

Year Six: Expanding Our Horizons

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Dear Readers,

Thank you for investing your time into exploring our completely undergraduate governed and operated life sciences journal. It has been a whirlwind of a year, and this issue represents the hard work of a truly talented group of students. Our organization has continued to grow in numbers, from only a single member in 2005 to 28 this year. As such, we decided to utilize this increase in manpower in new and interesting ways.

Every *Eukaryon* editor-in-chief hopes to improve upon last year's product in a significant way, and this year has been no different. On the cusp of our sixth birthday, *Eukaryon* has implemented several changes that represent a step forward in the quality of our journal and publication process.

All scientific discoveries require experimentation. In 2010, *Eukaryon* launched one of its biggest experiments yet. This year, we are proud to present the features board of *Eukaryon*, lead by Alina Konikova, *Eukaryon's* editor-in-chief elect. In past issues, each board member of *Eukaryon* wrote an article modeled after a magazine article on a topic of their choice. For the current issue, we created a features board whose members had the sole responsibility of writing articles that highlighted student involvement outside of the classroom, new scientific discoveries, book reviews, opinions on classes, developments on campus related to science, and more. It was a tremendous undertaking that required serious planning of the editorial board.

Each *Eukaryon* board is trained to complete their required duties, and the features board is no different. We invited two special speakers to help the features board write the most exciting, well written articles possible: Lindsay Beller, editor of *Spectrum*, the college's alumni magazine, and Dr. Dawn Abt-Perkins, professor of education and director of the college's Writing Center. Lindsay gave insight on how best to catch a reader's attention while Dr. Abt-Perkins illustrated how to relate to the audience of our magazine. Both speakers gave advice that clearly benefited the features board, as reflected by the outstanding quality of this issues features article, and we sincerely thank both of them.

Our endeavors didn't stop at improving the quality of just the print journal. Last year, *Eukaryon* conducted an assessment that revealed professors felt we could improve our communication with them regarding the status of articles they submitted and our review guidelines. We responded by revamping our e-mail update system as articles travel through the review board, and we updated our website with the most recent review guidelines and information about the review process. We constantly seek input from the faculty, students, and any other reader of *Eukaryon*, and I hope that this tradition of responding to suggestions remains long after my tenure as editor-in-chief.

Speaking of the website, our web manager has been hard at work increasing the dynamic nature of *Eukaryon's* home in cyberspace. Using Google Analytics, a powerful piece of web software that tracks visitors and page views, we now inform readers of what articles are the most viewed during the past six months. Additionally, we have added a section that updates visitors on *Eukaryon* alumni and how the alumni's experience as an editorial board member enhanced their career prospects. We hope to continue enhancing our website after the college implements its new website design this summer.

As you might realize, 2010 has been a year of unparalleled growth for *Eukaryon*. Our progress has been presented at several national meetings, and I am shocked at how interested visitors to our posters are in the idea of an undergraduate journal. I remember one particular instance in which our presentation inspired a professor from University of Wisconsin-Madison who was seeking to create a journal similar to *Eukaryon*. All he needed was proof that it could be done, and after our presentation, he said he had found it.

Each *Eukaryon* journal represents an exponential leap in achievement. From the cover art, designed by the extremely talented Jaime Perez '10, to the quality of the articles we accept, our journal continues to become more professional each release. This is no fluke; it is a direct measure of the caliber of members on our four boards. I am extremely proud of them all, and I hope you, the reader, appreciate and enjoy the product of their hard work.

Sincerely,

Michael Fiske
Editor-in-Chief '09-'10