

## Letter from the Editor

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Dear Readers,

Welcome to the fourth volume of the Tulane Undergraduate Research Journal. This journal marks the second consecutive year of the journal's publication under the direction of Office of Undergraduate Research. Many hands make this work possible, but special thanks are due to the managing editor, Karlene Stanton, who coordinated between authors and editors with speed and grace. The journal owes quite a bit to her keen effort.

The articles within this volume showcase some of the best undergraduate work taking place at Newcomb-Tulane College and other undergraduate institutions across the nation. In the field of neuroscience, Valerie Warkins contributes vital research in the role of a particular transcription factor within thalamocortical neurons that could contribute to how we understand disorders such as epilepsy and autism. Matthew Chopp of Occidental College investigates how centuries-old thinkers shape our current view of presidential power, while Tulane student Ning Xi explores assimilation and the cultural dialectics represented in the Post-Colonial New World.

Finally, Eshan Damle led a group of students under the direction of Dr. Meenakshi Vijayaraghavan into a vital analysis on the effects of environmental disasters on water quality. This research undoubtedly holds critical importance for those of us living in the Gulf South and other climatologically vulnerable regions.

Together, each of these articles represent the liberal arts promise of Newcomb-Tulane College and institutions like it in using every area of knowledge to explore a particular issue.

In addition to the authors mentioned above, thank you also to the outstanding work of the 2022 TURJ masthead who devoted untold hours of their time to read, vet,

revise, and copyedit every word in this volume. So thank you to Bailey, Charlize, Tabitha, Noelle, Sharhana, and Valerie, and Zach—without whom this journal would not exist.

In fellowship,  
Andrew Squitiro, MFA  
Editor-in-Chief, Tulane Undergraduate Research Journal  
Office of Undergraduate Research