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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

As has been vividly demonstrated since the COVID-19 pandemic began, collaboration between public health stakeholders is vital to combat endemic and catastrophic health issues facing humanity. A lot of press coverage has been given over to the conflicts among stakeholders in public health, but this coverage often ignores the people that are working together to create policy that makes progress against the existential issues that now confront us.

This issue of *The Journal of Law, Medicine and Ethics* highlights some of the best work in that area, as presented at 2023's National Public Health Law Conference. Its subtitle People. Policy. Progress. sums up the core theme of every article in this collection. Articles highlight flaws in policies, but also propose frameworks to resolve them. Practitioners from around the United States provide insights that address different facets of large issues, from vehicular deaths to climate change to the welfare of marginalized groups to labor issues to substance abuse. They also highlight how many of these are intersecting issues rather than standalone problems — and some of these intersections may be surprising. For example, it would never have occurred to me that teen delay in driving licensure may be the reason that fewer teens are getting after school jobs until I read the articles in this issue. The thoughtful research presented here is likely to lead to surprising new questions for public health practitioners — and hopefully, more innovative answers that help us overcome the challenges before us.

This is the second issue that I've worked on for *The Journal of Law, Medicine and Ethics*, and it's my first letter. Looking back at past editor's letters from Ted Hutchinson, Margo Smith and Courtney McClellan, it's clear that I have some impressive work to try to measure up to. Each issue of this journal that I've read has left my brain bristling with new information and insights, excited about a more equitable future but more aware than ever of the errors of the past that we must overcome. As this publication enters its 52nd year, I'm honored to be a small part of its great legacy.

Nicole Gustas  
Special Projects Editor