Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the *Journal of Genetic Counseling*

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The *Journal of Genetic Counseling* was established 20 years ago. The following are comments from the editors in reflection and celebration!

Deborah Eunpu

When the first editorial board was charged with establishing this Journal of Genetic Counseling, we had little idea of what we were doing. We had dreams, we had hopes, and we had a drive to begin a tradition of academically sound and rigorous examination of our work as genetic counselors. Thankfully we had those strong desires and a healthy dose of hubris, because we had little experience and no indexing

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service would take us on. Who would want to publish their work where it wouldn't be accessible through the indexing services of the day? How could we publish a journal when there was no paradigm for what research in genetic counseling should or could be? Where would the manuscripts come from? So, we started with what we knew: clinical reports and narratives of projects. I remember holding the first issue in my hands, the feeling of wonder akin to that of holding a newborn baby, and wondering how we would keep doing it again and again four times a year. I am grateful for all the board members, all the authors, the NSGC's support, and the continued willingness of our profession to commit time, talent and financial support to the journal. When I receive the journal now, it is still a special event. In its continued growth over the years is reflected the growth of our profession. To the first editorial board members, I send a special message: "See, we weren't crazy. The Journal you nurtured is thriving". That is all to the benefit of the patients and families we serve.

Robert Resta

With the success of Journal of Genetic Counseling—and I count 20 years of uninterrupted publication as a success—the genetic counseling profession has managed to pull a rabbit out of its hat. Remember that 20 years ago there was virtually no research tradition within the field. Indeed, most genetic counseling training programs did not even require a thesis for graduation, and most of us had little or no formal training in qualitative or quantitative research design. Still the drive to create an outlet about genetic counseling research came from within the field as it sought to define and assess itself on its own terms. Yet somehow the profession has managed to nurture the journal's growth

to the point where it has become one of the leading venues for articles about the psychosocial, ethical, and educational aspects of genetic counseling. Now the number of quality manuscripts submitted to the journal has nearly become an embarrassment of riches. So I offer a proud pat on the back to a profession that has never backed down from the many challenges of establishing a new and dynamic dimension to healthcare.

Allyn McConkie-Rosell

I took on the role of nurturing the Journal through the tumultuous early adolescent years. As any parent of an adolescent can tell you, those years are full of growth and conflict. It was no different for the Journal. Similarly the role of editor is not just about the Journal, it is also about personal professional growth. I don't know how Bob and Deborah managed to get the job done as it quickly became clear that the position of editor had grown beyond one person. It was at this time that the position of assistant editor was formally developed and ably filled by Jennifer Sullivan. Jennifer and I worked together to try to nurture the growth of the Journal, nudge it towards independence, and when needed to reign it in. We courted international submissions and encouraged first time authors. We expanded the editorial board and charged them with the tasks of identifying and facilitating research and professional issues submissions to the Journal. My fantastic editorial board also mentored papers that were not quite ready for prime time; with many successfully published because of their efforts. Along with the Journal the profession of genetic counseling has also grown and developed. As technologies, such as whole genome sequencing emerge, there are accompanying challenges. The Journal is poised to provide a forum to inform and debate these challenges. It is a great honor to have played a small part in the maturation of the journal. Congratulations to the Journal of Genetic Counseling for the first 20 years with many more exciting ones to come.

Bonnie S. LeRoy

So, I remember when Deb Eunpu first proposed a journal for the genetic counseling profession. I thought she was crazy. The profession was itself only about 20 years old. How could we support a journal? Well, just a few years ago, I applied to the NSGC to serve as the editor of that journal. This time I thought maybe I was crazy. How could I serve as the editor of a journal that had clearly become a well established publication in the world of journals and served as our face to the scientific community? I have learned so much over the last few years and I am honored to be in this position. The journal has clearly grown in terms of the number as well as in the breadth of manuscripts. The *Journal of Genetic Counseling* mirrors the incredible development of the profession. There are consistent threads across the 20 years demonstrating genetic counselors' skills in the science of genetics and the relationally-based grounding of our practice where we continue to strive to better understand what we do in order to improve our practice. The journal continues to publish all sorts of research including quantitative, qualitative, data-based and case-based, and also encourages papers that promote professional development. The journal is also clearly international where we all have the opportunity to learn from practitioners all over the world. It has been a privilege to serve as editor and I am excited to see where we can still go!!

You have brains in your head.

You have feet in your shoes.

You can steer yourself any direction you choose.

You're on your own.

And you know what you know.

And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go.

(Seuss 1990, p.3)

References

Seuss, D. (1990). *Oh, the places you'll go!* New York: Random House.