

## Letter from the Editors

Edgar J. Vasquez  
*Eastern Michigan University*

John Milkovich  
*Eastern Michigan University*

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## Letter from the Editors

Philosophy can seem, to the average person, quite nebulous and its utility is not always clear. At times it seems that most philosophers are solely concerned with each other, arguing amongst themselves with little influence on the world around them. While it is indeed important to respond to our peers, our concerns are diversifying, and we believe that is clearly displayed by the philosophers published in this volume. Each paper here is squarely concerned with how we live our lives both as individuals and as a species. This display by the next generation of philosophers encourages us and reminds us why we fell in love with philosophy.

We may be a small conference, but that only makes the event more special. Philosophy as a discipline will always be practiced as a community and community was ever-present at this year's conference. For 48 hours our lives were consumed by philosophy. Each discussion, whether it was had formally or between bites of food, was full of care and rigor.

One of those participants would go on to tell us:

“Attending the plethora of talks this weekend was one of the most intellectually humbling experiences that I have had in my life. Further, the mutually enriching conversation with my peers during the meals made me repeatedly say to myself, "These are my people." The community of truth seekers at this conference was truly incredible and made me excited to participate in the larger enterprise of academic philosophy.”

We hope that the essays published in this volume give public expression to the inspiring conversations those who attended the conference enjoyed. Our journal has always strived to provide undergraduate students the opportunity to publish their work and to give voice to the personal projects these students have worked exceptionally hard on. This journal will hopefully be the beginning of a fulfilling professional life for these students. You have our thanks for participating in our conference and allowing us to share your exceptional work.

I, Edgar Vasquez, must thank Natalie Anderson for welcoming me into the organization of this conference. She kept things running smoothly with an infectious passion. Thank you to my co-editor John Milkovich who guided me through the editing process of each entry. He has been an invaluable friend and role model, not just as an editor but as a philosopher and simply as a person. I am eternally grateful for his confidence in me. Of course, I must thank Dr. John Koolage for seeing each student's potential and creating an incredibly warm atmosphere in the conference rooms. Thank you to all the authors and presenters for making such a wonderful weekend and a spectacular volume.

I, John Milkovich, express my gratitude to all the same people my co-editor has above, but I would like to thank this co-editor especially. Edgar Vasquez has been a great partner to work with and, in all honesty, made my contribution to editing this volume very easy. He is a remarkable individual who has developed into a knowledgeable philosopher and a wonderful friend.