Announcing the “Meet the First Author” Page

Roberto Bolli

In my editorial manifesto published in early 2010,1 I indicated that one of my goals was to make Circulation Research less impersonal by publishing content that offers insights into the human dimension of both research and researchers. To this end, we have introduced a panoply of columns: first, Profiles in Cardiovascular Science, followed by Leaders in Cardiovascular Science, and then Promising Young Investigators, all of which feature the personal life of cardiovascular scientists at various stages of their academic career, in addition to other articles such as News and Views and the Beyond Science column. Our latest initiative is the Meet the First Author Page, which debuts in this issue of the journal and is designed to highlight the first authors of original research articles.

Upon acceptance of their articles, first authors will be invited to provide a photo and a brief (=100 words) biographical statement for publication in the front of each issue. In this statement, the authors will briefly introduce themselves and describe their educational background (from undergraduate to postdoctoral fellowship), faculty position (if applicable), and their main area of research interest. They may also provide other interesting personal information about themselves, such as new research projects, future plans, and special situations. In the remainder of the space, authors will be encouraged to briefly discuss their reason(s) for pursuing science and attraction to the area of research that is the subject of their article; their experience in building an academic research career as young scientists; the obstacles they might have faced or factors that might have contributed to their success; and other interesting or unique information about themselves that pertains to their personal life, including their favorite motto, quotes, and hobbies, interesting life experiences, dreams for the future, etc. Humor is welcome!

We believe that this initiative will further enrich the content of the journal while offering greater visibility to the first authors. There is much more to a scientific article than the scientific work per se. The personality of the investigators, their backgrounds, beliefs, and circumstances, and other human factors are often just as important in catalyzing a successful study, but are commonly not shared with the readers. Adding this information sometimes helps to better understand the genesis of an article and its significance. It may also provide useful insights or even inspiration to other trainees/young investigators who are in similar positions. Certainly, the personal dimensions of the first author make the article more interesting to read and less likely to be forgotten. But perhaps most importantly, highlighting the first author is a powerful recognition of the effort and work that he or she has invested in the project, work that often spans several years and is punctuated by sacrifices and challenges. We are cognizant of the fact that the majority of first authors are either trainees (students or postdoctoral fellows) or junior faculty members. We hope that publishing their photo and biographical sketch will serve as a strong moral boost and encouragement. Highlighting these young investigators is wholly consistent with the commitment of Circulation Research and the American Heart Association to promote and support researchers in the early formative stages of their careers.

Disclosures

None.

Reference

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