Letter from the Editors

We are very pleased to present the fourth issue of *The Cutting Edge, Stanford University's Undergraduate Journal of Education Research.* In this volume–and the ones that precede and the many that will follow–we proudly follow these four principles:

> **E**xplore undergraduate research in education,
> **D**isseminate diverse opinions,
> **G**ather creative scholarship, and
> **E**ncourage intellectual curiosity.

This volume, our largest yet, includes five research articles, five editorials, and two multimedia pieces. The authors featured in this volume tackle a range of complex issues concerning the state of education today. A brief glance at our table of contents may cause the reader dismay at how much needs to change to make our education systems more just and equitable. However, a closer look at each piece inspires a glimmer of hope. Each author puts forth a compelling, nuanced argument that envisions alternative futures for education, both in the United States and abroad.

We are so humbled and grateful to acknowledge the work of our editorial team and reviewers, who went above and beyond to produce an unprecedented second issue of *The Cutting Edge* in a single academic year:

- Alysson Farris '23
- Khaing Mon '23
- Christopher Maximos '23
- Karen Ge '23
- Jonathan Kula '21

Moreover, we thank our Graphic Design lead Bryan Defjan '24 for his creative work on our volume's cover.

Finally, we are so grateful to Professor John Willinsky for his mentorship and guidance during the past academic year. Throughout the difficulties of the past year, he has always made himself available and enthusiastically supported our revival of this publication.

As graduating seniors, our time with this publication has come to an end. Though bittersweet, we would like to take this moment to acknowledge what a privilege it has been to serve as editors-in-chief. Beyond the skills and lessons learned throughout our tenure, we built lasting relationships within our organization–we are so proud to be not just teammates, but also friends.

We leave knowing that this spirit of camaraderie and commitment to excellence will be carried on throughout future generations of *The Cutting Edge* editorial teams, beginning with next year's team led by Alysson Farris and Christopher Maximos.

–Melissa Santos '21 and Elizabeth Swanson '21
The Cutting Edge Editors-in-Chief 2020-2021

Author Biographies

Kristen Brown, Pitzer College. Kristen graduated from Pitzer College in 2021 with double majors in Environmental Analysis and Critical Global Studies.

Kira Conte, Stanford University. Kira is studying Psychology with a minor in Education and Data Science at Stanford University. Her passion lies in utilizing psychology and neuroscience to inform educational practices. In addition, she's interested in curriculum design that allows for optimal learning for all students.

Ryan Fann, Pitzer College. Ryan is in the class of 2022 at Pitzer College. Ryan is majoring in Cognitive Science and minoring in Economics.

Akio Ho, Yale University. Akio is an undergraduate studying at Yale University. They are currently majoring in History of Science, focusing on media, knowledge, and visual cultures. They are also a Yale Education Studies Scholar, through which they explore their interests in critical and alternative pedagogies, as well as new ways of teaching and learning that prioritize creativity and humanity.

Diana Jordan, Stanford University. Diana Jordan will graduate from Stanford University in June 2022 with a B.A.H. in Communication and B.A. in Political Science. Diana is a first-generation low-income (FLI) college student interested in making education more accessible for students from similar backgrounds. Diana has done extensive research with Stanford faculty on the needs, mental health, and success of FLI students across elite institutions.

Eunice Jung, Stanford University. Eunice is a senior at Stanford University majoring in Anthropology and International Relations and minoring in Education. Her passion for accessible education comes from years of working with literacy programs in low income communities of color around the Bay Area. She sees the radical potential of education technology, as well as the capital of investments into education coming from the tech industry and their philanthropic efforts. In the future, she hopes to be able to incorporate community-centered perspectives into education and sustainability!

Lina Karamali, Stanford University. Lina is a 2021 Stanford graduate who majored in Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity with a minor in Human Rights. At Stanford, Lina was on staff at the Markaz Resource Center, co-created More Than Material: Showcasing Muslim Fashion at Stanford, and was a LEAD fellow. In her free time, she likes to play one of her instruments (violin, flute, and piccolo), write music, cook, and watch *Friends*. Professionally, Lina is passionate about social justice and human rights work. In high school, she created a project to build a music center for children in Palestine, which was ultimately successful, with

over 40 children learning to play violin and cello. In college, Lina has participated in activism both on- and off-campus, and she is planning to go to law school to become a human rights lawyer.

Harleen Kaur, Stanford University. Harleen studied Anthropology at Stanford University, with interests in the embodiment of intergenerational trauma, systemic barriers to healthcare access, and social determinants of health.

Minha Khan, Stanford University. Minha Khan is a student of Sociology and Education at Stanford University. Her areas of interest surround educational inequities- both inside and outside the classroom. Minha's research lies on the intersection of practice and policy. Her recent publication- "Finding Identity, Equity, and Economic Strength by Teaching in Languages Children Understand"- focuses on the importance of providing mother-tongue education in post-colonial nations and provides a framework to be able to implement such language curricula in the classroom.

