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From the Editors

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From the Editors

by Melissa lanetta and Lauren Fitzgerald

When we began drafting this column, we turned to where we've continually turned these last few months as we've attempted to understand the myriad elements that comprise an issue of *WCJ*: the example set by Elizabeth Boquet and Neal Lerner, our *WCJ* editorial-team predecessors and all-around editorial superheroes. We both have long been impressed with the achievements of *WCJ* under their leadership, and now that we are responsible for filling their all-too-big shoes, we find their hard work, professional grace, and enduring good humor a model for all writing center professionals and scholars. Michelle Eodice, former *WCJ* Associate Editor for Development and current President of IWCA, has also served as an important resource and role model, always ready to give generously of her time. We sincerely thank Beth, Neal, and Michelle for their assistance and friendship and hope to do justice to their accomplishments.

We want to acknowledge, too, our debt and gratitude to other editors of the journal – Lil Brannon, Al DeCiccio, Diana George, Nancy Grimm, Jeanette Harris, Dave Healy, Joyce Kinkead, Ed Lotto, Joan Mullin, and Stephen North. These individuals have helped shape the field and so created the legacy on which we hope to build in our five years at *WCJ*.

In addition to recognizing such assistance from friends and colleagues in the field, we wish to express our thanks to those individuals at the University of Delaware and Yeshiva University who have made our work with *WCJ* possible. At the University of Delaware, Dean Tom Apple, Associate Dean Ann Ardis, and Chair of English Stephen Bernhardt have lent vital institutional support and individual expertise to this endeavor. We thank also Professor Ashley John Pigford and the students of UD Design Center – Marc Anderson, Nicole Fleisher, Allison Schwartz and Samantha Weintraub – for their design work. We hope you agree that their work gives the journal an exciting new vi-

sual presence. At Yeshiva University, David Srolovitz, Dean of Yeshiva College, YC Associate Deans Joanne Jacobson and Fredric Sugarman, and Adam Zachary Newton, YC English Chair, offered encouragement and support in ways that continue to matter. Finally, we note with particular gratitude that the University of Delaware will serve as institutional home to the journal, providing the resources necessary to give *WCJ* a physical location and administrative stability.

If you looked at the title page that preceded this preface, you might have noticed some of the other changes evident in this issue. Reflecting the collaborative nature of this production, for example, we've added editorial positions for the students and writing center professionals involved with the creation of this issue of *WCJ*. Associate Editor, graduate student Sophia Harrison, and Assistant Editor, undergraduate Jeff Conrad, have been integral to the production of this issue, as have writing center professional staff members and Editorial Assistants Eleanor Austin and Jane Sharf. We could accomplish nothing without the kind spirit and tireless energy of Production Coordinator Carolyn Clark, whose administrative talents keep all things humming along.

Other new items premiering in this issue include a revision to the *WCJ* statement of purpose and the call for a new feature, "Theory In/To Practice." The aim of the revised statement of purpose is not to change the already-impressive trajectory of the journal but to better align its stated mission with the present state of the field and with the work currently published in the pages of *WCJ*. With the call for "Theory In/To Practice" – described at the end of the announcements section – we hope to encourage the documentation and dissemination of those innovative practices that illustrate well the connection between theory and practice so crucial to writing center work.

Even while thus illustrating some of the new elements of *WCJ*, the essays in this month's issue continue the high scholarly standards that are the journal's hallmark. The mix of essays here, we think, both addresses issues of recurring concern and contributes new knowledge to our disciplinary conversation. In "All the Best Intentions," Karen Rowan uses empirical data collected from surveys of writing center directors and graduate student administrators to explore often-nebulous elements of mentoring. This essay will challenge readers to reconsider the field's self-perception as consistently supportive and offer strategies to mentor the next generation of writing center professionals. In a like manner, the other essays in this issue use empirical methods to bring new perspectives to writing center work. In "Between Technological Endorsement and Resistance," for example, Stephen Neaderhiser and Joanna Wolfe deftly draw upon

the primary data set of our discipline – the Writing Center Research Project’s biannual survey – to examine ways in which writing center professionals currently incorporate technology into their work. So too, in “Examining Our Lore,” Isabelle Thompson et al. use the data from student and tutor surveys about more than 4,000 writing center conferences to test commonly-held notions of ideal tutoring. Continuing this issue’s empirical theme, Carol Severino, Jeffery Swenson, and Jia Zhu engage in “A Comparison of Online Feedback Requests by Non-Native English-Speaking and Native English Speaking Writers” to discover important differences – and similarities – between the ways these populations make use of online tutoring. Looking at another essential context for writing center work, Jill Pennington rounds out this issue with her review of *Inside the Community College Writing Center: Ten Guiding Principles* by Ellen G. Mohr.

Taken together, these pieces augur an exciting future of writing center studies, a time when the traditions of lore are reconciled with empirical evidence and when our historical commitments to individualized instruction are more fully extended into new media. We look forward to receiving your manuscripts and seeing where writing center studies – and *Writing Center Journal* – will take us!