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Presidential Address

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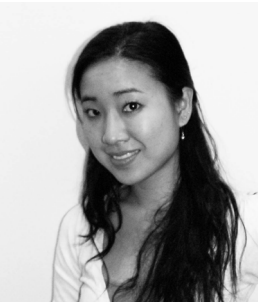
Presidential Address

Dear Reader,



In recent months, two profound events demanded the attention of the international community, bringing together individuals across the world in a common, global experience. The earthquake in Haiti led to efforts of governments and local communities to help rebuild a demolished country from the ground up. The recent conclusion of the Winter Olympic Games here at home united 82 countries in its celebration of athleticism and global unity, Spectators in Canada and around the world drew collective gasps and screams of joy as the Games unfolded. These events demonstrate the connection we, as global citizens, have with our global family whatever the distance. The plights faced by those of an unfamiliar continent can hit close to home, while festivities experienced within our borders can be felt far and wide.

This year, the McMaster Meducator presents this Special Issue in collaboration with the fifth annual Global Citizenship Conference - "The Power to Empower." In this Special Issue, we explore health issues in various geographical locations in our world. Nadira Saleh investigates the 'hidden hunger' of micronutrient malnutrition and the Philippines' response to this problem. Veronica Chan, Iris Lui, Grace Lun and Naushin Nagji examine widespread counterfeit drug dissemination in Africa and propose an adaptation of Nigeria's Vendor Awareness Initiative for use in Benin. Matthew MacDonald dives into the delicate business of vaccine use in the developing world, where cultural and social sensitivities affect their effectiveness. Rhyanna Cho, Jennifer Edge and Alvin Keng inspired by personal experiences, reflect on the ethical considerations each international volunteer should explore before departing on such travels. Finally, we are fortunate to have Dr. Nancy Doubleday, the professor of the Peace-building through Health Initiatives course, deliver a commentary on the impact and provision health care in areas of conflict and disaster.

This issue is a concerted effort of the McMaster Meducator and the Global Citizenship Conference (GCC) executive committees. It is the goal of the conference to help students recognize their role as socially conscious global citizens, and to inspire their empowerment through learning, discussion, and collaboration towards positive social change. Naturally, today's most pressing social issues are inextricably linked to global health challenges. Conference presenters will discuss themes consistent with our selection of articles in this issue, including grassroots HIV prevention and aid programs in Northern Ghana, water sanitation engineering technologies, female genital mutilation practices, and traditional aboriginal medicine. Moreover, authors of our Food Fortification, International Volunteering, and Peace Through Health pieces will be sharing their knowledge as workshop leaders.

I extend a sincere thank you to those with GCC for their cooperation throughout the process of putting this publication together. To community members and the McMaster Student Union, I would like to express our gratitude for your generosity in helping make this issue a reality. Credit goes to the McMaster Photography Association for the striking images you see on the cover and throughout this publication. Finally, I would like to thank the McMaster Meducator executive for their continued dedication to ensuring the rigor of the publication while constantly striving to better identify with the interests of the McMaster community.

Without further ado, The McMaster Meducator and the Global Citizenship Conference jointly present "Bridging Borders Through Health" - we hope you will be inspired and empowered by our selections.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Ho
B.H.Sc. IV

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