Editorial

Celebrating 10 Years of *The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics*

This issue of *The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics* marks our 10th year of publication, and indeed much has changed in molecular pathology. Health care pundits predict double-digit growth in molecular diagnostic testing for many years to come, making it the fastest-growing sector of the clinical laboratory. Indeed, the *Journal's* sponsoring societies, the Association for Molecular Pathology (AMP) and the American Society for Investigative Pathology (ASIP), have seen monumental growth in membership, and their areas of focus have been catapulted forward by new technology and scientific knowledge, paralleled closely by the *JMD*.

The *JMD* serves as a hub for the molecular diagnostic arena, addressing scientific and technological advances, along with practical issues critical for new assay development and validation as well as the delivery of quality molecular testing from the clinical laboratory. The *JMD* has expanded from four issues to six, with a marked increase in published manuscripts, reviews, and other features. Its influence and timeliness are reflected in the dramatic increase in impact factor, from 2.901 in 2006 to 3.478 in 2007.¹ *JMD* will undoubtedly continue this trajectory, based on the expansion of new diagnostic applications, including the promise of personalized medicine, with treatments that target specific molecular alterations in tumors and drug dosing tuned to an individual's enzymatic capabilities.

This contrasts with 10 years ago, when our horizons were more limited. Nucleic acid preparation was manual, and real-time amplification with automated fluorescent detection had not yet entered our clinical laboratories. We were only beginning to envision pairing molecular diagnostic tools with novel targeted therapeutics. Arrays were in their infancy, with expression analysis still being performed by differential display or series analysis of gene expression (SAGE). Quantitative measurements were still performed using competitive polymerase chain reaction (PCR). The changes in these 10 years have been extraordinary.

Coincident with the *JMD's* 10-year mark, many thanks are due. Several visionary members of AMP and ASIP worked tirelessly to bring the journal from idea to reality (see the following Guest Editorial for more information on *JMD's* inception). Several managing editors have also been critical to the *JMD's* evolution, beginning with Priscilla Markwood, who labored to help launch the new journal; Maria Giorla, who shaped it as it grew; and Dr. Audra

Cox, whose expertise now guides the *JMD*. Mark Sobel, Executive Officer of AMP/ASIP, has been a stalwart supporter and friend. The Associate Editors and editorial board members have devoted hours to the critical review and guidance of manuscripts through the peer review process, while authors have trusted us with their work. I have thoroughly and sincerely enjoyed my years as Editor-in-Chief of the *JMD* and have likely learned more from this role than any of the *Journal's* readers. After 10 years, however, it is time to turn the leadership over to a new editor, and the announcement of the upcoming search for a new Editor-in-Chief can be found in the later pages of this issue.

It is impossible to predict the future of our field, but it is also irresistible (see the Associate Editors' predictions in an additional Guest Editorial). No doubt much of the molecular testing done 10 years from now will be performed by automated analyzers, which will likely be miniaturized and often at the bedside. We will use information gathered from the genome, transcriptome, proteome, and metabolome. Treatments will be chosen based on molecular signatures that fine-tune a patient's diagnosis. These will include assessment of host factors important in disease progression or resolution, in addition to markers of the tumor or microbe itself that are indicative of sensitivity and resistance to therapy. Disease susceptibility will be measurable, and hopefully we will be attuned to preventative approaches that decrease a patient's risk for disease development. Many visionaries believe we will carry our genome sequences in our pockets, perhaps digitally encoded on our medical insurance or pharmacy cards. It is my hope that the *JMD* will thrive in this era, and I look forward with great enthusiasm to the many changes that lie ahead.¹

Reference

1. Journal Citation Reports 4.2: Science Edition. Philadelphia, Thomson Corporation, 2007

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Publisher's Note: Karen L. Kaul is the 2008 recipient of the AMP Leadership Award.