The past year has been marked by numerous challenges and opportunities.

I am proud of the work that the staff and volunteers have put into the continued success of ASM’s journals program.

Nearly all of us have been working from home as we balance our professional and personal responsibilities. In spite of the increased demands on our time, personal stress, and a surge in manuscripts addressing SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19, editors and reviewers have stepped up to ensure the continued high quality of the papers we publish. The outpouring of support from our volunteers has solidified my sense that a publishing model that depends on scientists and supports scientists is the most effective way of disseminating the most important research. I cannot overstate my appreciation for your contributions to ASM. Thank you!

The last year also highlighted the negative effects that racism has across society. That includes our scientific community. I am grateful to my colleagues on the Journals Committee for stepping up and publishing “The ASM Journals Committee Values the Contributions of Black Microbiologists.” Racism has had an effect on every aspect of microbiology, and the journals program is committed to working to eradicate it from ASM. In that editorial, which was published in every one of our journals, we laid out concrete action items that we are dedicated to addressing in the coming years. In this report you will find some of the metrics we are tracking to help assess our progress. We expect that the members of ASM will continue to challenge us to improve.

This year also marks a number of changes within the leadership of the journals program. Using an open search process, we appointed three new Editors in Chief for the Journal of Bacteriology, Applied and Environmental Microbiology, and Microbiology Spectrum. We will miss the retiring Editors in Chief and are grateful for their service to ASM. We look forward to working with the new Editors in Chief as we constantly seek to improve the experience of authors at our journals. It is notable that Microbiology Spectrum has been relaunched as an open access journal that reaches editorial decisions without regard for the potential impact of the manuscript. The journal is off to a great start, and the quick adoption of this journal by so many microbiologists has been impressive. In the coming years, we hope to leverage the success of Microbiology Spectrum to facilitate the conversion of all of our journals to a fully open access model.

As I mentioned in last year’s report, despite the challenges our world faces, this is an exciting time to be a microbiologist. We are proud to be able to serve our authors and readers.

Pat Schloss
Chair, Journals Committee
ASM Journals thanks all of our Editors for their many years of service to the community. In particular, we thank our retiring Editors in Chief for their leadership and welcome our incoming Editors in Chief.

**RETIRING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Journal/Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAROLD L. DRAKE</td>
<td>University of Bayreuth</td>
<td>Applied and Environmental Microbiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THOMAS J. SILHAVY</td>
<td>Princeton University</td>
<td>Journal of Bacteriology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHAEL SADOWSKY</td>
<td>University of Minnesota</td>
<td>Microbiology Spectrum</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**INCOMING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHRISTINA CUOMO</td>
<td>Genomic Center for Infectious Diseases of the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard University</td>
<td>Microbiology Spectrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEORGE A. O’TOOLE</td>
<td>Geisel School of Medicine</td>
<td>Journal of Bacteriology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEMMA REGUERA</td>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td>Applied and Environmental Microbiology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**CURRENT TERM**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CESAR A. ARIAS</td>
<td>University of Texas</td>
<td>Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDREAS J. BÄUMLER</td>
<td>University of California</td>
<td>Infection and Immunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROZANNE M. SANDRI-GOLDIN</td>
<td>University of California, Irvine</td>
<td>Journal of Virology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTURO CASADEVALL</td>
<td>Johns Hopkins</td>
<td>mBio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORRELLA (CORRIE) DETWEILER</td>
<td>University of Colorado, Boulder</td>
<td>Microbiology and Molecular Biology Reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRENE L. G. NEWTON</td>
<td>Indiana University, Bloomington</td>
<td>Microbiology Resource Announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PETER TONTONÖZ</td>
<td>University of California, Los Angeles</td>
<td>Molecular and Cellular Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JACK A. GILBERT</td>
<td>University of California, San Diego</td>
<td>mSystems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUSAN LOVETT</td>
<td>Brandeis University</td>
<td>EcoSal Plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STANLEY MALOY</td>
<td>San Diego State University</td>
<td>Journal of Microbiology &amp; Biology Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHAEL IMPERIALE</td>
<td>University of Michigan</td>
<td>mSphere</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

In January 2020, the Journal of Virology received the first submission to ASM Journals on SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. As the pandemic progressed, submissions grew. Here, we highlight the top ten most highly read articles published by ASM Journals in 2020, all of which were on SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19, as well as related collections, special issues, and podcasts.

