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Letter to the Members of the Georgia Academy of Science

David L. Bechler

Valdosta State University, dbechler@valdosta.edu

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Letter to the Members of the Georgia Academy of Science,

This letter is an update and review of recent activities in the Georgia Journal of Science. As of 2016, the journal has gone from a hardcopy format to a digital format through Digital Commons/Bepress (<http://digitalcommons.gaacademy.org/gjs/>). As a result of this, individuals worldwide now have access to journal articles free and online. Manuscripts accepted for publication are now placed online after the final acceptance and editing is complete.

A review on 20 March 2017 of online download events involving publications in 2016 shows that, of the 21 publications (the annual meeting program was included as one publication), there were 2,621 downloads with an average download rate of 124.8 downloads per publication (range/publication = 12–638, range of downloads/day/publication = 0.11–2.19, mean downloads/day/all publications = 8.64). A point of clarification needs to be made here as the length of time individual publications were online when the download analysis was performed varied depending on the date of publication, so the rate is higher for some publications than might be indicated above.

The journal is a broad-based publication covering multiple disciplines (anthropology, atmospheric, biological, biomedical, chemical, earth, physics, mathematics, and computers; and science, engineering, and technology studies). Within these disciplines, articles involving basic research, science education, and the history and philosophy of science are accepted. While the most common submissions for 2016 involved basic research (n = 15), publications involving education (n = 2), experimental protocol and philosophy (n = 2), and science history (n = 1) were also published.

Besides full length submissions that follow the standard formatting found in many journals worldwide (abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion, acknowledgements, and references), the journal also accepts Notes and Letters to the Editor (http://digitalcommons.gaacademy.org/gjs/instructions_to_authors.html). Given the diversity of subject matter accepted by the journal, authors are asked to submit their publications via the journal web site listed above.

Georgia has a rich and fascinating history (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia_%28U.S._state%29#History) but, like many states, the role Georgia has had in the scientific and science education processes and events is not well-documented. As such, articles reviewing the history of science and science education in Georgia are encouraged. Good examples of these are publications by Elliott O. Edwards Jr. (2016) and Paul Riggs, John Pascarella, and David Bechler (2010). Edwards' publication provides a rich and detailed history of the Shell Bluff formation in the Coastal Plain of Georgia with discussions of the early native American Indians and the arrival of Hernando de Soto in the 1500s. It also provides a critical synopsis of the discovery by John and William Bartram of the Shell Bluff oyster, *Crassostrea gigantissima*, and the naming of

it by John Finch in 1824. The historical review by Riggs et al. on the research carried out at Valdosta State University's Lake Louise Field Station also provides insight into the importance and value of such a site relating to research in the areas of paleoecology, paleotempestology, and ethnohistory, as well as other more current studies the station has been involved in.

Prior to the journal going digital, Andreas Lazari and Kathy Simons (2003) published a paper in which they proposed a method for teaching college algebra for at-risk students with the use of extended sections. The intent of this article was to introduce an educational process that would result in the initiation of classes that would improve student learning. In 2015, the Georgia Journal of Science subsequently published two papers by Gregory Harrel and Andreas Lazari (2015), and Rhonda Porter, Chinenye Ofodile, and Janis Carthon (2015) that examined the success of instituting such sections. Both sets of authors found that such extended sections resulted in significant improvement in the learning of college algebra for at-risk students. More importantly, the two publications supported each other, thus reaffirming the value of multiple studies on the same subject. This brings up another point discussed above, and that is that the three publications reveal the history behind this successful educational process change and the value of it.

As a final point, the work and subsequent publications discussed in the above paragraph, as well as the publication on the history of the extinct oyster, *Crassostrea gigantissima*, show the need for publications involving meta-analyses in various areas of research and science education. Georgia has strong and robust public and private college and university education systems, as well as private and state institutions involved in research. This results in a wide diversity of research and educational activities, and meta-analyses can show the role both private and public institutions in Georgia have had in various fields.

David L. Bechler
Editor-in-Chief

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