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FELLOWS-IN-TRAINING & EARLY CAREER SECTION

# Addressing Equity and More in 2021



## Call From Fellows-in-Training & Early Career Section Editors

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The year 2020 will be remembered in notoriety. Few events in history have so pervasively altered every aspect of our society as did the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. With respect to the training of the next generation of cardiovascular specialists, the virus has exposed frontline providers to unprecedented health hazards, limited their in-person learning and networking opportunities, and dramatically altered their clinical experiences (1).

Yet it was also a year marked by resilience. The pandemic demanded greater toughness and selflessness among health care providers of all capacities. Patient care, research, and training forced adaptation to stricter conditions, yet collaboration and innovation allowed trainees to ultimately prevail (1-4). Conferences, ranging from institutional lectures to national and international meetings, were held virtually. Fellowships and jobs were secured without a physical handshake. There will now be new generations of cardiologists and cardiac surgeons who will have spent the most formative months of their training during a pandemic.

The Fellows-in-Training & Early Career (FIT/EC) Section of the *Journal* also participated in efforts to bring together and share our collective efforts and ingenuity. We aimed to balance COVID-19-related

content with non-COVID content, with the goal of maintaining our overarching vision of promoting all topics related to FIT/EC education and advancement. Since transitioning into our new roles as section editors at the beginning of this year, we have been fortunate to receive excellent paper from voices across the globe, some new and some well-known to the *JACC* readership. With a practical focus, Almarzooq et al. (5) shared with us how virtual learning platforms can reshape the way we teach and learn during the pandemic. From a more soulful approach, Yong (6) reminded us of the importance of our community in such times of crisis.

As we look forward to this new year with cautiously renewed optimism, we hope to recognize an issue that has affected our field since well before the pandemic: equity. This year has highlighted and exacerbated the ways in which disparities influence not only the field of medicine but also the world in which we live. While everyone experienced unprecedented challenges, those who are less privileged based on gender, race, and socioeconomic status, among other factors, were particularly affected. This has driven us to bring further attention to these issues as we look toward a year of collective healing. Specifically, we would like to encourage the submission of articles focused on the theme of improving equity in: 1) recruitment; 2) training; and 3) career promotion of FIT/EC professionals. Some may be inspired to offer personal reflections. Some may be compelled to offer new ideas and solutions to structural discrimination and inequities. Regardless of the focus, we look forward to continuing to review well-written and thought-provoking papers containing diverse ideas, all centered on the goal of improving our growing community.

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Additionally, we plan to organize mini-themes throughout the year consisting of several niche areas of scholarship that are timely and valuable to the FIT/EC community. One example on our horizon is the “business of medicine,” which includes information on contract negotiations, tips on decision making with regard to job selection, and more. The pandemic has changed the business environment as much as it has the clinical, and we hope this information proves to be universally high yield. As always, our eyes and our inboxes are on the lookout for new ideas. We welcome all suggestions from the community on mini-themes as opportunities to collaborate.

We would like to express gratitude for the unwavering commitment to the FIT/EC Section by Dr. Valentin Fuster, *JACC* Editor-in-Chief, and his editorial board. We would also like to acknowledge the

hard work and dedication on the part of Ms. Justine Turco, the Divisional Senior Director, and Ms. Eileen Cavanagh, the Executive Managing Editor, without whom the pages would remain unfilled and unorganized.

As always, we remain inspired by the burgeoning, impressive voices within the FIT/EC community, and look forward to continuing to showcase the very best in the coming year.

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