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Massachusetts Institute of Technology Undergraduate Research Journal

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Welcome to the Spring 2004 issue of the *MIT Undergraduate Research Journal*. In this tenth edition of *MURJ*, we present a biology report and proposals. These papers are featured alongside topics that range from assessing seismic safety policy to the principle of hormesis, as well as pieces that discuss arsenic contamination in Bangladesh and problems associated with health care costs.

Our news alerts, reports, and features are meant to be accessible to all members of the MIT community. We hope that this interdisciplinary publication will provide an opportunity for our readers to learn about research in various fields. We also hope that this journal will serve as a forum for debate and discovery, through which our readers may access arguments relating to the intersection of scientific research and public policy.

Because we are a student-run, nonprofit journal, we do accept articles that have been published elsewhere. However, at least one of the contributors must be an undergraduate student at MIT.

We extend our profound gratitude to those who make this goal possible. We acknowledge the advice and assistance of our advisor, Dean Les Perelman, the professors who review our work, and the continued support of *The Tech*. We would also like to thank Dean Larry Benedict, as well as the UROP and RLSLP offices, for their financial support of *MURJ* this semester, which made this publication possible. Special thanks also go to the Departments of Materials Science and Engineering, Architecture, Chemical Engineering, Economics, Management, Aeronautics and Astronautics, Political Science, and Nuclear Engineering for their monetary contributions earlier this year.

If what you read piques your interest, we invite your input for the Fall 2004 issue. This volume shall be subjected to a peer review process. We are also planning a new section, "UROP Summaries," for paragraphs (about 100-300 words) that describe student undergraduate research. Feel free to join the *MURJ* team as a writer, editor, or part of our Review Board.

Submissions will be due by late September 2004. Please email murj-public@mit.edu or visit our website, <http://web.mit.edu/murj/www>, if you have any other questions or comments.

Sincerely,

The Editors of *MURJ*