

April 2017

Message from the Editor: Editor Makes Plea for Successful Journal's Biggest Challenge: More Reviewers

Nick Sanyal
University of Idaho

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Recommended Citation

Sanyal, Nick (2017) "Message from the Editor: Editor Makes Plea for Successful Journal's Biggest Challenge: More Reviewers," *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*: Vol. 9 : Iss. 2 , Article 1. Available at: <https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/jces/vol9/iss2/1>

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Editor Makes Plea for Successful Journal's Biggest Challenge: More Reviewers

I am writing this at 39,000 feet above the plains of central and western Nebraska, on my way home from the 2016 Engagement Scholarship Consortium (ESC) Annual Conference in Omaha. I found ESC to be such a successful, invigorating, and rewarding gathering of a most diverse group of engagement scholars and practitioners. *JCES* will be publishing a special edition in 2017 that will report on the highlights and share many of the stimulating and innovative papers that were presented there.

While at ESC I was privileged to represent *JCES* at the traditional editors' forum along with my counterparts from four other engagement journals. While we all agreed on several important aspects of the engagement publishing world—basing manuscripts on rigorous scientific work, learning from “revise and resubmits” and rejections, and focusing on the key foci of each journal—we also differed in key ways. Those differences strengthen and widen the engagement publishing landscape by providing journals that target very different niches and thus ensuring that a wide diversity of your experiences and research needs can be met and shared with a large audience. *JCES* has been and will remain a “different kind of journal” that will strive to share the work of academics and researchers, practitioners, students, and community members in ways that appeal to all of us and increase the value of our work.

I was also thrilled to meet the *JCES* team face-to-face for the first time. Until now, we had all been faceless voices on conference calls. Not surprisingly, we all hit it off and I think we now have a new understanding of each other's skills and passions and vision for *JCES*. New to the team is Krystal Dozier, assistant to the editor. Krystal is a graduate student at The University of Alabama, and brings energy and youth, and a sense of humor, to our shared goal of delivering and improving *JCES*.

Helping us publish a robust and provocative collection of articles each issue is a team of reviewers, many who also serve on our Editorial



Dr. Nick Sanyal, Professor of Natural Resources and Society, University of Idaho

Board. Most reviewers, however, remain anonymous and driven by a selfless desire to promote engagement scholarship and do so for no public recognition and the occasional mumbled “thank you” from one of us. So, in gratitude for the invaluable service our reviewers play in keeping us from being just another publishing outlet, Thank You! Blind peer review is an enduring characteristic of quality scholarship, and you provide the expertise and direction that is essential to our mission. We are always looking for more reviewers; if you are interested in helping us, just drop us an email and we will put you to work. More reviewers will help us meet our biggest challenge brought on by our success over our first decade of existence, providing timely feedback to our authors.

Issue 9.2 of *JCES* continues to stretch the boundaries of engagement scholarship. For instance, Randy Stoecker and J. Ashleigh Ross introduce us to the emotional side of engagement—the personal needs and experiences of those traumatized by external forces. Subjects appreciated and responded to the emotional support that researchers and others provided, but in large they perceived

researchers in general as insensitive to community needs. Closely related to this work is the work of Louanne Keenan, who describes an interdisciplinary study in Canada that documents the administrative and operational challenges that thwarted and invigorated work linking homelessness and incarceration to women's health.

Nicole Thompson and Nancy Franz elaborate on the decision choices that engagement practitioners face as university scholars. Their work will go a long way toward helping those inside *and* outside academia better understand why we do the things we do.

Sharon Casapulla and Michael Hess describe their model of engagement education in which “teaching and learning are place-focused, project-based, asset-driven and democratically oriented.”

Michelle Kaiser, Christy Rogers, Michelle Hand, Casey Hoy, and Nick Stanich introduce us to the creation of food-mapping teams—diverse interdisciplinary expertise and resources of university researchers and community partners whose work informs, and impacts community engagement.

I'll end by reemphasizing a point made by Fay Fletcher, Alicia Hibbert, Brent Hammer, and Susan Ladouceur, in their article on authentic relationships, that draws focus to the principle of “...working *with*, versus *for*, *in* or *on* community.” *JCES* is all about working with communities.

Dr. Sanyal can be reached at nsanyal@uidaho.edu.