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Welcome to SUURJ

Editors of SUURJ

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Welcome to *SUURJ*: Celebrating its Fifth Year!

Welcome to the Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal (*SUURJ*). Through the hard work and collaboration of student editors, organizers, advertisers, and fundraisers, we have achieved a fifth volume of our journal, and we are thankful for the contributions of university students, faculty, and administrators. Beyond simply a journal, *SUURJ* is a publication made to amplify students' voices and insights beyond the classroom into wider conversations; it is also an opportunity, providing both authors and editors with valuable professional experience. Although we were challenged by the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and interacting entirely through virtual means, *SUURJ* Volume 5 has come together, and we are thrilled to present the product of our year-long collaboration.

This year's volume is a poignant curation of student research across a variety of fields of study, from microbiology and game design to the cultural renaissance and the impacts of refugees. Each year's selection is a careful deliberation that seeks to balance disciplinary and methodologically diverse content with relevant theses that engage broader issues in important and insightful ways. In being an online journal, we have the benefit of bridging students' research into larger conversations at a global scale. Although *SUURJ* is a small journal, the process of its creation has been immense, from our training, to the selection process, to copyediting, to publication assembly. We feel it is this hard work and dedication that have brought us to where we are: with our fifth volume, and one that we are proud to showcase. While *SUURJ* does not choose annual themes for its volumes, natural patterns and rhythms will often occur. This year, we noticed surfacing themes of boldly confronting injustice at the environmental, social, and humanitarian levels.

As the fifth team to embark on this journey, we have had the gracious leadership, compassion, and insight of Dr. Molly Clark Hillard, who ran the entire practicum. It has been a turbulent journey from beginning to end, but being the experienced captain that she is, Dr. Hillard guided us through our stresses and uncertainties until we reached the final stretch, with moments of laughter, fun, and creativity illuminating the culmination of our work. The challenges created by the pandemic pushed us to grow, adapt, and innovate, leading us to a publication that we feel has not only met those challenges, but reflected the context of our world and the concerns which swirl about it. We have the collective effort of our cohort, leader, and contributors to thank for that.

SUURJ Volume 5 encountered a rich pool of submissions, perhaps a reflection of the need to bring issues to light, helped by the passions of students. It is, without a doubt, the

drive of inspired community members that has fueled the need for undergraduate research journals and created for students across disciplines an impactful platform. The need for diverse voices and issues is crucial, and it is our hope to elevate in order to provoke, to inspire in order to motivate, to start the conversation in order to begin change. We do that with the help of driven student research, the work of our student editors, and the participation of readers like yourself. So, in this milestone year of the journal, we thank you.

All Our Gratitude,
The *SUURJ* Volume 5 Student Editorial Team

A Note from the Chief Faculty Editor

It is hard to believe that it has already been five years since we launched our first volume with our first cohort of student editors and authors. It has been my honor to serve as the founder and faculty editor of this journal since its beginning in 2016 (with a year off for sabbatical, when the journal was in the very talented hands of Professors Tara Roth and Hannah Tracy). In a short span of time, *SUURJ* has gone from an idea to a thriving publication with a global readership. This success would not have been possible without the help and support of many people, among them our faculty advisory board; the financial and logistical sponsorship of the College of Arts and Sciences, Albers, Lemieux Library, and the University Core office; the many faculty who have encouraged their students to submit essays, our faculty content editors, our talented contributors, and four years of amazing student editors, who take on the mantle of *SUURJ* apprenticeship year after year with skill and grace.

It bears noting that this first cohort of editors found themselves deliberating on our first set of manuscript submissions the day after the election of Donald Trump in November 2016. In the midst of collective shock and grief, that editorial team marched into deliberation sessions with a laser-like focus and determination to create a first issue that would render clear their values as a team, give voice to students, and speak truth to power. That set of intentions has stayed with *SUURJ* for all five of its issues. This year, in November of 2020, our new crop of editors once again entered the deliberation process with a presidential election hanging in the balance. They, too, set the task for themselves of selecting a set of essays that speak to justice, repair, and hope in bleak times.

Watch this space for new and exciting directions for the journal in the future as we *SUURJ* forward into the next five years!

Yours in the service of great prose and ethical editing,
Molly Clark Hillard, PhD
Department of English
Chief Faculty Editor for *SUURJ*