

Welcome from the Conference Co-Chairs

Healthy Populations Journal (HPJ) is a multi-faculty, student led, open access, peer-reviewed journal housed at HPI at Dalhousie University. As part of our mission to support and disseminate research which advances knowledge on population health research and global health equity, we partnered with the *Crossroads Interdisciplinary Health Research (Crossroads) Conference* to highlight the student-led research presented at the 19th annual conference on March 10th and 11th in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The Crossroads Conference is a student-led and student-centered initiative that began within the School of Health and Human Performance at Dalhousie University and is now affiliated with the Healthy Populations Institute. Crossroads began with a focus on Nova Scotian students and has grown to welcome students from across Canada and beyond. The conference aims to provide the next generation of leaders and innovators in health research with a forum to gain valuable skills and experience in knowledge translation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and critical thinking. Crossroads offers opportunities for students to share their research, network with peers and experts, and attend panel discussions, mini-courses, and keynote lectures.

On March 11, 2020, two days before the 18th iteration of Crossroads, the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the world. While Crossroads endured a three-year hiatus, the Healthy Populations Journal emerged as a student-led initiative with the aim of highlighting population health and global health equity research. In 2023, Crossroads was revived, and the HPJ continues to thrive.

In 2023, attendees returned to Crossroads with new perspectives after living through a global pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated many pre-existing global health crises and created new population health challenges. The 2023 Crossroads theme of *(Re) picturing Health* highlighted these new perspectives and encouraged new and innovative approaches to solving health-related challenges.

Abstracts in this issue explore wide-ranging and timely topics related to population health, health inequity, applied science and engineering, clinical research, health policy, kinesiology, mental health and addiction, and recreation and leisure. The cover of this issue features a photograph of students participating in the photovoice methodology workshop at Crossroads on March 10, 2023.

This special issue would not be possible without support from the Healthy Populations Institute, CUPE Nova Scotia, Dalhousie University's Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University's Office of the Vice President of Research and Innovation, Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, and Dalhousie University's School of Health Administration, and support from the HPJ Editorial Board Members.



Michaela Title

Co-Chair, Crossroads Conference
School of Health and Human Performance
Dalhousie University



Josh Yusuf

Co-Chair, Crossroads Conference
School of Health and Human Performance
Healthy Populations Institute
Dalhousie University