



**Louisiana/Mississippi Section
of the
Mathematical Association of America**

NEWSLETTER—FALL 2004
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**LETTER FROM WALLY PYE—LA/MS SECTION
CHAIR**

Dear Section Members:

I have begun the preliminary planning work for our spring meeting. The dates for the meeting are March 3-5. Early birds can register Thursday evening (March 3). As usual the actual meeting takes place all day Friday (March 4) and Saturday morning (March 5).

The site is the Grand Casino Gulfport. It is located near the intersection of Highways 49 and 90 and overlooks the Mississippi Sound. The actual meeting facilities are apart from the gambling area. Rooms will be available for \$99 if reserved in conjunction with the meeting.

Bruce Palka, *American Mathematical Monthly* Editor, will be our featured speaker. He is at the University of Texas at Austin.

I have asked an actuary, a bioinformatist, a Raytheon manager, and a Stennis Space Center applied mathematician to serve on a panel. The focus will be on careers that require a mathematical background. My expectation is that student attendees will drive the discussion primarily in a question and answer format.

I solicit your suggestions for other meeting activities. E-mail me at wallace.pye@usm.edu. I look forward to seeing you on the Coast.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE SECTION

CENTENARY COLLEGE

Mark Schlatter was granted tenure, promoted to Associate Professor, and appointed chair of the mathematics department.

Derrick Head and **Mark Schlatter** attended the MAA SAUM (Supporting Assessment in Undergraduate Mathematics) workshop on "Assessing the Undergraduate Program in Mathematics". Centenary College is one of 28 schools participating in this workshop which takes departments through the process of assessing their major.

The mathematics department at Centenary moved into its own building - the Irene K. Wright Mathematics Building. The late Mrs. Wright (a member of the class of 1938) was a mathematics major who advanced from a job as a bank secretary to the post of vice president and trust officer of Bank One. At one point, she considered leaving Centenary, but was contacted by one of her professors who made sure she could stay in school. She left over \$2 million to Centenary, a portion of which was used to purchase and renovate the current mathematics building. The department is pleased to have three computer equipped classrooms, a seminar room, a library, a student lounge, and (luxuries of luxuries!) our own kitchen.

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Two new faculty members were hired this year. They are **Dr. David Jay Hebert** and **Dr. Lee Virden**.

A 2004 summer institute for mathematics teachers of grades 6 through geometry was held on Delta State University campus on June 1 through 28. Funding for the institute was provided by the State Institutions of Higher Learning under "No Child Left Behind." The project was led by co-directors **Dr. Rose Strahan** and **Dr. Stella Wear**. Participants received 6 hours of graduate credit for their participation in the institute. All of the 13 teachers who participated

taught in public schools. The grade levels taught ranged from fourth grade mathematics through high school geometry with most teaching at least two levels of mathematics. The participants had a broad range of educational backgrounds with only six having attained a major in mathematics education and teacher certification in mathematics for grades 7-12. Although there were vast differences in the mathematical knowledge of the participants, they learned much from each other and were a very congenial group. Participants wrote lesson plans, presented a teaching activity on a topic for their grade level, presented problems and solutions to the group, read and critiqued journal articles, and participated in journal writing. The institute participants will also attend two academic year follow-up sessions.

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AT EUNICE

Dr. Ray Robicheaux will be making a presentation at the AMATYC Conference which will be held in Orlando, Florida, on November 18 – 21, 2004. **Ms. Ellen Stutes** is a Liaison Officer.

The ICTCM Conference will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana on October 28 – 31, 2004. **Dr. Grace Cascio Houston** is the Conference Chair. **Dr. Diane Fisher** and **Dr. Renee Robicheaux** will be making a joint presentation. **Mrs. Lorrie Joubert** and **Ms. Sharon Clark** will also be making a joint presentation. **Dr. Bill Henshaw** will be presenting at the meeting as well. **Dr. A. J. Roques** will be attending.

