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## From the Interim Director

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## A NOTE FROM INTERIM DIRECTOR SUZANNE FIEDERLEIN, PH.D.



We are living in uncertain times as we face an unprecedented global health crisis. In keeping with the tradition of adaptation and creativity in the mine action community, numerous national clearance programs and implementing partner organizations have adjusted operations in order to continue survey, clearance, and risk education work in line

with required COVID-19 restrictions. As some places begin to resume a greater range of activity, we recognize the threat presented by this new virus remains pronounced, and we wish all of you safety in your daily lives and good health.

The unprecedented challenges we have all faced these past four months coincided with the start of my new role as CISR interim director. As part of the JMU community, we all transitioned successfully to working remotely and continue to do so as we reach mid-year. Fortunately, my experienced Journal production team continued its work to assemble another remarkable issue to share with you, finding the editorial process actually easier as authors remained closer to their computers and quicker to turn around article versions as they went through the review process. We shall see what the remainder of 2020 has in store for us, as the United States not only continues to grapple with the pandemic but also a long-overdue reckoning with deeply ingrained systemic racial injustices. We at CISR remain committed to our service to the global HMA community, as we also work alongside members of our JMU and local community in these challenging times.

Our spring/summer issue focuses on a variety of topics including the role of the media in HMA, robotics and remote sensing, environmental risk mitigation in mine action, a new approach to accessing and complying with IMAS, as well as developing sustainable national training capacities and explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) activities. We would normally highlight each of our contributors and their articles; however, we have such a full spring/summer edition that in an attempt to save space, I encourage you to review our table of contents for a full listing of this issue's featured articles.

In looking toward our fall issue of *The Journal*, we want to hear from you and your organization on how the HMA sector is coping with COVID-19. How have organizations responded to the pandemic and in what ways have they adapted their operations both in and out of the field? In what ways have organizations leveraged their in-country assets to assist regional authorities and local communities? What does the future look like for HMA operations, what challenges has the sector faced during the past few months, and how as a community can we better adapt to these new circumstances? We look forward to hearing from you.

For more information, please see *The Journal's* Calls for Papers at <https://www.jmu.edu/cisr/journal/cfps.shtml>.

*Suzanne*

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