

Editorial

A Year of Firsts for *Organic Letters*

Organic Letters celebrates its first anniversary with this issue. Volume 1, Issue 1, dated July 15, 1999, made its debut one year and 26 issues ago. It has been an exciting and gratifying year. The enthusiasm with which the journal was greeted a year ago continues, and the response to the journal from the worldwide community of authors, reviewers, readers, and librarians has been remarkable.

The decision by the ACS to develop a new Letters journal, broadly based in organic chemistry, was a bold commitment designed to bring the highest-quality research to those who need it and to deliver it quickly and at a reasonable cost. Early on, the ACS realized that in order to accomplish these goals it would need to challenge established paradigms throughout the publishing continuum.

The result is *Organic Letters*, which provides authors with state-of-the-art systems for electronic submission of manuscripts and electronic review of galleys, the first ACS publication to do so. Similarly, the ACS offers reviewers the opportunity to examine critically manuscripts online. The entire publishing process has been redefined to deliver research to the chemical community in record time. Fully edited Letters are now available on the Web within an average of 7 weeks following submission and within an average of 2 weeks following acceptance. The impact of this innovation is evidenced by the response from authors (85% of papers are now submitted electronically) and by the decision from other journal communities, both within and outside the ACS, to embrace electronic submission. I am also pleased to report that *Organic Letters* is now abstracted by ISI, Medline, and Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS), thereby guaranteeing the widest possible distribution of the research.

In recognition of the fact that the electronic world offers more than simply an opportunity to publish faster, the ACS also launched with *Organic Letters* the CAS Reference Linking feature in which virtually every reference in the journal is instantly and seamlessly linked to the corresponding abstract through the auspices of Chemical Abstracts Service. This linking is regardless of publisher and at no additional cost. Additional innovative features of this new journal include the use of pedagogical color at no cost to the author, 25 free reprints of each paper, and the reciprocal

availability of graphical abstracts (in *The Journal of Organic Chemistry* and *Organic Letters*).

However, the willingness of organic, bioorganic, and medicinal chemists to trust and support a fledgling journal with their research and to give their time in providing critical reviews in a timely manner has been vital to our success. As is the case with all ACS journals, the primary and most fundamental commitment of *Organic Letters* is to quality. That quality is impossible without excellent content and a commitment on behalf of the scientists who support, contribute, and review for *Organic Letters*.

That extraordinary commitment is best illustrated by the overwhelming response from authors. In June, we published our 1000th Letter and project that in 2000 we will publish over 4500 pages. More than 50% of those papers will come from outside the U.S.; all represent the highest-quality research from a diverse range of contributors. In addition, in the last year approximately 1700 scientists have reviewed one or more manuscripts submitted to *Organic Letters*.

The support of the chemical community has also been evident in the leadership and service of the Associate Editors and members of the Editorial Advisory Board, who have been instrumental in quickly establishing *Organic Letters* as a prestigious, leading journal. This highly regarded group has been further augmented by the recent addition of two new Associate Editors: Erick Carreira from Switzerland and Eiichi Nakamura from Japan. Their addition further establishes our commitment to excellence on a global basis.

Support from the library community has also been a critical factor. *Organic Letters* was the first publication endorsed by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) through the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), a 180-member worldwide alliance of research institutions, libraries, and organizations with the goal of partnering with publishers to bring top-quality, low-cost research to a greater audience. It is the endorsement and support of SPARC that has ensured that the research published in *Organic Letters* has been broadly disseminated beginning with its very first issue.

While it is logical to mark this anniversary by reflecting on the past, it is critical to the future of *Organic Letters* that we continue to work aggressively to provide the highest-

quality venue in which to publish your work. In launching the journal, Robert D. Bovenschulte, Director of ACS Publications, described *Organic Letters* as “an extraordinarily important venture because it would test innovations that could change the face of publishing.” Indeed, in many ways, the inauguration of *Organic Letters* opened a new chapter in

electronic publishing and the delivery of communications in chemistry, but it is only the first chapter in our endeavor to add value to the journal.

In closing, I thank all of you for your generous support over the last year and for helping to define the future of this important enterprise.

Amos B. Smith, III

Editor-in-Chief

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