LaMsMatyc will be meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, on September 23, 2004, and **Ms. Katina Freeman**, **Mrs. Lorrie Randall**, and **Ms. Sharon Clark** will be attending.

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AT SHREVEPORT

Judith Covington has received the Elmer and Barbara Simon Professorship for Excellence in Teaching. She is serving as a member of the Editorial Panel of *Mathematics Teacher*.

Debbie Shepherd has received the George and Regina Khoury Professorship in Sciences. She is serving as the book review editor for the journal, *Quality and Reliability Engineering International*.

We have hired two new faculty, **Aurel Stan** and **Francis Hanna**.

LOUISIANA TECH

Dr. Jinko Kanno of the Program of Mathematics and Statistics at Louisiana Tech University has been chosen as one of 76 new Project NExT fellows nationwide.

Dr. Jenna Carpenter was awarded the Louisiana Tech University Foundation 2004 Professorship Award (for excellence in teaching, research and service).

Four mathematics faculty members were awarded Louisiana Board of Regents Endowed Professorships. These are as follows: **Jenna Carpenter** was awarded the Wayne and Juanita Spinks Professorship; **Weizhong Dai** was awarded the McDermott International Professorship; **Bernd Schroeder** was awarded the Edmondson/Crump Professorship; and **Gene Callens** was awarded the James Naylor Professorship.

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

John Travis was recently named as chair for the Department of Mathematics at Mississippi College. His selection followed a reorganization where mathematics and computer science were split into separate departments.

Tommy Leavelle, Melinda Gann, and Teresa Floyd, in conjunction with the Mississippi College School of Education and the Jackson Public Schools, are providing professional development activities for teachers of math 1-12 through an NSF grant.

John McMath has been named Head Golf Coach and was instrumental in the reestablishment of the program at Mississippi College. He also continues to serve as Professor of Mathematics within the department.

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Professor William T. England died on September 2, 2004, due to heart failure during surgery. He obtained a masters degree in mathematics from Columbia, N.Y. in 1964 and a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Virginia in 1968. After teaching mathematics in Guatemala, he took a position at Mississippi State University in 1976 where he remained until his retirement in 2002. He was well known for his inspirational teaching and influenced several students to continue their studies at the graduate level. Bill will be sorely missed in this department.

MISSISSIPPI UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN

Math Camp 2004 met June 6-11 on the MUW Campus. The focus was Mathematical Biology. Math Camp 2005 will be June 5-10, and will focus on mathematics and art. **Dr. Bonnie Oppenheimer** has directed these summer residential camps since 2000.

Two summer opportunities for middle school mathematics and science teachers were held on the MUW campus. In June, twenty mathematics teachers and twenty science teachers participated in "Summer Institute for Teacher Excellence" (SITE) which was funded by the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning. This four week program was a combined effort between MUW and the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science. Participants from Oktibbeha, Noxubee, Lowndes, and Monroe Counties obtained a greater understanding of the concepts in the subjects they teach. In addition, they learned how to use a variety of strategies to teach these subjects to a diverse population of students. Strategies included the use of hands-on learning, technology, and outdoor learning. Participants earned college credit towards their "No Child Left Behind" requirements. They also received a plethora of classroom supplies to help expand their knowledge base.

In July, nine mathematics teachers and six science teachers representing 6 counties in the Delta, Columbus City, and Lowndes County Schools participated in the two week program "Creating High Achievement in Mathematics, Problem Solving and Science" (CHAMPS II) which was funded by a Mathematics and Science Partnership Grant through the Mississippi Department of Education. The CHAMPS II Project hopes to positively impact

student achievement in the classrooms of participating teachers as they engage in a year-long journey of professional growth and development. During the two weeks, teachers spent mornings studying intensive math and science content, with their afternoons being geared towards hands-on content activities. The participants will be taking part in Super Saturday professional development programs and mentor programs.