ANALYSIS OF MEASLES-MUMPS-RUBELLA (MMR) TITERS OF RECOVERED COVID-19 PATIENTS

RECEPTOR RECOGNITION BY THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS FROM WUHAN: AN ANALYSIS BASED ON DECADE-LONG STRUCTURAL STUDIES OF SARS CORONAVIRUS

COMPLETE GENOME SEQUENCE OF A 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (SARS-CoV-2) STRAIN ISOLATED IN NEPAL

EFFECTIVENESS OF FACE MASKS IN PREVENTING AIRBORNE TRANSMISSION OF SARS-CoV-2

MICROWAVE-GENERATED STEAM DECONTAMINATION OF N95 RESPIRATORS UTILIZING UNIVERSALLY ACCESSIBLE MATERIALS

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019–COVID-19

LABORATORY DIAGNOSIS OF COVID-19: CURRENT ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC: BUILT ENVIRONMENT CONSIDERATIONS TO REDUCE TRANSMISSION

COULD AN UNRELATED LIVE ATTENUATED VACCINE SERVE AS A PREVENTIVE MEASURE TO DAMPEN SEPTIC INFLAMMATION ASSOCIATED WITH COVID-19 INFECTION?


COLLECTION

All ASM papers related to SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 are free to read.

PODCASTS

Our Editors in Conversation podcast series covered multiple aspects of the pandemic, including therapeutic options, diagnostic testing, the use of remdesivir against SARS-CoV-2, vaccine development, how to manage the indoor environment to reduce transmission, and how clinical microbiologists are navigating the media spotlight.

SPECIAL ISSUES

JMBE’s special issue, “Teaching in a Time of Crisis,” examines the impact of the pandemic on educators and students.

A Micro-Comic, Journal of Clinical Microbiology

Image: Alexander J. McAdam
Although the pandemic dominated our lives in many ways, influential research across the microbial sciences continued. Here, we highlight non-SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 research, reviews, and essays published in each of our ASM Journals that captured the community’s attention.

**COMMUNITY STRUCTURE OF ARBUSCULAR MYCORRHIZAL FUNGI IN SOILS OF SWITCHGRASS HARVESTED FOR BIOENERGY**

*Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 10.1128/AEM.00880-19

**FITNESS TRADE-OFFS RESULTING FROM BACTERIOPHAGE RESISTANCE POTENTIATE SYNERGISTIC ANTIBACTERIAL STRATEGIES**

*Infection and Immunity* 10.1128/II.00926-19

**DOES GENDER BIAS STILL AFFECT WOMEN IN SCIENCE?**

*Microbiology and Molecular Biology Reviews* 10.1128/MMBR.00018-19

**WHEN LONG NONCODING BECOMES PROTEIN CODING**

*Molecular and Cellular Biology* 10.1128/MCB.00282-19

**MECHANISM-OF-ACTION CLASSIFICATION OF ANTIBIOTICS BY GLOBAL TRANSCRIPTOME PROFILING**

*Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy* 10.1128/AAC.01207-19

**ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE IN ESKAPE PATHOGENS**

*Clinical Microbiology Reviews* 10.1128/CMR.00181-19

**TYPE II TOXIN-ANTITOXIN SYSTEMS: EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTIONS**

*Journal of Bacteriology* 10.1128/JB.00763-19

**ADVANCES IN MOLECULAR DIAGNOSIS OF TUBERCULOSIS**

*Journal of Clinical Microbiology* 10.1128/JCM.01582-19

**MUCIN-LIKE DOMAIN OF EBOLA VIRUS GLYCOPROTEIN ENHANCES SELECTIVE ONCOLYTIC ACTIONS AGAINST BRAIN TUMORS**

*Journal of Virology* 10.1128/VI.00367-19

**GUT FEELINGS BEGIN IN CHILDHOOD: THE GUT METAGENOME CORRELATES WITH EARLY ENVIRONMENT, CAREGIVING, AND BEHAVIOR**

*mBio* 10.1128/mBio.02780-19

**CODING-COMPLETE GENOME SEQUENCE OF YADA YADA VIRUS, A NOVEL ALPHAVIRUS DETECTED IN AUSTRALIAN MOSQUITOES**

*Microbiology Resource Announcements* 10.1128/MRA.01476-19

**LESSONS FROM MICROBES: WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT EQUITY FROM UNCULTURABLE BACTERIA?**

*mSphere* 10.1128/mSphere.01046-20

**HUMAN SKIN, ORAL, AND GUT MICROBIOMES PREDICT CHRONOLOGICAL AGE**

*mSystems* 10.1128/mSystems.00630-19

**WHEN LONG NONCODING BECOMES PROTEIN CODING**

*Molecular and Cellular Biology* 10.1128/MCB.00282-19
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

ASM Journals is committed to supporting, promoting, and representing all microbial scientists.

