

Generally Physiological

Looking to the past and to the future



As my first year as Executive Editor of *The Journal of General Physiology* draws to a close, I thought I'd take the opportunity to note some of the online and offline changes that have taken place at the *JGP* over the past year, and others that will be coming up soon.

Researchers planning to submit articles to the *JGP* may wish to consult our revised and reorganized online [Instructions for Authors](#), which give detailed information on all of the different types of articles we publish—both those initiated by authors and those typically generated or solicited by the editors. The former group includes not only our familiar [Research Articles](#) but also [Communications](#), which are reserved for articles that report discoveries with the potential to open up new areas of research or that provide unexpected physiological insights. As such, Communications are typically shorter than Research Articles—although like the latter they have no formal upper or lower page limits—and do not require as in-depth an exploration of the underlying mechanisms. Recent Communications have provided insight into developmental changes in the properties of the mechanotransducer channel of the mammalian cochlea (Kim and Fetiplace, 2013) and into the criteria regulating the mechanism whereby the sensor in voltage-gated ion channels couples to the gate (Arrigoni et al., 2013).

Author-initiated articles also include two classes of articles that we've introduced over the past year: [Viewpoints](#) and [Methods and Approaches](#). Like a Review, a Viewpoint

summarizes the field under discussion and provides a critical assessment of current controversies; the Viewpoint then presents the particular view of the authors on this topic. Our first Viewpoint, on using computational modeling and molecular dynamics simulations to investigate channel gating (Vargas et al., 2012), was swiftly followed by the second, which proposed a new mechanistic hypothesis of C-type inactivation (Hoshi and Armstrong, 2013). We



The *JGP*/SGP reception took place at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA)—a truly spectacular venue. (Photos courtesy of Gregory Malar.)

hope to publish more of these exciting features—designed to focus on controversial areas of particular interest to the *JGP* readership—soon. Methods and Approaches are intended to provide in-depth information about techniques used to investigate problems of fundamental physiological significance. Encompassing our old class of Tutorial Research Articles, but broader-based, Methods and Approaches provide sufficient information to enable interested readers to adopt the highlighted methodology and insight into

a physiological problem obtained through its use. Our inaugural Methods and Approaches article, on using shifted excitation and emission ratioing (SEER) to image membrane potential, was published last month (Manno et al., 2013); the second, on using solid-supported membrane electrophysiology to investigate ClC transport, appears in this issue ([Garcia-Celma et al.](#)). As with Research Articles and Communications, authors are encouraged to include [Video Summaries](#) with their Methods and Approaches articles.

We're delighted to announce that we are implementing a new Manuscript Submission and Review system, hosted by eJournalPress, which we hope will facilitate both the online submission and review process. We've also added a [Featured in Faculty of 1000](#) page to highlight *JGP* articles selected for inclusion in this online directory of noteworthy publications, as well as a page highlighting [Meetings of Interest](#) to the *JGP* readership.

In addition to those changes visible online, we've put various other



JGP Editor-in-Chief Ed Pugh and Incoming Editor Sharona Gordon.

A look at the online and offline changes at the *JGP* over the past year, as well as a view of things to come

initiatives into place that can best be experienced in person. As Executive Editor of the *JGP*, I attend numerous meetings, allowing me to hear about interesting new research developments and discuss the Journal with members of the physiology community. The first meeting I attended in this capacity was “Sense to Synapse 2012,” a conference focused on molecular and biophysical mechanisms of perception. After that terrific meeting, I contacted the organizers to see if they had plans for future “Sense to Synapse” conferences and am now delighted to invite interested researchers to attend the “[JGP Sense to Synapse Conference](#)”

taking place in New York City on April 11. Keep an eye on the home page for announcements of future meetings and symposia sponsored by the Journal.

Scientific meetings are not the only venue for direct interaction between the Journal and the physiology community. In February, the *JGP* teamed up with the Society of General Physiologists (SGP) to host a reception at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) for researchers interested in learning about publishing in the *JGP* and membership in the SGP. The *JGP*/SGP reception—attended by more than 200 scientists—was a resounding success, and we hope that it will be the first of many such occasions, intended to provide an informal opportunity for researchers to talk with the *JGP* editors, editorial board, and journal staff, and with SGP council members.

The PAFA reception was also the occasion for the announcement of the biggest change of all: it followed the editorial board meeting at which Ed Pugh announced his decision to step down as *JGP* Editor-in-Chief at the end of 2013. The *JGP* community will miss Ed, who has guided the Journal with energy and imagination, and with tireless devotion to maintaining the high quality and scientific integrity for which the *JGP* is known. We look forward to working with his successor—Incoming Editor Sharona Gordon—knowing that she will uphold the same high standards, while leaving her own distinctive mark on the Journal, as we go forth into the future.

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Incoming Editor Sharona Gordon addresses guests at the PAFA reception.