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## From the Editor, Issue 25, 2001

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## From the Editor

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Four years ago Linley E. Hall came to Harvey Mudd College as a freshman. A short time later Linley became the Production Manager of HMNJ. It is clear to all that the journal flourished under her wise and steady hand. Her skills and high standards have been a boon to the readers and to me. I am grateful that she chose to give her energy and skills to the journal while studying and doing research in chemistry. Linley will go to graduate school at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where her concentration will be Science Writing. As you can see from the inside front cover, the production staff has added four students. I am grateful to and encouraged by the talented students who joined the staff and by their conscientious work in addition to their studies.

Of course, everyone is grateful to the ExxonMobil Foundation for their continuing support since 1987.

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A continuing source of anguish and frustration is the prominence of high stakes testing in the United States; the NEA Resolution reprinted below expresses that frustration.

**NEA 2000-2001 Resolutions B-56. Standardized Testing of Students (<http://www.nea.org/resolutions/00/00b-56.html>):**

The National Education Association believes that standardized tests should only be used to improve the quality of education and instruction for students. Standardized tests are most useful when selected by educational professionals closest to the classroom and integrated with assessment information specific to local programs. Affiliates should advocate the design and use of a variety of developmentally appropriate assessment techniques that allow necessary accommodations, modifications, and exemptions and are bias-free, reliable, and valid. When a test is mandated at the state or the national level, it should only be used to evaluate programs toward meeting state or national standards and/or goals.

The Association opposes the use of standardized tests when—

- a. Used as the criterion for the reduction or withholding of any educational funding
- b. Results are used to compare students, teachers, programs, schools, communities, and states
- c. Used as a single criterion for high-stakes decision making
- d. They do not match the developmental levels or language proficiency of the student
- e. Student scores are used to evaluate teachers or to determine compensation or employment status
- f. Programs are specifically designed to teach to the test
- g. Testing programs or tests limit or supplant instructional time.

The administration of a standardized test includes the responsibility to educate the stakeholders in the purpose of the test, the meaning of test results, and the accurate interpretation of conclusions. (1978,2000)