

## Year Eight: Branching Out

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Dear Readers,

At the beginning of this academic year, we at Eukaryon decided that “branching out” would be the phrase that best described our motives for the eighth volume of the journal. As Lake Forest College continues to grow and diversify, Eukaryon wanted to keep pace and recognize disciplines interrelated with the biological and natural sciences. As a result, this year we reached out to the Psychology department and Environmental Studies program for submissions that would add a new tier of content diversity to our journal. We can all agree that these great additions not only strengthen the breadth of content published in Eukaryon, but improve the overall quality of the journal as well.

As we strive to produce our best work, Eukaryon looked within itself to find means of improvement. We recognized the need for changes in our review process that would reduce reviewer bias and encourage diverse writing styles. Zakea Boeger '12, our Web Manager, took on the lead role in making vital changes to the rubrics used by our board during article reviews. After working closely with members of the review board and taking suggestions from the faculty, we now have more refined rubrics that maintain our high standards of review, and are accepting of the diverse writing styles of our authors. Additionally, our review board has improved communication with authors, notifying them of their acceptances or rejections with suggested improvements in a timely manner. We hope that students and faculty recognize the significance in these changes in allowing Eukaryon to “branch out” and incorporate new material and improve the quality of articles published.

In keeping with our theme of branching out, our speaker for this year—Dr. Michael LaBarbera of the University of Chicago—will be presenting us with an exciting lecture on the biomechanics of movie monsters. As a sophomore, I had the incredible opportunity of attending Dr. LaBarbera's keynote speech at the 2009 Argonne Undergraduate Symposium. This talk left me with a curiosity for an unfamiliar and exciting topic that is often overlooked, and a desire to share this interest with my peers who were not present. I am confident that this exciting educational lecture would attract an audience with diverse interests, ranging from physics and biology students to art and theatre enthusiasts.

Being a journal of life sciences, Eukaryon strives to remain respectful to our environment and encourage eco-friendly habits within our campus. This year we sought to publish a more environmentally conscious print journal. We are proud to announce that all journals published this year were made with 60% post-consumer waste content recycled paper, and were printed using soy and vegetable-based inks low in Volatile Organic Compounds. Our new publisher offers these great eco-friendly options to us with no increase in printing charges from the previous years.

This has been a fantastic year for Eukaryon and we have produced a journal of which I am extremely proud. None of this would have been possible without the great support system we have within our organization. Our editorial board now consists of more than thirty members who come from diverse majors such as Chemistry, English, Environmental Studies, French, Biology and Neuroscience. I am incredibly thankful for all of the hard work they put forth this year with the most positive attitudes that made leading this wonderful organization such a privilege. I'd like to sincerely thank all of the executive board members who displayed great responsibility in ensuring all deadlines were met, and all the needs and concerns of their boards were respected. Thank you to Lindsay Nemcek, New Media and Marketing Coordinator, and Dr. Dawn Abt-Perkins, Director of Writing Programs and Professor of Education, who have been supportive of Eukaryon's initiative to highlight the outstanding scholarship of the students of Lake Forest College in the form of high quality features articles published each year. Also, I am eternally grateful for Dr. Sean Menke, our new advisor, who has been the backbone of our success. He provided innovative ideas and encouraged us to truly embody the experience of being part of a student-run, peer-reviewed journal. Finally, I would like to thank you, the reader, for your interest in our journal without which it would not enjoy the success it does today.

Sincerely,

Saajidha Rizvydeen  
Editor-in-Chief '11-'12