Aftermath

Crocker Science House

Next year, twelve outstanding students will have the opportunity to share an historic residence near Heritage Commons. Students are eligible if they have declared a major within the College of Science and will be a junior or senior during the 2002-2003 academic year. Application forms and information are available at the College of Science Dean's Office, 220 JTB. Applications are due January 11.

Career Day

Mathematics Career Day was held Thursday, November 29. Jim White from Career Services informed students about how Career Services can help them, and a panel described some career opportunities in mathematics. Elizabeth Tashjian from the Finance Department spoke about the importance of math in finance and the opportunities available in this field. Robert Lindsay, Vice President of Engineering at Teltronics, told students about the different areas in which mathematics is used in engineering. Kevin Lawlor, a former student and founder and President of MedStatistics, talked about how to prepare for a career in statistics and what to expect when starting your own business. Marilyn Keir offered insights into the rewards and challenges of a teaching career. The students who attended learned that mathematics opens many doors to promising career opportunities.

Charitable Giving
by Jim Carlson

The Mathematics Department would like to express its thanks to the faculty members and alumni who have made charitable contributions to the department. These funds have been used for scholarships, to buy books for the undergraduate collection, to provide refreshments at the undergraduate and graduate colloquia, and for many other good works. During the past two years, these gifts have totaled $9,300, plus an additional $2,935 in contributions to the Calvin Wilcox Scholarship Fund. Once again, thank you for your generosity. It really helps.

Putnam Competition
by Fletcher Gross

On Saturday, December 1, the 2001 William Lowell Putnam Mathematics Examination was held throughout the U.S. and Canada. Taking the test here were David Ayala, Christopher Hansen, Les Kartchner, David Lindsay, Helen Obzansky, Andrew Reinkoester, Ryan Rettberg, Jonathan Smith, and Amy Williams. This test is famous for its difficult problems. As examples, here are two of the problems from this year's exam:

• Can an arc of a parabola inside a circle of radius 1 have length greater than 4?

• Let a and b be real numbers in the interval $(0, 1/2)$ and let g be a continuous real-valued function such that $g(g(x)) = ag(x) + bx$ for all real x. Prove that $g(x) = cx$ for some constant c.

VIGRE Visit

The VIGRE External Advisory and Assessment Committee visited the Math Department for meetings November 30 and December 1. The committee members who visited were Efraim Armendariz (Univ. of Texas at Austin), Al Taylor (Univ. of Michigan), and Sylvia Wiegand (Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln). While they were here they met with students and faculty members involved in the VIGRE programs.

Alumni Update
by Karim Khader

I graduated in May 2000 and in anticipation of graduation, began looking for jobs seriously in February. I received a job offer as an actuary with an insurance company called Amica. I was scheduled to begin my new job in June, 2000. My wife transferred to the University of Rhode Island and is currently studying Dietetics.

Amica is a great company. I work with very nice people and have a relatively low stress job. One of the things I don't like about my job is that I have to drive across the entire state of Rhode Island to get to work. It takes me about 50 minutes one way.

Our location is very nice. We live about 2.5 hours from New York City, 1 hour from Boston and 10 minutes from the beach. We have visited many new places, seen new things and eaten great food. There is an abundance of good seafood and Italian food in Rhode Island.

During the course of my employment with Amica, I have learned much of what it means to be an actuary. I have found through interacting with fellow actuaries and going through the exam process that this is probably not a career I am interested in. I really miss studying mathematics and am hoping to begin graduate school in mathematics in the fall of 2002.

The Mathletes

Members of the Math Department participated in the Intramural Volleyball League. Team "Mathlete" members pictured are Dali Zhang, Frank Lynch (who spent the season on the disabled list), Michael Crosswhite, Jingyi Zhu, Sarah Strong and Sarah Geneser. Mathletes not pictured include Mark Avery, Bethany Bradfield, John Chinchen, and An Le. Andy Oster opted not to join the Mathletes and instead played for a team with a better record (not hard to do – the Mathletes only won one game, and that one by forfeit).

Upcoming Events

Dec. 7: Reading Day

Dec. 10 - 14: Final Exams

Dec. 12: Department Holiday Potluck Social, 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the faculty/staff lounge

Dec. 15 - Jan 2: Holiday Break

Jan. 3: Spring Semester classes begin