



Introducing *ATS Scholar*, the American Thoracic Society Education Journal

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Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.

—Nelson Mandela (2003)

Efforts ranging from teaching residents at the bedside in the intensive care unit to demystifying respiratory physiology to inspire future generations of pulmonologists, helping a patient understand the results of her sleep, and collaborating with respiratory therapists to teach excellent inhaler technique occur every day in medicine. To be successful, these endeavors require skilled teachers. We are launching *ATS Scholar* because education is essential to the core mission of the American Thoracic Society (ATS), improving health across the world.

There has been a steady growth of clinician-educators within the ATS and across academic medicine as a whole with a concurrent increase in clinician-educator tracks in graduate medical education programs (1–3). In response to this, ATS created the Section for Medical Education in 2015 as a home for educators within our society. In less than five years, the Section has grown to over 2,000

members. *ATS Scholar* is a new journal home, not only for these educators, but also for readers who want to develop teaching skills and understand the changing landscape of medical education, ranging from the training of the next generation of scientists to the rapid growth of interprofessional teaching and learning. Our focus is on content related to education and training of health professionals that is broadly relevant to adult and pediatric pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine. Our vision includes papers examining issues relevant to undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education. We strive to publish papers that appeal not only to educators but also to practicing clinicians. As an example, *ATS Scholar* has created a novel publication type called “How I Teach.” These narrative reviews from master teachers will describe their approach to teaching an important topic in pulmonary, critical care, or sleep medicine while also reviewing the subject matter in an easily digestible way.

There are several important and unique fields of study within the scope of *ATS Scholar* to highlight. The best medical care is provided by high-functioning teams, so

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papers related to interprofessional education are of particular interest. Because education and efforts to improve patient care should go hand in hand, quality-improvement and implementation science papers that detail the educational approach of the intervention will be considered, as will papers and videos that serve as plain-language patient education resources. Long-standing issues related to lack of diversity and gender equity in the healthcare workforce are finally being acknowledged and discussed (4). Papers that study these problems or provide informed perspective on them are also encouraged. Burnout is a growing problem across health care and is especially common in those who provide care to critically ill patients (5), so we seek papers related to the well-being of healthcare professionals.

ATS Scholar will be designed to optimize the reading experience so that manuscripts and embedded figures and media are easy to read online, as opposed to journals primarily formatted for print.

There are major concerns about the future of the physician-scientist workforce (6). We hope to see papers related to novel approaches to the training of scientists and interventions to create a richer learning environment. Trainee transitions into the laboratory may or may not come with dedicated instruction, so videos teaching specific scientific skills or techniques are also encouraged. Education in our field varies across the globe, so we hope to publish scholarly work and commentary from our international colleagues.

The first original research papers published in this issue include a qualitative

analysis of fellowship directors' perspectives on applicant personal statements (7) and a research study comparing the digital footprints of asthma Twitter posts from medical and nonmedical stakeholders (8). This issue also includes important perspective papers about training, one from the Pulmonary and Critical Care Milestones team describing the ongoing effort to modify the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education milestones to improve trainee assessment (9) and another providing practical guidance regarding educational strategies for quality-improvement and implementation medicine training (10). These manuscripts only serve as the beginning as we look forward to the spectrum of literature the journal will publish in upcoming issues.

ATS Scholar will take a modern approach to publishing. Our world is digital, so the journal is online only. This allows us to take advantage of media such as videos, which can serve as important exhibits in manuscripts or as stand-alone peer-reviewed educational pieces (11). We hope this will also encourage authors to be creative with their submissions. *ATS Scholar* will be designed to optimize the reading experience so that manuscripts and embedded figures and media are easy to read online, as opposed to journals primarily formatted for print.

Furthermore, all articles in *ATS Scholar* are free for readers so that we can serve our community with peer-reviewed open-access educational content. The modern learner's habits of content consumption are changing, so *ATS Scholar* will engage with readers through social media. Our social media team will provide infographics for articles with appealing posts linking to our open-access articles. Journal readers should look forward to Twitter chats and

podcasts with authors of articles and subject matter experts to provide context about important papers and issues relevant to the education community. We hope this outreach will engage emerging educators so that *ATS Scholar* is a clear home for the next generation of teachers and learners.

Today's medical readers have many options, from the rapidly rising number of journals to popular medical blogs. Our belief is that timely and thoughtful peer review matters more than ever to ensure readers have access to accurate and well-written material. *ATS Scholar* has a talented group of Associate Editors and Editorial Board members to lead this important peer-review process. With this group, we seek to model the diversity that is essential to health care as a whole by committing to gender equality and representation of people of color on our Board.

The simple guiding principle of *ATS Scholar* is to publish excellent peer-reviewed, open-access content related to training and education. When the journal is eligible, we will apply for inclusion in journal citation databases such as MEDLINE, from the National Library of Medicine, which require an independent assessment of a journal meeting a quality standard. Unique

full-text download data will help us better understand reader interest in specific publications and, as a complement, study the altmetrics to optimize broad access to articles (12).

As the journal is launched, we are upfront in acknowledging that it will evolve. The plan is for this evolution to occur in large part by partnering with authors and readers. We will not just review download data, but also listen to individual feedback online, in person at meetings, and on social media to determine whether the journal is meeting their needs. This feedback will help us adapt and inform the growth of *ATS Scholar*. Our team is sincere in this commitment to the community of educators.

As the world of medical publishing moves from print, we will meet the readers where they are today, on their computer, tablet, or phone. The journal will pursue digital enhancements that maximize the reader experience. Though much is uncertain about the digital transition of medical journals, the commitment to publish high-quality manuscripts and videos within the scope of *ATS Scholar* will remain constant.

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