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## FROM THE EDITOR

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It is summer in Minnesota. The radishes have come and gone, the tomatoes and peppers are setting fruit, and the marigolds are going about their business without a care in the world. This is how I measure things now. Like many, I hopped on the gardening bandwagon in 2020. With travel plans delayed indefinitely, I knew I would be home to water and tend. I knew I would be home a *lot*. I also knew I needed something to mark the passage of time, to provide purpose and hope, and to feed my stomach and soul.

And so, I started with one raised bed, tucked over the hill behind our home. Growing up, my family always had a garden, so I had a fairly solid foundation of knowledge. Nevertheless, I felt like a novice and found comfort in research. I came to enjoy it, especially in the snowy early months of the pandemic. Watching garden tours and tutorials while the March winds blew was a reminder of warm sunny days ahead, of how much there was to learn. It was through this research that I began to reconsider my own possibilities as a gardener. I found a community of growers happy to share wisdom, who joyfully explain lessons that took them years to learn through trial and error while adamantly reminding fellow gardeners that we might all apply these lessons in unique ways and with different results. In other words, they share their insights freely so that we may learn, build on their lessons, pay that knowledge forward, and—in more ways than one—grow together.

I share this because gardening has had an unexpectedly profound impact on my life during the past 16 months. During this time, my gardening space has more than quadrupled. I began starting vegetable seeds indoors this past February and maintain spreadsheets to track the performance of dozens of varieties of plants. Gardening has been a hopeful highlight and welcome distraction in a year of uncertainty and near-constant concern. Moreover, the lessons I have learned have infused my thoughts, my conversations, and my values. In fact, it is difficult for me to reflect on the gardening process without drawing parallels to my job as an educator: preparing a timeline for sowing seeds indoors reinforces the importance of thoughtful planning. The magic of watching life stem from a tiny dried out seed, each of which has unique requirements for success, reminds me to focus on potential. The patient process of separating seedlings into individual pots so they have space to grow is a metaphor deserving of its own book. And the process of hardening plants off by gradually exposing them to direct sunlight, wind, rain, and fluctuating temperatures is a reminder that growth requires challenge, but not all at once or more than one can handle.

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I see these lessons and more reflected in this issue of the *CTAM Journal*, and I am grateful for the wisdom of each contributor. I appreciate the glimpses we get into their research, their musings, and their classrooms. Unique to this issue, we begin with three “Covid Shorts.” These pieces set the stage by reminding us this issue was not created in a vacuum by folks going about “business as usual.” It came together despite the challenges of the moment. I hope these snapshots will remind us of the inextricable link between the personal and the professional, especially in disciplines as human-centered as our own. Our scholarship cannot—and should not—be divorced from the realities of our lived experiences as educators, scholars, and individuals with rich lives that extend well beyond our chosen vocations.

In addition to our wonderful contributors, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the individuals who made time to review submissions and provide thoughtful feedback that helped shape them into the excellent articles in the pages that follow. You have been an incredible team of associate editors. I would like to offer an additional line of thanks to my husband Chad Kuyper, whose front row seat to this process means he is frequently asked—and happily agrees—to provide an additional set of eyes or ears. Despite the additional challenges of the past year, the time, expertise, and diligence of these individuals made this issue possible. I appreciate you all.

As a final note, this will be my last issue as editor of the *CTAM Journal*. I am grateful to have had this opportunity to serve our organization, and I am equally grateful for Dr. Bradley Wolfe's willingness to take over as the new journal editor. He has excellent ideas for future issues of the journal, and I have no doubt he will be exceptional in this role. May we all answer his calls and keep his inbox fully stocked with quality manuscripts!

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As we move forward, I encourage you to look back on the last year. While there is certainly much about the pandemic we are eager to leave behind, I hope you will be inspired to reflect on things you would like to bring with you into the new normal. Regardless of whether that includes flowers and vegetables, I hope you will find new opportunities—both professionally and personally—that inspire you to grow.

Happy reading,



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