Editor's Notes

By Abbie Brown
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Welcome to the first issue of *TechTrends* volume 56! It is also a new year and for many of us the start of a new semester. As we begin anew, I am reminded of discussions on the theme of "exploration" held at the National Technology Leadership Council (NTLC) summit held in Washington, DC this past September. We in educational technology spend a great deal of our time exploring innovations. We learn how new tools and systems work; we research innovation in instructional settings; we struggle to separate the hyperbole of the marketing claims and consumer fears from the realities of how innovative ideas and tools can help improve learning. Our task is not unlike setting out to explore uncharted territory: we are in our own way Magellans, Colum-buses, Lewises, Clarks, Sacagaweas, Boones, Byrds, Hudsons and Cortés. Like every explorer, we run into

problems at least as often as we find treasure, but we continue with our endeavors knowing that we are helping contribute valuable information to our colleagues and communities.

In this issue that valuable information includes John Cowan's description of a hybrid technology education masters program making successful use of a community of practice model and problem-based learning approach; Kevin Thomas and Christy McGee's exploration of current research on classroom use of cell phones; and Catherine Schwartz's report of the results of a study in which she compares a problem solving activity applied to both online and face-to-face learning environments.

As we begin the new year and a new volume of our journal, I wish you the very best in your endeavors to make innovations accessible and improve learning opportunities.

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