Editor's Note

Elizabeth Scramlin
Western Michigan University

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Through the tools of the pen, paper, and a vast amount of skill and imagination, we are given the ability to create. With these simple tools, we may create emotion—devastating sadness, malicious anger, ecstatic love, or an earnest desire for change. We can create characters, write sad or happy endings, and change the future. For the past eight years, *The Laureate* has been dedicated to publishing written creations of art. This year, we are especially proud to include visual art as well, making this journal a true collection of talent.

As you read through the 2008-2009 edition of *The Laureate*, I hope that you will enjoy your journey through a vast array of genres, themes, styles, and forms. The authors of the pieces selected for this edition display their incredible talent to paint the most basic elements of life—relationships, death, tragedy, growth, memory—in a way that is both beautiful and extraordinary. Each piece is unique, yet each holds the same talent and creative inspiration as the next. I sincerely hope you enjoy each selection that you encounter, and am positive that each individual poem, short story, and photograph will have a profound impact on you in some way.

From the very first written submission we were given the opportunity to read, it was quite evident that Western Michigan University is home to many incredibly talented writers. We thank each individual writer who took the time, effort, and courage to submit his or her writing. Each submission was a true honor to read, and we hope that each artist continues to use his or her talents in the years to come. The writing selections chosen for this journal have been chosen out of a great multitude of submissions, and I hope they will prove to be both thought provoking and awe inspiring.
Many hands have helped bring this edition of The Laureate to its finish. I would like to lend a sincere thanks to each individual who aided in the publishing process of this journal—from those who urged their students to submit their work to the individuals at Lee Honors College and The Design Center, Gwen Frostic School of Art, WMU. I would like to specifically thank my assistant editors and faculty editor for their untiring work and dedication to this project. It has truly been a pleasure and an honor.

You will soon be presented with work by some of the most talented writers and artists at Western Michigan University. I hope you enjoy this edition of The Laureate.

Elizabeth Scramlin
Editor-in-Chief