*, we have

begun to distribute quarterly newsletters that feature *JEM* papers on a variety of specialty subjects. The first of these newsletters, the Vascular Biology Update, was launched in 2006 and provides registrants with immediate and free full-text access to all original research articles and commentaries related to vascular biology. Those interested in receiving this Update are encouraged to register at our website (<http://www.jem.org>). We plan to introduce similar newsletters in other fields, including osteoimmunology, oncology, and neurobiology, in the coming year.

Beefing up

Improvements to the *JEM* have always depended on feedback and suggestions from the research community. One way to strengthen our ties to the community is to attend more conferences and conduct more laboratory visits. But one person can only cover so much ground. Thus, one of our goals for 2007 and beyond is to expand the number of Ph.D. level scientists working as in-house editors at the *JEM*.

This effort is already underway. We are pleased to announce that former Executive Editor Jennifer Bell will continue to work with the *JEM* as European Associate Editor. Jennifer, who is now based in Edinburgh, Scotland, will attend conferences, conduct site visits, and act as a liaison between the Journal and researchers primarily in the UK and mainland Europe. In February, Doris Peter will join us as Associate Editor. Some of you may know Doris from her work as Publisher of *The Medical Letter*, a nonprofit organization that publishes appraisals and reviews of new and old drugs. Doris' publishing experience and expertise in neurobiology and biochemistry will help us to recruit and evaluate manuscripts in these areas. Two News Editors, Hema Bashyam and Ruth Williams, also joined the *JEM*

team in the past year. Hema and Ruth will help to enrich the content of the Journal by writing news for the front section, including our regular In This Issue and From the Archives sections, as well as news feature articles.

Finally, we are pleased to welcome the newest member of our editorial board, Alexander Rudensky (University of Washington, Seattle, WA), a leading expert in the field of development and regulation of regulatory T cells.

Maintaining integrity

The reputation of the *JEM* depends heavily on the integrity of the data we publish. Several recent high-profile cases of image manipulation have triggered an onslaught of media attention and have tarnished the public's perception of scientific research and their trust in research scientists (1). The Editors of the *JEM* take this issue very seriously and have thus adopted the image quality standards (2) developed by Mike Rossner, Managing Editor of our sister journal, *The Journal of Cell Biology*, and newly appointed Executive Director of the Rockefeller University Press. To uphold these standards, our dedicated image screener checks every image in every accepted manuscript before publication.

If an image fails to meet our standards, the authors are asked for their original data. These requests are not meant as accusations of nefarious behavior, as inappropriate image manipulation most often stems from the innocent "prettying up" of data. This is simply our way of ensuring that the data are presented accurately.

Although standards for image presentation are a good start, more still needs to be done. Better standards and guidelines for other types of data presentation, such as flow cytometry data, are overdue. With the help of Mario Roederer (National Institutes of Health,

Bethesda, MD), we are drafting new guidelines for the analysis and presentation of flow cytometry data. We plan to implement these standards early this year.

With an expanding editorial staff and a firm commitment to publishing top quality papers in experimental medicine, I look forward to an exciting and fruitful 2007 at the *JEM*.

REFERENCES

1. Couzin, J. 2006. Breakdown of the year: scientific fraud. 2006. *Science*. 314:1853.
2. Rossner, M., and K.M. Yamada. 2004. What's in a picture: the temptation of image manipulation. *J. Cell Biol.* 166:11–15.