In this issue, the JoLLE Editorial Board introduces a new feature—the Poetry and Art Section. Following the JoLLE@UGA 2013 Spring Conference and Spring 2013 Issue, which both featured activist visual art, we considered ways that we might expand JoLLE to regularly feature artistic literacies. In the early planning stages of the fall issue, a number of Board members readily volunteered to spearhead the effort. Led by Susan Bleyle, JoLLE sent out a call for visual art and poetry that related to literacy and/or language education. We were delighted when writers and artists from all over the country began to submit their work, and this inaugural section features five poems and three visual pieces. If you have work that meets the guidelines for the Poetry and Art Section, please contact the JoLLE Poetry and Art Board at jolleart@uga.edu.

The Poetry and Art Section works in conversation with the newly updated feature “Scholars Speak Out” and with the research articles featured in this issue. The sections share a common effort to expand and challenge traditional boundaries.

The poets and artists published in this issue, in what we hope will be a regular feature in future issues of JoLLE, remind us of how powerful and personal language and literacy are for all of us. The first work is a painting by Alejandro “Cheesecake” Galeana Salinas, a high school student who attended the JoLLE@UGA 2013 Spring Conference. His painting UndocuMary reshapes the familiar image of Rosie the Riveter to respond to nationwide anti-immigration policies and to provide a voice to millions of silenced students. Next, a multimedia art piece The Prospect of Honey: Synergistic Theories Brimming with Potential by Stephen Landry, visually considers the value of transgressing theoretical borders so that different ideas might inform one another. The poem “Words” by Ted Kesler reflects on words’ power to hurt others and the self. Richard Meyer’s “This Is a Test” experiments with poetic form and explores the implications of standardized testing and education reform by presenting stanzas that double as test items. Mary
Kay Rummel’s two poems, “Ars Poetica” and “Mother Tongue,” contemplate the ways that words and literary works can be personally powerful, particularly when faced with outside pressures to devalue one’s heritage and true self. The fifth poem, Anna Soter’s “Sing the Bizarre,” celebrates creativity while exposing the ways that education often tries to quell uniqueness. The final piece in our new section is a cartoon by Emily Suderman that considers the ways in which many approach language with little insight or finesse, leading viewers to contemplate the consequences of such actions.

In our revitalized “Scholars Speak Out,” Melisa “Misha” Cahnmann-Taylor, who is currently teaching in Oaxaca, Mexico, discusses the lessons that she has learned from her Oaxacan students and community members, including the importance of social responsibility and action. Cahnmann-Taylor’s discussion extends the conversation to consider the ways that her personal experiences have taught her to approach education in a more socially active way.

The eight articles in this issue feature research that complements the discussions offered by Cahnmann-Taylor, and by the poets and artists. The first two articles consider the implications of data collection and standardization in education. In an effort to ensure student’s authentic reading experiences, “Developing an Observation Instrument to Support Authentic Independent Reading Time During School in a Data-driven World” by Lunetta M. Williams, Katrina W. Hall, Wanda B. Hedrick, Marcia Lamkin, and Jennifer Abendroth describes the authors’ efforts to develop an observation instrument to measure and develop meaningful independent in-school reading. In relation to the issue of high-stakes assessments, “Invisibility: An Unintended Consequence of Standards, Tests, and Mandates” by Laurie Elish-Piper, Mona W. Matthews, and Victoria J. Risko proposes a culturally responsive pedagogy to combat the standardized testing that renders teachers and students invisible.

The next three articles are mindful of the implications of testing, too, and focus specifically on the consequences of policy implementations that affect minority students and the United States. These authors propose socially just actions that serve to educate students rather than to limit access to learning. Offering a pedagogy of resistance, Curtis Acosta, whom some readers may recognize from the documentary *Precious Knowledge*, discusses in “Pedagogies of Resiliency and Hope in Response to the Criminalization of Latin@ Students” the political and social acts that limit Latin@ and African American students’ opportunities and the ways that some students and educators challenge discriminatory policies. Christian J. Faltis, who was a keynote speaker and featured artist at the JoLLE@UGA 2013 Spring Conference, continues the conversation of resisting inequitable social and education policies through art and writing in “Eradicating Borders: An Exploration of ScholArtistry for Embracing Mexican Immigrant Children and Youth in Education.” Following Faltis’s manuscript, which incorporates art and research, Lindsey Moses considers the importance of viewing as a literacy practice for bilingual learners in “Viewing as a Cultural Tool in the Construction of Meaning with Expository Texts for Young Bilinguals.”

The final three articles consider ways to maximize and authenticate learning experiences within the contexts of testing and cultural diversities. In an effort to move beyond the physical borders of a classroom, “Life Inside the Hive: Creating a Space for Literacy to Grow” by Jane M. Saunders examines the importance of technology in constructing a lively literacy classroom. Given many schools’ shifts to nonfiction texts following Common Core implementation, Gina
Gallo and Molly K. Ness’s article “Understanding the Text Genre Preferences of Third-grade Readers” is a timely consideration of the ways to engage students in a variety of text genres, including informational texts. The final article, a Voices from the Field feature written by John A. Unger and Vicki A. Scullion titled “Digital Video Cameras for Brainstorming and Outlining: The Process and Potential,” considers how teachers might integrate digital video cameras to facilitate postsecondary students’ writing processes.

Finally, this issue includes six book reviews that introduce you to recent publications that focus on both research and practice related to language and literacy education. Extending the poetry section’s and articles’ consideration of testing, Katie Wester-Neal reviews What Every Elementary Teacher Needs to Know About Reading Tests (From Someone Who Has Written Them). The Literacy Coach’s Handbook: A Guide to Research-Based Practice, reviewed by Thea Yurkewecz, and A Research Reader in Universal Design for Learning, reviewed by Brittany Bogue, offer resources to literacy teachers and researchers. Gabriela del Villar offers a book that connects directly with other sections of this issue with her review of Redesigning Composition For Multilingual Realities. For those readers interested specifically in writing, Shim Lew’s review of A Synthesis of Qualitative Studies of Writing Center Tutoring 1983-2006 offers a historical consideration of writing instruction. The final review, by Stephanie P. Jones, examines the ways that Crossing Boundaries: Teaching and Learning With Urban Youth might assist teachers in urban areas. Those who are interested in reviewing a book for JoLLE may contact Deavours Hall, Book Review Editor, at bookrev@uga.edu.

The JoLLE Editorial Board hopes that you will read this issue mindful of the ways that you might challenge and transcend your own boundaries. The poems and art in this issue remind us that creative literacies are important means of expressing understanding and struggles. The “Scholars Speak Out” feature provides a forum for language and literacy scholars to share their questions and ideas, which will be updated regularly on the JoLLE website. Any readers interested in extending this or other conversations through “Scholars Speak Out” should contact Meghan Thornton at jolle@uga.edu. The research articles and book reviews offer a variety of perspectives that examine trends affecting our nation, and many propose ways that we might respond to those trends, personally and professionally. It is our hope that this issue will encourage you to consider multiple viewpoints and possibly will push you to consider ways that language and literacy might help to make you more aware of and responsive to whatever borders you find surround you.