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## Message from the Editor: Founding Editor Reflects on JCES Development

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## Founding Editor Reflects on *JCES* Development



Greetings, *JCES* readers. It is with great ambivalence that I write this, my final editor's message for *JCES*. Being editor of *JCES* brought much to my life. I have had the opportunity to work with an amazing group of individuals. From the students who have worked in the office to the full-time staff affiliated with the Center for Community-Based Partnerships, my job as editor was made easier because of them. During my tenure as editor, a very difficult job was made possible through the hard work of three editorial assistants, Dr. Kyun-soo Kim, now on faculty at Grambling State University, Dr. Jessica Averitt Taylor, now on faculty at Northern Kentucky University, and Vicky Carter, a doctoral social work student, our current assistant to the editor. Each of them kept us organized, on task and moving forward. They did and continue to do far more to contribute to the success of *JCES* than most people realize. We are fortunate to have had Kyun-soo and Jessica at critical times in the journal's development and we are very fortunate as we approach another critical time in the journal's growth to still have Vicky. To each of them I say thank you and you are appreciated. A special accolade goes to Dr. Edward Mullins, production editor of *JCES*, whose talent and artistry continue to add to the unique aesthetics of *JCES*. But more than that, his strategic use of visuals gives the journal a vibrant, new, and different look and appeal. His commitment to readability adds to the journal's accessibility to all. He oversees the production of each issue of *JCES* and I appreciate his work.

*JCES* has allowed me to meet some of the strongest engagement scholars across the globe, many whom have and do serve as Editorial Board members, reviewers, and authors. Without you, the journal would not have achieved its current status in the engagement scholarship world. Also, to the board of the Engaged Scholarship Consortium I extend a sincere thank you for your support and sponsorship of *JCES*. Your sanction of the journal brings with it a level of credibility that is one indicator of success. It is always nice to know that the fruits of one's labor are recognized. And last, but definitely not least, a sincere appreciation to Dr. Samory Pruitt, vice president of the Division of Community Affairs at the University of Alabama, whose vision it was to start an engagement scholarship journal, which ultimately became *JCES*. For some reason (about which to this day I remain confused) he asked me to be this new journal's founding editor. Hesitant at first, I questioned his selection of me, especially considering there were others with stronger scholarship records than mine. Basically, what I heard was in our years' working on the same campus he took notice of my commitments to students and working with communities. He knew I was committed to providing a stronger voice and presence of those often overlooked or easily dismissed. Dr. Pruitt somehow knew before I did that I would take on this challenge. Thank you for trusting me with the course of the journal, the content of the journal, and most importantly, for supporting elevating the roles of community partners and students in a scholarly peer reviewed, academic journal.

So, my farewell is bitter sweet. It is sort of like a child getting married or going off on their own. You are happy, but... After all, what started out as a three-year commitment, turned into an eight-year one. It is time for me to return to working with other people and with students and doing the work I was doing before I became editor.

In the first issue of *JCES* we promised you a new and different kind of journal with an emphasis on what we refer to as "authentic" community engagement. We talked about the transformative nature of engagement scholarship and how *JCES* would be a vehicle for that. I am confident that we have delivered on those commitments. I am also confident that *JCES* will continue to grow, develop, and be transformative under the leadership of the new editor, Dr. Nick Sanyal of the University of Idaho. I am very pleased that Nick agreed to be the next editor. He is intelligent, committed to students and community partners, balanced and innovative with a strong engagement scholarship record. He "gets it" and I have 100% confidence in his ability to lead and shape *JCES* as we move into the future. We also welcome Dr. Marybeth Lima

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from Louisiana State University as the new associate editor. Another scholar in engagement scholarship, Marybeth brings a wealth of knowledge and perspective to the journal.

Enjoy this special issue with highlights from the 2014 Engaged Scholarship Consortium (ESC) Conference hosted by the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. We are pleased to be able to distribute this issue at the 2015 ESC Conference hosted by the Eastern Region (James Madison University, The Pennsylvania State University, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University) at Penn State in State College, Pennsylvania. Take a minute to look at this issue. I am sure you will find something of interest to you. As always, we welcome your feedback and encourage you to let us know your thoughts. The editors may have changed, but the email address is still the same, [jces@ua.edu](mailto:jces@ua.edu).