

A Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Research Journal (IURJ), a publication of the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Honors College and UIC Library. As a premier research institution in the heart of one of the world's greatest cities, UIC undoubtedly fosters an excellent environment for its undergraduate students to take advantage of a myriad of research experiences under the guidance of leading scientists in the field. The Honors College in particular encourages this engagement in scholarship, empiricism, and intellectual growth. By working alongside devoted faculty members, students are able to develop professional relationships while eventually being able to design and execute their own research studies. This journal is designed to showcase their work.

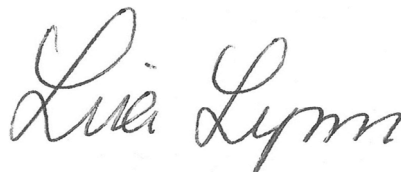
For our first issue, we are publishing six of fifteen submissions which we believe represent exemplary undergraduate research. These studies were evaluated based on originality, scholarly significance, and the use of rigorous research methods appropriate to that field. We would like to thank all of the supervising faculty members acknowledged in each paper for their continuous mentorship and support of their students with the substantial task of writing a research manuscript. We would also like to extend our thanks to the Advisory Board for their time and dedication in making this journal possible. Finally, we express our sincere gratitude to all of our graduate peer reviewers who have provided invaluable and constructive feedback to the authors and Editorial Board.

We continue to welcome submissions from all UIC undergraduate students who are working on research in any discipline. It is our sincere hope that IURJ will be the launchpad for many successful research careers and that the authors you see listed in these pages will someday be the names you see listed in the pages of top-tier journals.

Sincerely,



Rahul Patel, *Editor-in-Chief*



Lisa Lynn, *Graduate Review Chair*