Caitlyn McGinley, Stanford University. Caitlyn is currently finishing up her coterminal masters degree in Sociology at Stanford University. In addition, she holds a BS in Neuroengineering from the Human Biology department with an Honors in Education. With interests in neurotechnology, how institutions influence individual neuroscience, and the intersection of neuroscience, education, and the law, Caitlyn is interested in integrating biological data into the social sciences.

Sarah McKenzie, Rowan University.

Amanda Moreno, Brown University. As a recent graduate of Brown University, Amanda concentrated in Education with a focus on history and policy. Her passion for education stems from the belief that the youth are our most powerful resource in creating social change. Amanda will continue her journey in the field of education as a teacher in Richmond, California.

Avrum Noor, Stanford University. Avrum is in the class of 2023 at Stanford and is studying Electrical Engineering and Machine Learning. Avrum is also the co-founder of Stanford Product Hub and Limbcarnation Prosthetics.

Cher Nomura, Stanford University. Cher Nomura is a third-year undergraduate student and a B.S. candidate in the Earth Systems program, with a focus on land systems. Thus far into her Stanford career, Cher has conducted research and volunteer work for her local community in American Samoa, online community-based learning, service-learning with the Rosalie Rendu community in EPA, Indigenous impact assessment research for the Karuk Tribe in Northern California and is currently working with the North Fair Oaks Community Alliance as a summer

fellow for the PCJ in the Bay Area Initiative. Cher's primary academic interests aim to incorporate climate justice, land management and environmental governance in community engagement work with Indigenous and other marginalized communities. Cher also has a strong background in youth mentorship and coaching and looks to integrate education and environmental learning into community engagement work, as an approach to increase equity and representation for marginalized individuals and communities.

Julia Raven, Stanford University. Julia graduated with her B.A. in Psychology in 2021, and is currently an M.A. candidate in Sociology at Stanford University. Julia has been involved in social science and education research for going on 4 years. She is passionate about education and its intersections with psychology and sociology. Both prior to and during her time at Stanford, she has served in multiple teaching, tutoring, and mentorship roles. She is also involved in the dance community, and was a member of Stanford's 5-person dance team for the 2019-2020 academic year. Julia hopes to pursue a career in education administration and/or education intervention to mitigate opportunity gaps.

Melissa Restrepo, Rowan University.

Julianna Saez, Rowan University.

Justin Sleppy, Pitzer College. Justin graduated from Pitzer College in 2021 with double majors in Critical Global Studies and Sociology.

Helen Tamrat, Yale University. Helen is an undergraduate student at Yale University in the class of 2023. She is majoring in African American Studies and is in the Education Studies program. Most of her academic and extracurricular interests surround using education as a form of resistance, particularly in exploring alternatives to Western forms of study that center historically oppressed people. After college, she plans on becoming a teacher to push for these ideas by building a collective critical consciousness among her students. In the last year, Helen's interests in research have revolved around corporate interests in education reform, that ultimately hijack authentic grassroots organizing. These were interests that were fostered by her own personal experiences while working in an education reform organization, Our Turn, that claimed to be to youth led and center those most vulnerable. In the midst of dedicating significant time and hope into the organization, her romanticization about the organization withered as she discovered its deeply destructive history through research under its previous name, Students for Education Reform (SFER). With an insider's perspective, Helen was soon enough able to see the connections of this history to the organization's modern day function and influence on the United States public education system - to privatize and destroy it.

Jennifer Tegegne, Yale University. Jennifer Tegegne is an Ethnicity, Race, and Migration (ER&M) Major and Education Studies scholar at Yale University. Her academic work is focused on the colonial and racial projects of white supremacy and how they manifest in social institutions to maintain order and hierarchy. She is engaged in community organizing and research grounded in critical studies of the School and Prison as sites of state violence, racial subjugation, and resistance. With more than 4 years of experience, Jennifer hopes to continue working in organizing and criminal justice reform spaces that advance racial, educational and migrant rights. She calls Ethiopia, Kenya, and Chicago home — constantly reflecting on her varied experiences with education and migration across these contexts. When she is not at the Chicago lakefront or binge-watching shows, she enjoys spending time with her friends and family.

Vanessa Veak, Stanford University. Vanessa is a B.A. candidate in Sociology with a double minor in Human Rights and Education at Stanford University. At Stanford, she has continued her work in the education field as the co-president of Health Education Lifetime Partnerships For Kids, a tutor for East Palo Alto Stanford Academy, and experience as a teacher assistant for Self & Society: Introduction to Social Psychology, and Frosh 101. Vanessa's research interests thus primarily focus on education equity for youth in marginalized communities and the intersectionality between race and socioeconomic status through policy and outreach/targeted programs. Vanessa also strongly advocates for LGBTQ+ rights, education policy supporting Southeast Asian minorities and their achievement, and diversifying educational materials and content to decolonize the education system as we know it..

Yug Yadava, Rowan University. Yug is earning a B.A. in Biology and Biological Sciences at Rowan University. Yug is also the chief Operations Officer at the Journal of Young Investigators.

Suzanna Yates, Pitzer College. Suzanna graduated from Pitzer College in 2021 with majors in Cognitive Science and Computer Science.