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Editors' Note

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EDITORS' NOTE

We are very pleased to present Volume 24, our first volume as coeditors of the *Midwest Social Sciences Journal*. We are committed to uphold the high standards set by our predecessors and to the goal that the journal serve as a channel for the dissemination of excellent scholarly work in the social sciences.

This year's volume includes papers on the themes of pedagogy, government policy, and firm behavior, from various social science disciplines and time periods. The first paper is an invited essay from Selena Sanderfer Doss on the patterns of black migration and the economic forces that drove them over a period of 400 years. In the 20th century, these forces have resulted in a return migration to the American South with greater political and socioeconomic progress for black Americans. Dr. Sanderfer Doss graciously stepped in to write this paper on a topic parallel to that of Dr. Diane Pinderhughes's 2021 keynote presentation at the annual meeting of the Indiana Academy of the Social Sciences.

In this volume, three papers address the effectiveness and significance of context in policy making. Dr. Viskupič investigates the impact of a country's perception of status on its foreign policy decisions. On the domestic policy front, Dr. Chang investigates the effects of variation in physical activity legislation across states on adolescent obesity rates. Using establishment-level survey data, Dr. Hsu's paper investigates whether tariff-reduction policies in Uruguay had similar impacts on importers in the manufacturing and service sectors.

Two papers explore the factors that influence the decision-making and behaviors of firms. Using customer transaction data from a large retailer in China, Sun and colleagues model the predictive powers of alternative machine algorithms on customer-relationship management as measured by customer lifetime value. Being able to pick the best algorithm gets firms closer to identifying profitable retail customers. Icka and colleagues examine the sustainability practices of Albanian small business enterprises using interview-based firm-level data. They find that despite the lack of regulation in Albania on minimum sustainability standards, firms are motivated to adopt these practices in order to better integrate with the more profitable markets in the European Union.

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed many challenges to higher education and learning, to which instructors have responded with varied pedagogical approaches. Shine and Brown describe challenges of curricular transformation when premature termination of criminal justice internships required conversion of internships to capstone experiences. Their paper describes pedagogical techniques that can be adopted across disciplines facing similar challenges. Clark describes the techniques of double-loop learning, i.e., learning that is productive and not defensive. Contrasting defensive-learning actions against productive-learning ones, he provides a model that can be adapted to varied contexts, including the current pandemic.

Several reviewers graciously agreed to provide authors with high-quality feedback, committed their time to reading multiple revisions, and helped *MSSJ* maintain the highest standards of scholarly work. We thank these reviewers, and we are pleased to recognize them by name at the end of the volume.

We are thankful for the editorial assistance of Stephanie Seifert Stringham, our copy editor, who continues to ensure that we meet the highest technical standards prior to

publication. We are also immensely grateful to our publishing advisor, Jonathan Bull, who has facilitated our transition to an open-access journal. He has managed the smooth functioning of our online submission portal, Digital Commons (powered by BE Press), to ensure smooth author submissions and editorial and peer-review processes. With his able assistance, authors can obtain instant access to and recognition for their work upon acceptance and do not have to wait for compilation of the full issue.

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During the past year, papers from *MSSJ* have been downloaded by more than 300 institutions. This year, there were 4,300 downloads. The following are the top most-downloaded papers (in order):

1. Monteiro, Delmira, and Mixalis Poulakis. 2019. "Effects of Cisnormative Beauty Standards on Transgender Women's Perceptions and Expressions of Beauty." *Midwest Social Sciences Journal* 22(1):10. <http://scholar.valpo.edu/mssj/vol22/iss1/10>
2. Mathna, Brooke E., Jennifer J. Roberts, and Marthinus C. Koen. 2020. "A Comparison of Self-Control Measures and Drug and Alcohol Use among College Students." *Midwest Social Sciences Journal* 23(1):6. <http://scholar.valpo.edu/mssj/vol23/iss1/6>

The George C. Roberts Award for best paper published in *MSSJ* was awarded to Evelyn D. Ravuri for her paper "Gentrification and Racial Transformation in One Neighborhood in the City of Cincinnati during the Great Recession" for Vol. 23 (2020) and to Vijay Lulla and Owen Dwyer for their paper "Racial Segregation in Indianapolis, 1990–2010: A Spatial Perspective" for Vol. 22 (2019).

In this, our first year as coeditors of the journal, we have moved *MSSJ* to a fully online format to continue expanding the journal's profile and to draw from a diverse group of authors and readers in the social sciences. To this end, we will also list it in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). In 2022, we plan to bring out a special issue titled "Health and Society," with invited papers from scholars whose research specifically addresses health in the social sciences.

Lastly, we thank Jon Kilpinen, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Valparaiso University, for his support of both the IASS and our assumption of the role of coeditors of the *Midwest Social Sciences Journal*.

Nirupama Devaraj and Bharath Ganesh Babu
Coeditors
Midwest Social Sciences Journal

