

From the Editor's Desk

Welcome to 2004 and the 40th anniversary year of *JRRD*! *JRRD* got its start in 1964 when the Veterans Administration (now the Department of Veterans Affairs [VA]), more specifically its Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service, began publishing the *Bulletin of Prosthetics Research*, which covered VA-funded research projects. The *Bulletin of Prosthetics Research* was published semiannually until 1983, when it was expanded and renamed the *Journal of Rehabilitation Research and Development*, which was published quarterly. As you have seen during 2003, we have come a long way! Later this year, we will feature a more in-depth article, exploring the historical strides *JRRD* has made over the last 40 years in covering cutting-edge rehabilitation research.

During 2003, the *JRRD* editorial and production teams achieved many milestones, including migration to on-line submission and review (Manuscript Central), doubling of submissions received in one year, two special single-topic issues, more than 1 million Web requests for *JRRD* and related materials, and admittance into DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals). Additionally, *JRRD* has worked with the VA Office of Research and Development on the Diversity-Building Research Training Program by contacting minority institutions and offering them complimentary subscriptions to *JRRD*. This outreach will help ensure that “individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences are fully represented in VA research” and understand VA research possibilities. To date, over 70 institutions have accepted our invitation, including all the institutions from the American Indian Higher Education Consortium.

Manuscript Central has proven itself to be immensely popular with authors and reviewers alike. Since January 2003, the editorial staff has added 1,313 reviewers to the *JRRD* database and has seen the average review time plummet from 206 days in 2002 to 50 days in 2003! The 51 national and international Editorial Board members

have enthusiastically supported Manuscript Central and have been instrumental in reducing the review time per article as well as recruiting prestigious national and ever-increasing international submissions. Indeed, *JRRD* now receives over 25 percent of its submissions from international experts!

We are very pleased with the substantial increase (almost double) in Web requests for *JRRD* articles and related materials. The *JRRD* mission statement charges us “to responsibly evaluate and disseminate scientific research findings impacting the rehabilitative healthcare community,” and with our redesigned Web site, *JRRD* has disseminated material more widely than ever before. In addition, *JRRD* is the only rehabilitation publication of 672 journals available on DOAJ. DOAJ, which was launched in early 2003, aims to “increase the visibility and ease of use of open access scientific and scholarly journals, thereby promoting their increased usage and impact.”

So while 2003 was a good year for *JRRD*, our 40th year will be a banner year, and you can expect to see more changes! Specifically, the *JRRD* editorial and production teams will be bringing you 12 articles an issue and more double issues with more select topic sections. We have updated the Web site to allow greater ease of use and more immediate access. We are featuring a greater diversity of Guest Editorials and would welcome suggestions for areas that are controversial or need spotlighting within the rehabilitation community. We will be showcasing more “Letters to the Editor” with the unique on-line feature of Web links to the original article(s). We are reaching out to veterans more than ever before and will be attending all four VA National Rehabilitation Special Events, with a special emphasis on the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. For 2004, we are proud to feature the “French Red House” by Michael Ounjian, a colorful oil painting done left-handed by a former U.S. Navy veteran who was selected from among the top three entries in each of the National Veterans

Creative Arts Competition art division categories. *JRRD* is rapidly becoming the leading publisher of the best science that rehabilitation research has to offer, and we want people to know it! A focus of our information dissemination efforts for this year is the distribution of *JRRD* at conferences and symposiums, so let us know if you spy a copy of *JRRD*

among the educational materials. We wish you and yours a wonderful 2004.

Sincerely,

Stacieann C. Yuhasz, PhD,
and the Editorial and Production Teams



Front row L to R: Charlotte M. Irby, Technical Writer-Editor; Celeste T. Anderson, Visual Information Specialist; Stacieann C. Yuhasz, PhD, Editor; Lisa M. Finklea, Graphics Designer; Judith M. LaVoie, Public Affairs. Back row L to R: Nick Lancaster, Multimedia Manager; Neil McAleer, Managing Editor; Lloyd Tinker, Program Assistant; Ed Motsinger, IT Consultant; James McAnany, IT Specialist; Marguerite M. Montes, Program Specialist. Missing from photograph: Arthur Parker, Program Assistant.