Student Débuts a Focused Mission

It is my great pleasure to present the first issue with the new title of the *Journal of Student Science and Technology* formerly known as *Canadian Young Scientist Journal*. I have been actively involved with the Journal for over two years and truly believe that it exemplifies the talent of student scientists who are making a positive difference in the world. One of our student editors, Julia Robson, feels that “the Journal specifically provides a unique opportunity for young peoples' work to be recognized and valued”. Hence, this issue is dedicated to the student editors, authors, ambassadors and readers who are the backbone of the organization.

I asked my fellow students what working with the Journal has meant for them. For Sarina Lalla, a student leader in the organization, the “networking” and contributing to Journal projects “has nurtured a passion for science that [she] didn’t know was so strong in [her]”. I share her sentiment since my involvement has allowed me to interact with like-minded individuals across Canada and furthered my interest in research and innovation. As a grade 12 student, I stand at a turning point in my life, faced with multiple decisions about my education and career. I can proudly state that the Journal has affected my perspective on the field of scientific research and I intend to passionately pursue this vocation.

Student voice and initiative is embedded at the core of the Foundation for Student Science and Technology and this commitment allows students to develop leadership, communication, and other career skills. Students feel that programs like the Journal pushes them beyond their comfort zone as they take on projects and roles previously unavailable to them. Andy Ou, one of our ambassadors, recently promoted to regional leader said that “I have learned a lot from my experiences and failures. FSST has pushed me above my limits as well as enhanced my leadership and communication skills”. The perspective of students is powerful and when they implement their own ideas, such as our recent Cover Art Contest featured in subsequent issues this year, they experience growth as well as sense of accomplishment. And the Contest participants also gain experience and illustrate the link of creativity between art and science.

Our organization prides itself on empowering students to get involved in Science and Technology. Netra Unni, a student leader, sums up what this means perfectly when expressing “I personally believe that FSST is definitely taking a big step towards furthering research-based education by making students aware of research opportunities and the applications of research in STEM. Through student-run symposiums and various outreach methods, FSST has opened a path for students to pursue scientific inquiry and apply their knowledge to innovate.”

All in all, the new name of the Journal and organization reflects our emphasis on putting students first. We are the *Journal of Student Science and Technology*. Our goal this year is to continue building on this idea. The students are embracing this mission and looking forward building on our accomplishments and launching new innovative initiatives. We hope you find the student spirit at FSST just as empowering as we do.

**Abeera Shahid**
High School Senior and Director Outreach
The Foundation for Student Science and Technology