Two instructors in mathematics have been hired for the current academic year. **Ms. Tess Creel** joins MUW after completing her Master's degree at Mississippi State University in the summer. **Ms. Yvonne Jones** will be a full-time instructor after many years of part-time teaching for MUW.

Dr. Dorothy Kerzel, associate professor of mathematics, now serves as the head of the Division of Science and Mathematics. Dr. Kerzel has been at MUW for seven years.

The Division expects to carry out a tenure track search this year for an assistant professor of mathematics, with duties to begin in August 2005.

NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY

Ianna West is a new assistant professor in the department. Ianna recently completed the requirements for a Ph.D. in Mathematics at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Badiollah (Badi) Asrabadi was appointed interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for one year effective July 1, 2004.

Nicholls State University initiated a new graduate program effective fall 2004. The new program is a Master of Science in Community/Technical College Mathematics and replaces the Master of Science in Applied Mathematics. This program will prepare teachers for the new community college system in Louisiana including the use of technology in teaching mathematics. The Louisiana Board of Regents envisions the program servicing the entire state through distance learning.

<p>Mark your calendars! LA/MS Section Meeting March 3 - 5, 2005</p>

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY

The Southeastern Louisiana University Department of Mathematics is pleased to announce that it will be hosting the Southern Regional Weekend Algebra Conference, 5-7 November. Algebraists are invited to come share a weekend of stimulating professional talks. More information may be found at the conference website:

<http://www.selu.edu/Academics/Faculty/kneuerburg/algconf/2004algconf.htm>

The Department continues to sponsor an ongoing Colloquium series. If anyone is interested in speaking at one of our colloquia they should contact **Dr. Lucy Kabza** (lkabza@selu.edu), **Dr. Tom Mark** (Thomas.Mark@selu.edu) or **Dr. Bill Vautaw** (wvautaw@selu.edu) for more information.

The Department has had several personnel changes this year. **Dr. Ken Li**, **Dr. Dennis Merino**, and **Dr. Tena Golding** were all promoted to the rank Full Professor. **Dr. Danny Acosta**, **Dr. Lucy Kabza**, and **Dr. Kent Neuerburg** were all promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. Finally, **Ms. Ronnie Settoon** was hired as a full-time Instructor.

Dr. Kent Neuerburg was named Interim Department Head while we conduct a search to fill the permanent position. As it becomes available, information on the Department Head position will be posted on the Southeastern Louisiana University Human Resources website:

<http://www.selu.edu/Administration/Depts/HumanResources/>.

We also had some sad news. **Dr. Robert Brown**, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Department Head Emeritus, passed away in August. Another retiree, **Joyce Travis**, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, also passed away in August.

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

Prof. Henry Heatherly and **Catherine "Cat" McKay** have retired from the Mathematics Department. **Duane Blumberg**, a former Section Chair, has retired as the University's Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies and has assumed the position of Assistant Secretary of Economic Development for the state of Louisiana.

Michael Johnson and **Ryan Dutsch** have joined the faculty as Instructors.

The MAA/PREP Workshop "Mathematics Meets Biology: Epidemics, Data Fitting, and Chaos" hosted by the Mathematics Department in May was a great success. Registration slightly exceeded the announced limit, and the participant evaluations were very positive. A follow-up session is being planned for the national meeting in Atlanta, and there is a possibility that we will be hosting another workshop in the spring of 2005.

Enrollments in graduate and upper-level undergraduate mathematics classes again increased from the previous year.

Roger Waggoner attended the MathFest in Providence as the new Section Governor and found the experience to be interesting and enlightening. The Section was represented prominently by current and former members.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Instructor **B. Jan Davis** took phased retirement at the end of spring 2004. Jan joined the department in 1971. During her 33 years at Southern Miss, she garnered an enviable reputation as an outstanding classroom teacher. She will return in spring 2005 to teach half-time. Professor **Mylan Redfern** has retired and begun a new career. She accepted the position of chair of the combined department of mathematics and computer science at Valdosta State University in Georgia. Dr. Redfern came to us as an instructor in 1978. She took a two-year developmental leave starting in 1984 to work on her Ph.D. at LSU, which she earned in 1988. Dr. Redfern was well-known for her excellent teaching. She established herself as a scholar in stochastic analysis, was one of the few in this department with success in obtaining external funding, and gave unstinting service to the department, especially in committee work such as the Scholarship Committee.

