

# FOREWORD

Welcome to the 2022–2023 issue of the Undergraduate Research Journal at Illinois Tech (URJ-IIT). This issue’s feature article, “Academic Publishing,” is especially timely. Scholarly communication is now on the cusp of significant change and the current generation of researchers can influence how it develops. This communication is vital to advancing science, technology, medicine—indeed, all areas of scholarship—and publishing has been central to scholarly communication almost since the introduction of the printing press. However, there have been major changes in scholarly publishing over the past 60 years. During this time, scholarly publishing has gone from being a print-based enterprise controlled by nonprofit organizations, such as universities or scholarly/professional societies, to an online-based business controlled by for-profit multinational corporations. This has led to the current situation where the cost of publishing tends to exclude all but elite institutions from participating fully. Subscription costs are simply too high for paywalled content, and publishing charges are too high for open content. This presents opportunities and challenges for the future of research and scholarly communication.

To meet some of those challenges and opportunities, many new initiatives and publishing models are being introduced. This publication is a good example. URJ-IIT is an example of what’s known as “open access,” or OA for short. It is free for readers. All funding to support its publication comes entirely from the university and it is hosted by Illinois Tech’s library. Students volunteer their time as editors, reviewers, and contributors. You can support the journal’s commitment to OA by volunteering your time as a contributor or a peer reviewer.

In this issue, students contributed and peer reviewed seven articles in addition to the feature article. These articles cover topics in biomedical engineering, the humanities, psychology, and computer science, displaying the breadth and depth of student research here at Illinois Tech. I encourage everybody to explore all the articles presented here.

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