

Volume XI, April 2009

Preface

In the fall of 1997, The College of New Jersey sent a five-member team, composed of four faculty members and one administrator, to a weekend workshop titled “Institutionalizing Undergraduate Research.” The workshop was sponsored by the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR), a national organization whose mission is to support and promote high quality undergraduate student-faculty collaborative research, scholarship, and creative activity. At that time, as a faculty member at one of TCNJ’s peer institutions, I had the great fortune and honor to serve as the CUR facilitator who worked with the TCNJ team to help develop a strategically oriented action plan to expand, strengthen, and institutionalize TCNJ’s efforts. The outcomes of that workshop energized TCNJ’s community and created a series of initiatives aimed at promoting and supporting a College-wide scholarly culture focused on deep student engagement and the teacher-scholar model for the faculty. One of the specific outcomes of the workshop was the establishment of this *Journal of Student Scholarship*, with the first volume published the following year, in 1998.

I feel even more fortunate now to be a member of the TCNJ community and to have the opportunity to work directly with our student- and faculty-scholars, including those whose incredible papers are featured in this volume. Based on both our own experiences at TCNJ and the broader body of knowledge that has been published in recent years, it is clear that student interactions with faculty mentors through undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activity significantly affect students’ cognitive and behavioral development and directly influence student learning in many positive ways. Engagement in these high-impact pedagogical and scholarly experiences yields an array of results for students, which are broadly related to cognitive and intellectual growth, professional growth and advancement, and personal growth. You will no doubt be able to observe several of these key outcomes firsthand when you read the impressive collection of papers, representing many different disciplines, that are included in this eleventh volume of TCNJ’s *Journal of Student Scholarship*.

Finally, without the hard work and deep dedication to scholarly inquiry of each of the student authors, as well as their faculty mentors, this volume would not be possible. Congratulations on this important achievement, and best wishes.

Jeffrey M. Osborn
Professor of Biology
Dean, School of Science
President, Council on Undergraduate Research