Dr. Julie Cwikla has joined the department on the Coast. She was formerly a member of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, but she wanted to be part of mathematics. Professor Cwikla earned a B.S. in mathematics and chemistry from Fairfield in Connecticut, an M.S. in applied mathematics from the Courant Institute in New York City, and a Ph.D. in mathematics education from the University of Delaware. She has been an assistant professor at Southern Miss since 2001. Dr. Cwikla is the principal investigator for a National Science Foundation CAREER grant. This prestigious grant

covers the period from 2003-2008 and is the first grant of its type at Southern Miss. There will also be four visitors on the main campus in Hattiesburg during 2004-2005 to help with the teaching. **Jessica Bunch**, M.S. in mathematics, and **Kelly Tucker**, M.S. in curriculum and instruction, are first-time instructors. Jessica graduated from our master's program and returns to us after one year of teaching at Waynesboro High. Kelly completed her master's with a heavy math emphasis at the end of August. **Yosi Balas**, who has been teaching for us since 1997, and **Dr. Gaston Smith**, who has taught for us since 1993 shortly after his retirement from William Carey, will both return for another year.

Last May, **Wright W. Cross** received the first College of Science and Technology Outstanding Alumni Award. The award was particularly significant because it is the first, and all graduates of the college were eligible to receive it. The first endowed chair at Southern Miss was created by Wright and Annie Rea Cross of Baker, Louisiana. This happened in 1997 when Mr. Cross, a 1951 mathematics graduate of USM, and his wife set up a Charitable Remainder Unitrust gift to fund the Cross Chair in Mathematics and Endowment for Undergraduate Research. In total Mr. Cross has given the university over \$3.3M. **Dr. Jiu Ding** was selected by the University Awards Committee to receive the Excellence in Teaching award for 2004. He was honored with a presidential "Congratulations Luncheon" on April 27 and received an honorarium of \$1,000.

XAVIER UNIVERSITY

Dr. Carroll Diaz became the new Mathematics Department Chairman, beginning in the summer of 2004. Dr. Diaz will replace **Dr. Vljako Kocic**, who served as Chairman for seven years (one year as Appointed Chair, and two consecutive terms as Chairman).

Ms. Alyssia Dayries-Sam joined the Mathematics faculty in the fall of 2004.

On Saturday, November 8, 2003, the Mathematics Department held its 9th Annual Math Fair. Students from several New Orleans High Schools attended the event, which was supported by donations from several sponsors. Towers Perrin, John Wiley and Prentice Hall provided money, gift certificates, books and other items. Ms. Barbara Gundy of Towers Perrin came from New York to attend the fair, and spoke to the students before the competition,

highlighting the career opportunities for math majors. Teams from the attending high schools competed by taking a two hour test, given at two levels (lower and upper), and by participating in a quiz bowl. Participants received t-shirts and gifts bag, and enjoyed a free pizza lunch. Matthew Hebert, Samuel White and Thomas Sires tied for first place in the upper division, and Eric Everett placed first in the lower division.

On March 5, 2004, seven Xavier students (Lyril Chism, senior, mathematics and computer science; Chika Chukwu, sophomore, chemistry; Quashee Collier, graduate, education; Alexandra Lecorps, junior, biology; Mary Moore, junior, mathematics; Andrea Tyson, junior, mathematics; and Leah Wooden, senior, mathematics) and two faculty members (**Dr. Valerio De Angelis**, mathematics, and **Dr. Paul McCreary**, mathematics) attended the Louisiana - Mississippi section meeting of the Mathematical Association of America, held this year at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, LA. Alexandra Lecorps earned an Honorable Mention for the presentation of her paper "Using Linear Algebra to find the GCD and LCM of two numbers". She researched the topic and wrote the paper under the supervision of Dr. De Angelis in the spring of 2003.

