



## Letter from the Editor

Sandra Dorning, Marine Biology\*

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Dear readers,

The past few months have been a tumultuous time for our campus and our country. It is precisely this period of unrest and transition that, I believe, necessitates the publication and celebration of UO undergraduate research. May the accomplishments of these students inspire faith in the next generation to explore, study, and critically *question* the world around them. And let their work implore readers to view society from a new perspective.

Just the same, OURJ has experienced its own transition during the process of publishing this issue. The editorial board here wishes a fond farewell to our previous Editor-in-Chief, longtime editor Aidan Grealish, and wishes her the best in her future endeavors. I have assumed this position eager to more inextricably link OURJ to the climate of research on this campus, and to foster a collaborative spirit in both research and the editing process. Speaking of collaboration, I must thank OURJ faculty advisors Barbara Jenkins and Kevin Hatfield for their guidance and support in my first months as Editor-in-Chief and for their valuable contributions to this issue. I also want to thank our small but mighty editorial board for their dedication and hard work throughout the entire publication process.

At OURJ, we aim to publish the best undergraduate research on this campus, knowing that out of a large selection of excellent student work, we can publish only a few pieces each time around. In this issue we present a stunning diversity of research endeavors, from an analysis of zombies in literature to a study of plastic accumulation on Madagascar beaches. We are also proud to feature an editorial by Terry Hunt, Dean of the Clark Honors College, who imparts wisdom on the research process inspired by his work on the island of Rapa Nui.

Thank you readers, for your continuing support of undergraduate research and the authors we feature in this, our 10<sup>th</sup> issue of OURJ. Enjoy!

\*Sandra is a senior in the Clark Honors College planning to graduate with a degree in Marine Biology and a minor in Political Science this spring. She has been on the OURJ editorial board since spring 2014, and has served as Editor-in-Chief since November 2016. She is currently writing her honors thesis on the ecology of an invasive ascidian species in Oregon's Coos Estuary. Please direct correspondence regarding this issue of OURJ to [ourj@uoregon.edu](mailto:ourj@uoregon.edu).