

Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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Happy New Year, and welcome to another exciting year at *Obesity Research*. We anticipate continued publication of top-notch and seminal research, plus some exciting and novel contributions.

Coming in February is a series of evidence-based reports on recommendations for best practice in weight loss surgery. These reports evolved from a request to convene an expert panel to study weight-loss surgical programs and procedures as they relate to patient safety. The request was from the Massachusetts Commissioner of Public Health's Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety and Medical Error Reduction. The report includes recommendations for improving the safety and well-being of patients who undergo weight loss surgery in Massachusetts. These unique reports are expected to have far-reaching impact to inform health care core policy and clinical practice.

New this year will be a series of invited "Perspectives" on the relationship among the food industry, health and environmental policies, and obesity. These "Perspectives" will be written by leading policy experts. As always, we welcome suggestions for additional perspectives or reviews.

I would like to thank all contributors and reviewers for their part in increasing our submissions, impact, and membership during the past year. We encourage your continued

support of *Obesity Research* as there can be no growth or improvement in our impact without your participation.

We apologize for any delays you may have encountered with our review process during the past year. We are trying to eliminate this problem and, toward that end, expect the review process (as well as the submission process) to be going online soon. We particularly want to encourage those who submit articles to the journal to help with the review process by recommending at least five reviewers for their own articles and agreeing to review articles by others.

In order to show our appreciation to excellent reviewers, we will begin a new annual process to acknowledge our premier reviewers at the annual meeting. This honor will be based on the number of articles reviewed and the rapidity of review.

In the same spirit, in the past year we instituted an annual monetary award for the best authors of basic, clinical, or population articles that appeared in the journal. The 2004 winners, Thomas A. Wadden and Jacqueline Stephens, were selected by a vote of the Associate Editors. Considerations included the article itself, its impact on the field, and other contributions by the author. This award will continue to be given annually.

A special thank-you is also due to the Managing and Associate Editors and the NAASO staff for their hard work, commitment, and support.