



The Heart-Growing Work of Becoming a Healthcare Provider

Molly Fessler*, Elena Lorenzana*, Limi Sharif*, Marvin Urias, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Bhavna Guduguntla*,
*University of Michigan Medical School

Background

The word ‘auxocardia,’ (awk’sō-kar’dē-ă) is defined as “enlargement of the heart, either by hypertrophy or dilation” (medicaldictionary.com). At *Auxocardia Journal*, we like to broaden that definition of heart expansion to also include, ‘the process of becoming a healthcare provider.’ *Auxocardia* (auxocardia.com) was founded in 2020 as a collaborative, community space for learners in the health professions to share their reflections on the process of becoming a healthcare provider. Publishing biannually, in May and November, we seek to provide a forum for students to express themselves creatively and share those reflections with a broader audience. *Auxocardia* seeks to share the triumphs, trials, and tribulations of medical, social work, midwifery, nursing, dentistry, PA school and more. It seeks to recognize the immense privilege of working in the healing professions, honoring the patients we serve, and recognizing the teachers who shape us, while also offering an honest take on the challenges associated with the process.

Actions

Auxocardia Journal entered the literary space soliciting submissions from all members of the health professional student community. Our journal accepts art, essays, videos, literary interviews, fiction, poetry and more from students in the health professions disciplines. It is our contention that reading, viewing, and engaging with the collaborative works of our colleagues fosters empathy, enables us to be better healthcare team members, as well as better future providers for our patients.

Results

While our outreach and collaboration efforts are still in their infancy, to date, *Auxocardia* has published artists, writers, and poets from nursing, medical, special education, forensic psychology, neuroscience, EMT, and pharmacy schools. Analytics from the journal hosting platform demonstrate that we have engaged viewers from over 50 countries across the globe. Our audience has grown since our first issue; this year we’ve seen a 23% increase in new unique visitors to our platform. We’ve grown our collaborative efforts through the receipt of a University of Michigan Library Mini-Grant, becoming a member of the Community of Literary Magazines and Presses, and partnering with undergraduate students on a monthly interview installment, Homograph.

Lessons Learned

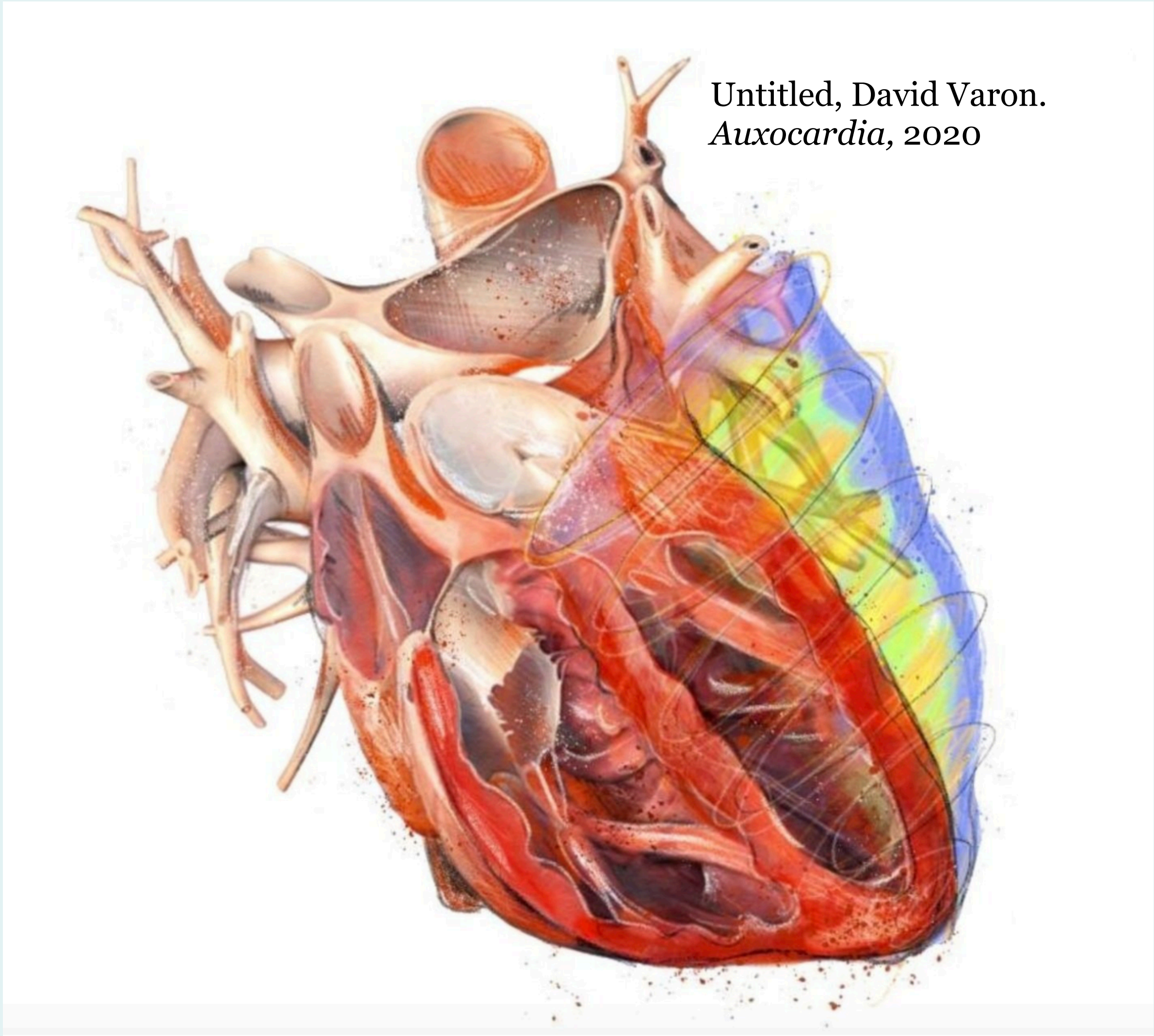
Auxocardia would benefit from greater presence of interdisciplinary board members, editorial staff, and administrative staff. At this time, our founding team is primarily medical students; an interdisciplinary organization cannot grow without greater interdisciplinary leadership. We’ve also learned that our organization would benefit from greater structure, organization, and delegation of roles. The literary journal publishing space is complex; journals come and go every day. Particularly as working students, we’ve learned that publishing a journal on a biannual basis is not without a great deal of effort, time, and dedication.

Next Steps

Looking to the future, we hope to increase *Auxocardia*’s presence in the literary and medical/narrative medicine fields, increase recruitment of inter-professional board members and work to include a greater diversity of voices and experiences for publication. We seek to make *Auxocardia* a place where the arts are accessible to health professional students; we hope to make it an artistic home for every student walking the path to becoming a provider while fostering dialogue and community amongst our inter-professional colleagues.

Acknowledgements

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Untitled, David Varon.
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