In 2020, the Journals Committee collectively published an editorial outlining our commitments to the community.

Throughout 2020, we have worked to further these commitments, and our work will be ongoing.

LISTENING, LEARNING, AND PROMOTING DIVERSE VOICES

mSphere of Influence
That's Racist—COVID-19, Biological Determinism, and the Limits of Hypotheses
by Kishana Taylor

Frameshift—a Vision for Human Microbiome Research
by Ariangela J. Kozik

mSphere of Influence
No More Excuses—Addressing Race, Racism, and Socioeconomic Issues in the Science Classroom and Laboratory
by Pascale Guiton

mSystems Thinking Series
An interactive online webinar on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Invited speakers were: Michael D.L. Johnson, Rosie Alegado, and Kat Milligan-Myhre

Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education presented a special issue on Inclusive Science.

ASM Journals now allows authors to change their name for personal reasons.

EXAMINING BIAS

mBio published a research article examining potential gender bias in editorial decisions at ASM Journals.

mBio: Women Are Underrepresented and Receive Differential Outcomes at ASM Journals: a Six-Year Retrospective Analysis

DIFFERENCE IN REVIEW RECOMMENDATION

<table>
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<th>OVERREPRESENTED</th>
<th>ACCEPT</th>
<th>REVISE</th>
<th>REJECT</th>
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<tr>
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</table>

American Society for Microbiology
Journals.ASM.org
2020 ANNUAL REPORT
ASSESSING AND IMPROVING REPRESENTATION

We’ve updated our appointment process to include open searches and Editor in Chief applicants are required to describe their experience in fostering diversity, equity and inclusion.

2020 GENDER REPRESENTATION
ASM JOURNALS-WIDE

We used genderize.io to examine gender diversity within our publication process.

2020 GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION
ASM JOURNALS-WIDE

We examined the geographic diversity of our authors, reviewers, and editors. Moving forward, ASM Journals are identifying appropriate methods to further quantify and assess demographic representation.
NEW INITIATIVES

NEW JOURNAL LAUNCH

Microbiology Spectrum, our newest open access journal, is now open for submissions and published its first articles on June 9, 2021. Microbiology Spectrum publishes research studies that are of high technical quality and useful to the community, without subjective evaluations of impact.

Microbiology Spectrum has an Open Editorial Board, allowing anyone to submit an application to join the Board.

NEW WEB PLATFORM

ASM Journals launched a new web platform on May 25, 2021. The new sites have updated, clean designs, improved search, and enhanced features for readers.

ENGAGING EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS

mBio is creating a Junior Editorial Board for early career researchers. Junior Editorial Board members will serve two-year terms, during which they will receive training in peer review, learn about the scientific publication process, and gain first-hand experience in the peer review process. The Junior Editorial Board will be filled via an open application process, and individuals will be selected based upon defined criteria and the needs of the journal.

EDITORS IN CONVERSATION

In 2020, AAC recorded the first ASM Journals podcast on therapeutic approaches for COVID-19. Since then, we created Editors in Conversation, a program-wide podcast where journal editors can interview scientists on a range of topics of interest to the microbial sciences community. AAC, JCM, and mSystems regularly add new podcasts.

2020 JOURNAL METRICS

All metrics refer to the 2020 calendar year.

SUBMISSIONS

ASM JOURNALS-WIDE

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TURNAROUND TIMES

ASM JOURNALS-WIDE

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<tr>
<td>Time to First Decision</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time from Final Decision to Publication</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
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</table>
2020 JOURNAL METRICS

ANNUAL PUBLICATIONS
ASM JOURNALS-WIDE

The percent of all ASM Journals content published in either an OA journal or published Optional Open Access in a hybrid journal.

OPEN ACCESS
ASM JOURNALS-WIDE

The percent of all ASM Journals content published in either an OA journal or published Optional Open Access in a hybrid journal.
PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

TOTAL ASM MEDIA COVERAGE 2020

ASM issued 45 press releases in 2020. 28 of those were related to COVID-19.

COVID-19 62%

KEY MESSAGES

- corona
- virus
- testing
- vaccine
- antibody

7,992
4,137
1,767
141
2,909
COVERAGE BY ASM JOURNAL

mBio 4,218
Journal of Virology 2,331
Applied and Environmental Microbiology 899
mSystems 600
Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy 561
mSphere 553
Journal of Bacteriology 248

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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
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ADMINISTRATIVE
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Adar Luckey

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Maisha Miles

ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR
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Diane Smith
Jasmine Wallace
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Deborah Plavin

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Kathleen Kurtts