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For years, *The Synapse* has provided a platform for creative scientific exploration, including articles

on everything from the mechanics of equestrian riding to the importance of science writing. In the current climate of polarization and misinformation, it's critical to bridge the arts and sciences in pursuit of new understandings and greater truths. As the incoming Editors-in-Chief, we, Rachael Branscomb (OC '19) and Leah Treidler (OC '20), are excited to support writers, editors, and artists in examining the world in new ways and sharing their unique insights.

We're incredibly grateful to our predecessors, Tara Santora (OC '18) and Victoria Albacete (OC '18), for their hard work and high standards. And we're excited to welcome our new board, beginning with Yue Yu (OC '20) and Steven Mentzer (OC '20) who are taking over as Chief Layout Editor and Art Coordinator, respectively. Emma Larson (OC '20) will be our Web Manager, Tori Fisher (OC '21) will be taking over as Treasurer, and Jane Sedlak will be continuing on as our Outreach Coordinator.

As electric cars begin to line the streets and natural disasters ravage corners of the world, we at *The Synapse* are passionate about keeping up with the most recent scientific discoveries. In 2017, scientists created artificial wombs, growing lamb fetuses in a lab. For the first time, gravitational waves were detected from the merging of two neutron stars about 130 million years ago. CRISPR was successfully used to edit a human embryo. If you're hoping to learn more about advances in genetically modified organisms, read Joanna Zienkiewicz's article, *The Designer Plant Debate*. If you're

fascinated by the idea of eventual human relocation, check out Kileigh Ford's article *Exoplanets: A Home Away From Home*, which analyzes exoplanets within and just beyond our solar system for their earth-like qualities and human-sustaining capabilities. And if you want to learn about a booming sector of cancer research, flip through Maureen Madar's article, *Genetics of Esophageal Cancer*.

To understand how the current political environment is affecting widespread change on scientific discovery, peruse Gailyn Gabriel's article, *Science Policy in the Trump Administration*. To explore the morally questionable and psychologically destitute side of space travel from a creative perspective, check out *Gravity Ridge* by Alexander Metz, the first ever fictional story published in *The Synapse*. And if you're afraid reliance on modern machinery is altering your intelligence, consider Tyler Duffrin's article, *Man's Best Friend*.

We thank you for picking up a copy of *The Synapse* — or checking us out online — and invite you to apply to write or edit for *The Synapse*. We hope that you continue to search for meaning in a rapidly developing world, research new discoveries for yourself instead of perpetuating misinformation, and advocate for an informed and generous scientific world, because it's only by the advocacy of people like you that scientific thought remains an integral and integrity-based part of the modern world.

Rachael Branscomb and Leah Treidler
Editors-in-Chief

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Tara Santora graduated from Oberlin College in 2018 with a major in Biology. Tara began at *The Synapse* as a writer the first semester of their freshman year, eventually becoming Editor-in-Chief and forming the partnership between Oberlin College and Denison University. At Oberlin, they worked as a Quantitative Skills Center tutor, played on the quidditch team, and did research in the Bio and Environmental Studies departments. Drawing from the love of journalism they fostered at *The Synapse*, they're currently attending New York University's Science, Health & Environmental Reporting Program.



A 2018 Oberlin College graduate, Elena Hartley double majored in Chemistry and Geology. She's worked with *The Synapse* for three years as an art contributor, art coordinator, and Chief Layout Editor. Outside of *The Synapse*, Elena has worked as a peer advisor at the Career Development Center, Layout Editor for *The Oberlin Review*, and a student representative for the Geology Department. A lover of drawing, she continues to use her art as a bridge to connect important topics in science to the public. She is currently attending the Science Illustration Certificate Program at California State University, Monterey Bay.



Victoria Albacete is a 2018 Oberlin College graduate from Pittsburgh with a double major in English and Biology and a minor in Hispanic Studies. In addition to serving as one of the previous Editors-in-Chief for *The Synapse*, Victoria spent her senior year as an Editor-in-Chief of the *Plum Creek Review*, Production Manager of the *Oberlin Review*, and a dancer with Movimiento. She has always had a passion for reading and hopes to join a children's and young adult literature-focused imprint of a major publishing company or to work abroad as an assistant editor.



Rachel Dan is a 2018 Oberlin College graduate from Bethesda, Maryland with a double major in Neuroscience and Creative Writing. In her three years at *The Synapse*, she served as an artist, layout editor, writer, crossword maker, and Chief Layout Editor. A student in both humanities and sciences, *The Synapse* has afforded her the opportunity to explore scientific interests outside her academic life, writing about subjects such as the Juno spacecraft. She spends her free time reading, drawing, and practicing Aikido and she hopes to someday visit all seven continents.

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