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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

ASLME has long supported professors in their efforts to improve their own teaching — whether through *JLME's* column “Teaching Health Law,” the recently published supplement on “Teaching Public Health Law,” the Jay Healey Teaching Award presented at our Health Law Professors conference, or the endorsement of several educational programs and career opportunities at other universities. Our readers are no doubt familiar with our commitment to improving the education of students and encouraging professors in this endeavor. Particularly, we value the knowledge and insight gained by connecting law, medicine, (bio)ethics, and related fields. Thus, when ASLME President Charity Scott approached us with a proposal to publish a supplement about a year-long interdisciplinary teaching fellowship, we welcomed the opportunity to do so.

This supplement issue of *JLME*, “Transforming the Future of Public Health Law Education through a Faculty Fellowship Program,” is the cumulative work of fellows, deans, mentors, and project leaders, who participated in the faculty fellowship program during the 2014–2015 academic year. The goals of the program — funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation — were to create new ways of teaching public health law in various graduate- and professional-level schools and to create an online library of resources for these professors. Scott, in her role as faculty lead and project director, added a third important goal of this fellowship: “a community of practice,” which aimed to cultivate a sense of identity, support, and resources among the fellows. The fellowship program kicked off with a ten-day summer institute in Park City, Utah, which gave the fellows the opportunity to design the kinds of innovative courses they would ultimately teach at their respective institutions; it also laid the foundation for ongoing support from the other fellows and mentors during implementation of these courses. During that academic year, the courses were added to the curriculum and open to students in law, public health, medical, and social work schools. Each course aimed to apply the students’ various backgrounds, skill sets, and thinking to “real world” projects, such as hands-on work at local health departments. These projects were essential to the experiential-learning component of the course and exposed the students to the benefits of interdisciplinary education. Though it was challenging for the fellows to create a completely different kind of public health law course, the fellowship program contributed to how the field can be taught and practiced, and by whom. In the end, both the fellows and their students were rewarded with invaluable experience, exposure, and perspectives that will engage and attract a new generation of lawyers and academics to public health. We hope this supplement provides some helpful guidance for you and your students as well.

Courtney McClellan
Assistant Editor
JLME