

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

In this issue of the *Journal of Character Education* we return to something foundational and introduce something new. The foundational element is a set of six independent scholarly manuscripts by a mix of emerging and established scholars. Kysa Nygreen and Kathryn McDermott tackle secondary school teachers' understandings of character education revealing a complex picture of how they are conceptualized. William Hansen focuses on adolescents' values and sense of attachment to school. Most relevant to this journal is that school bonding was related to only two values: education and character. Tonia Bock and Heidi Giebel address the question whether teachers of ethical philosophy have differential impacts on student moral development depending on whether they took a neutral stance on ethical theories or demonstrated advocacy. Across different outcomes the advocating teachers had more positive impacts on student moral development. Hillary Schaefer, Kristina Callina, Jeremiah Powers, Gerald Kobylski, Diane Ryan and Richard Lerner report results of a study of character development among cadets at the U.S. Military Academy. Using growth-modeling statistical techniques, they were able to discern a positive developmental trajectory across the first 3 years at the academy. Michael Lamb, Jonathan Brant, and Edward Brooks present a new approach to educating for character at the university level, describing an Aristotelian-inspired developmental-educational framework and concrete

strategies for each component. Sabrina Little also invokes a virtue-ethics framework and presents a conceptual analysis justifying corresponding pedagogical strategies. Lastly, Richard Lerner provides a review of *The Character Edge: Leading and Winning With Integrity* (2020) by Lt. General (Ret.) Robert L. Caslen, Jr. and Michael D. Matthews.

We are pleased to introduce a new feature of the *Journal of Character Education* in this issue, namely a section we are calling simply "Opinion." We began the *JCE* with an exclusive focus on publishing scholarship because there was no scholarly journal that focused on character education. Over time we realized that we wanted to speak about practice and particularly to practitioners as well. Hence we created a section we call "Voices" to present innovations and perspectives representing the "voices" of exemplary practitioners of character education. Recently we received a manuscript from Eric Schaps for the "Voices" section, but it was more of an op-ed type article, advocating for a challenging argument. This led us to realize that we could publish perspectives from leading authorities in the field that might be more provocative. As a way to kick off this new feature in this issue, Eric's challenge is to understand the inequity of pedagogical styles across privileged and under-resourced schools and districts, and how the types of pedagogy that align with character education are far less likely to be applied in the latter. Even among the editorial team at the

JCE Eric's words have stirred up debate, so we expect, in fact hope, that they do likewise for all our readers. *JCE* coeditor Marvin Berkowitz penned a second opinion piece that hopefully will further stir debate; in this case, concerning the destructive avoidance of controversy in this field by avoiding the language and content of morality.

We would love to hear responses to either or both of these opinion articles and are working on plans to share such responses, perhaps on one of our related websites. At this point, we plan on publishing more opinion articles, and for now, by invitation. However, we are always willing to consider unsolicited articles for possible inclusion in the *JCE*.