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## Introduction by the Editor-in-Chief

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Welcome to the first issue of the *Journal of Environmental and Resource Economics at Colby* (JEREC), an open access peer-reviewed journal publishing articles authored and peer reviewed by undergraduate students. The articles featured in this first issue of JEREC stem from senior seminar projects conducted by students in The Economics of Ecosystem services and Biodiversity (TEEB) Senior Seminar during Spring 2014.

The journal originated from efforts to help students understand and appreciate the research and publication process behind the journal articles they regularly read in classes. The learning goals for the senior seminar focused on students going through the full research process starting from identifying a research question, finding appropriate analytical methods, collecting or finding the data to answer the research question, answering the research question, discussing/getting feedback from peers, and finally communicating the results.

This journal helped facilitate the last two steps. The students submitted first drafts through the journal submission system, conducted blind reviews of each other's work using the journal review system, and then finally submitted revised versions of the manuscripts. The peer-review process worked extremely well, with most of the students receiving substantial comments and on some occasions the referees writing five to seven page referee reports. The students also presented their work multiple times including at the Colby Liberal Arts Symposium. They incorporated the feedback from the presentations into the final manuscript.

The topics in this issue range from renewable energy, seafood labeling, indoor health and wellness to the identifying the value of nature from the price of paintings. The students used a wide range of methods including choice experiment surveys, dynamic simulation models, hedonic analysis, and cost benefit analysis. The methods are not at the cutting edge of research, but each student used sound methods based on their technical skills for their analysis.

It would not have been possible to create this journal and incorporate it into the curriculum without the support, hard work and quick turnaround by David Stienstra at BE Press, Martin Kelly at Colby Libraries, and Colby Libraries. I am very pleased that Professor Amy W. Ando at the University of Illinois, a leading environmental and resource economist who also appreciates the value of teaching and undergraduate education, has written an introduction to the journal and this issue. Thanks also to you, the reader, for engaging with the research process by reading articles in this issue. Finally, this journal would not exist without the dedicated work, long (very long) hours, constructive criticism and numerous revisions that were done by students in EC476 in SP2014; Alec,

Buddy, Cole, Dylan, Inuri, Jack, Jesse, Katharine, Lindsay, Lucy, Max, Meagan, Shannon, Torie, and Will – Thank you.

I will end this welcome with a quotation that I cherish; *“The greatest happiness of thinking man is to fathom that which is fathomable and to reserve the unfathomable for reverence in quietude”* Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 – 1832). This issue is the culmination of efforts by students in the Spring 2014 TEEB senior seminar to fathom a little bit more about our world. Thank you for sharing in their efforts.

If you have thoughts or questions on any of the articles in this issues please contact me.

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