

## Transition in Leadership: Opportunities and Challenges

After 40 years of distinguished and unparalleled service, Professor Philip S. Portoghese retired at the end of 2011 as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry* (JMC). Under his leadership JMC has maintained its top-ranked status in the field of medicinal chemistry research publications with a 5.2 impact factor, 53 000 citations, and 2.7 million Web hits in 2010. As Editor-in-Chief of JMC for 4 decades, Professor Portoghese had a tremendous impact on the growth and maturation of medicinal chemistry as an important scientific discipline.

We are very honored and pleased to be appointed as Editors-in-Chief to succeed Professor Portoghese. We have giant shoes to fill but are confident that with the help of our trusted colleagues from the ACS Publications Division, our experienced Editors, distinguished advisory board members, dedicated editorial assistants, competent reviewers, and, most of all, our authors and readers, we will continue Professor Portoghese's legacy, evolve the journal, and uphold JMC's role as the top international journal in medicinal chemistry research publications. We will place prime importance on scientific excellence and prompt review and publication of articles.

As incoming Editors-in-Chief, we are initiating some innovations to enhance the value of the journal to our authors and readers. Beginning in 2012, JMC will introduce "Featured Articles" to showcase some of the significant papers published in JMC. The "Featured Articles" will be selected by our Editors and published with an accompanying "Viewpoint" commentary written by an expert in the field. The authors of "Featured Articles" will have the opportunity to submit artwork based upon their paper to be used as one of the rotating JMC covers. We anticipate that our "Featured Articles" will serve as an additional incentive for our authors to publish their most noteworthy and exciting research in JMC and to further enhance their publishing experience with the journal.

Medicinal chemistry research leads to the creation of new therapies for the treatment and prevention of diseases. As such, an important milestone in any medicinal chemistry program is the advancement of a compound into clinical development. Drug candidates entering clinical trials, therefore, have special significance for medicinal chemists, and we plan to launch a new manuscript category to highlight such special compounds later in 2012. Stay tuned!

Advancements and breakthroughs in molecular biology, computational chemistry, high-throughput screening, combinatorial and organic chemistry, and structural biology have a major impact on how we practice medicinal chemistry today. The current evolution of genomics and bioinformatics will change how we diagnose and treat human diseases. These advances and the development of stem-cell-derived cell and organ models of human diseases will greatly impact the science of medicinal chemistry research. In publishing manuscripts, we want to place a special focus on new technologies, approaches, and methodologies, be they experimental or computational, that have direct applications to the practice of medicinal chemistry.

Just like the economy, medicinal chemistry research has become a truly global enterprise. While North America and Europe remain the major powerhouses and our main contributors, JMC has in the past decade seen a surge of manuscript submissions and publications from emerging markets, particularly from China and India. Embracing this trend, Professor Portoghese appointed Dr. Hualiang Jiang from the Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica as the JMC Asian Editor and a number of advisory board members from countries where exciting research in medicinal chemistry is emerging. We will continue this practice and will increase our international outreach, especially to Asia and South America. We are also welcoming Professor Brian Blagg from the University of Kansas, whom we recently appointed as a new Associate Editor.

With advances in technologies and an explosion in the number of possible drug targets, medicinal chemistry might be entering its golden age, despite all the challenges we face in the world economy with downsizing and reorganization in the pharmaceutical industry. We trust that the field of medicinal chemistry will have a very significant impact on the current challenges that the world is facing, such as unprecedented population growth, global health challenges, and the dramatic increases of health care costs.

We promise you that JMC will continue its tradition as the premier international journal for publication of the most significant research in medicinal chemistry.

**Shaomeng Wang**, Editor-in-Chief

**Gunda I. Georg**, Editor-in-Chief