Making The Most Of What We Say

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This year is bringing exciting changes to TLM, all made possible by the hard work and dedication of our editorial board, our publisher, and the expanding group of medical education community members contributing to our mission.

First, I am delighted to announce that 2019, TLM’s 31st year of publication, will be our first regular five-issue volume year. Sustained high volume of new submissions plus increased impact of our publications has necessitated a larger page count to feature the quality work we are receiving. This milestone represents the halfway mark between the quarterly cycle TLM has had since its founding and the bimonthly format we seek to achieve in the future. TLM is smaller in scale than other medical education journals, and by design it is likely to remain so. We strive to maintain a size that will allow us to optimally balance publication output with personalized interaction, responsibility, feedback, innovation, and involvement in the community via participation in panel discussions, workshops, and social media.

Second, we are seeking to expand our role in engaging community voice by inviting and supporting group reviews of manuscripts (please see our Reviewer Acknowledgements in this issue), encouraging submissions on topics that promote diversity, inclusion, and cross-cultural understanding, and connecting readers to our publications and each other through increased social media activity. Our goal is for TLM to continue being a forum for exploration, reflection, and growth, but in a way more explicitly geared towards healing—of individuals, communities, and society. Of course, some things remain the same; please stay tuned for this year’s Editors’ Choice Award announcement, where we celebrate publications that exemplify TLM’s mission to inform educational decision making by advancing theoretical understanding.

Finally, I am pleased to present in this issue the fourth installment of TLM’s “Conversation Starters” series, featuring a brand new format. Earlier letters from the editor describing this series1,2,3 provide helpful details on the previous format and how it has evolved to remain true to its intent while keeping pace with changing interests and trends. Followers of this series will recall that this collaboration with the Group on Educational Affairs (GEA) and the Medical Education Scholarship Research and Evaluation (MESRE) Section seeks to promote scholarly discussion and deeper understanding on topics raised by interesting presentations at regional GEA Spring meetings. In essence, “Conversation Starters” extends an international invitation to participate in conversations typical of the collegial engagements these small, but exciting meetings catalyze.

This year’s installment focuses the conversation in depth on a single topic—peer-assisted learning—with the goal of examining how our descriptions of educational interventions may be used to advance theory and practice. The four selected abstracts, one from each regional meeting (Central, Northeast, Southern, and Western), all feature peer-assisted learning innovations, and their descriptions are used as a touchpoint for pondering what it means to “do” peer-assisted learning. Lead authors from each abstract collaborated with our expert commentator team—multinational and designed for expertise in peer-assisted learning and scholarly program evaluation—to build a shared understanding of the projects, their context, and aspirations for next steps. Together, we explored how peer-assisted learning may be identified in learners’ interactions, rather than their personal characteristics, and what this might mean for designing studies to evaluate impact. We believe this Conversation Starter presents new ways of thinking about peer-assisted learning and harnessing the power of learning communities in the health professions. In any event, the shared contemplation to produce this article was edifying and a great deal of fun.

Other abstract topics common across the regional meetings were interprofessional education and healthcare equity. In enthusiastic partnership with the GEA, MESRE, and regional GEA meeting planners, we eagerly anticipate exploring topics like these in future “Conversation Starters” articles. The application of
medical education scholarship to improving teamwork and outcomes in the context of diverse patient and provider need is inspiring; perhaps as a field we are discovering the power of our voice and expecting more from what gets said. We hope that deep dives like “Conversation Starters” support this endeavor and that TLM more broadly serves this important goal in who we include and what we publish. Thank you, readers and contributors, for making this exchange possible. We look forward to shaping the future together.

GEA Informational Links

**GEA**

2019 National Grant Program: [https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/gea_sections/mesre/](https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/gea_sections/mesre/)
- Pre-Proposals due February 2019

**Regional Programs**

2019 Grant proposals due:
- September 30, 2019
- Call for Proposals – March, 2019

2020 Spring Meeting abstracts due:
- November, 2019

GEA Central Region (CGEA)
Grant Program: [https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/cgea/251660/cgea_awards.html](https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/cgea/251660/cgea_awards.html)

GEA 2019 National Grant Program: [https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/gea_sections/mesre/](https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/gea_sections/mesre/)
- Pre-Proposals due February 2019

GEA Northeast Region (NEGEA)
Grant Program: [https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/negea/453486/negeagrants.html/](https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/negea/453486/negeagrants.html/)
- Spring Meeting: [https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/negea/meetings/](https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/negea/meetings/)

GEA Southern Region (SGEA)
Grant Program: [https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/sgea/awards/](https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/sgea/awards/)
- Spring Meeting: [https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/sgea/meetings/](https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/sgea/meetings/)

GEA Western Region (WGEA)
Grant Program: [https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/wgea/](https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/wgea/)
- Spring Meeting: [https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/wgea/meetings/](https://www.aamc.org/members/gea/regions/wgea/meetings/)

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