

Editorial

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I spend too much time imagining an ideal world. In my academic position this world takes the shape of campus communities free of the abuse and trauma of the world and ready, willing and able to advance knowledge. The world we live in consistently defies these longed-for ideals. In the past few months, our university populations have been traumatized by multiple disasters, as well as recent terror attacks that have impacted so many where they live, work and learn. This is reality and therefore it's futile to hope for an academic population free from these horrific experiences.

We have little control over what happens outside our campus communities. However, it is our obligation to provide the safest and healthiest communities within our colleges and universities. With the health and wellness challenges facing our current university populations, we have developed this issue to equip our readers with information on how to promote healthy campus climates. Several of our articles provide strategies to support the mental health of our students. We begin the issue with essential recommendations on supporting the mental health of students on our campuses with a position statement from the National Consortium for Building Healthy Academic Communities (BHAC). Two articles on mindfulness follow – the “What’s” and “Hows,” complemented by a case study approach for mindfulness in young college women with eating disorders. A literature review on mental health services in academia rounds out our series supporting the mental health needs of our university communities. We are also pleased to feature an article examining college student’s awareness of sexual assault on campus and the impact of a college culinary nutrition program on healthy eating. Collectively, these articles provide an opportunity to further engage our campus communities in healthy processes and practices to promote quality of life among faculty, staff and students.

I have faith in a better world, but can't sit around and wait for it to happen. The majority of the world's leaders pass through our academic doors, during which time we have the chance to offer safe and nurturing college environments where faculty, staff and students develop the knowledge to make this world a better place. We follow paths of knowledge discovery in the form of brilliant ideas that are debated, critically analyzed, sometimes discarded. At other times these ideas become life-saving and life-changing. Let's not miss this opportunity to ensure that our teaching and learning environments provide the formative foundation for life, so everyone leaves our communities better than they found us and motivated to create such environments wherever they go. Let's join together to nourish our academic capacity, pushing the envelope of knowledge discovery, all the while, supporting healthy minds, bodies and spirits to make this world a better place.