During the spring and summer 2004, Mathematics faculty members **Mrs. Susan Fredine** and **Dr. V. J. DuRapau, Jr.**, and students Mr. Kody Melancon (Math Education major) and Ms. Andrea Tyson (Math major) have been working on the Freshman Mathematics Community Research Project. This work was partially funded by a Communities Initiative grant that is administered by Xavier's Center for the Advancement of Teaching and funded by the Bush and William and Flora Hewlett foundations.

This past February, members of the Department of Mathematics, both faculty and students, participated in a unique mini-conference on 3D visualization and other uses of mathematics in DNA modeling. Students and Faculty donned polarized "sunglasses" that let the viewer "fly" through 3 dimensional scenes of the Grand Canyon (on the large end) and molecular models of DNA (on the small end of the size scale). Members of the department convinced university officials to purchase three full 3D systems so that we can use them in laboratories and classrooms at Xavier.

Register NOW for the ICTCM 17th Annual Conference in New Orleans!!

Join the [International Conference on Technology in Collegiate Mathematics](#) in New Orleans, Louisiana at the Hyatt Regency October 28 - 31, 2004; less than six weeks away!

ICTCM offers a unique and exciting opportunity to

- network and connect with your peers,
- learn about the latest technology in the teaching and learning of mathematics, and
- view new products and services in the Exhibit Hall.

There will be mini-symposia, calculator workshops, computer minicourses, sessions, contributed papers, and poster sessions available to select from, with many of these activities providing free practical advice and ready-to-use activities.

Other exciting events include:

- **Exhibits Welcome Reception** on Thursday, October 28 from 6pm - 7:30pm
- **Keynote Address** on Friday, October 29 at 8:30am presented by Thomas Banchoff, Brown University
- **Technology Extravaganza**, a hands-on opportunity to "play" with cutting edge teaching technology **on Sunday, October 31**. Participate in the **raffle** for the opportunity to take some new technology home with you!
- **Mini-Symposia** will begin with an introduction by the organizer. The invited speakers will speak for fifteen minutes. These symposia will conclude with a discussion/summary

Also, please be aware of the fact that

- The fee for computer minicourses and calculator workshops is now included in the registration fee. Register for these offerings quickly as space is limited and will be assigned on a first come first register basis.

Visit <http://www.ictcm.org> for full complete conference details.

We are holding a limited number of rooms at the [Hyatt Regency New Orleans](#) at a special convention rate. These rooms will be released on October 6, 2004 so make your reservation today!

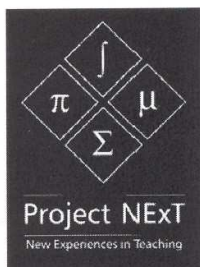
For more information or to register, visit [conference registration](#) or call (800) 472-6288.

**Don't delay! The pre-registration deadline is October 6th. Register early and save!
Advance Registration is \$195 for the three day conference!**

If you have already registered for the 17th Annual ICTCM, please forward this message on to a colleague who may be interested in attending this event.



SPONSOR A PROJECT NEXT FELLOW



Project NExT (New Experiences in Teaching) is looking for Individuals, Departments, Universities, MAA Sections, Organizations, Businesses to sponsor a Fellow(s) for a year plus program that helps new and recent Ph.D.s in the mathematical sciences make the transition from graduate student to full-time faculty.

Sponsorship means:

- P**rofessional development
- R**ecognition among recent Ph.D.s
- O**pportunity to become active in the profession
- J**ob enhancement and support
- E**lectronic networking
- C**ollegiality
- T**eacher enhancement

through **N**ew
Experiences in
Teaching

COST:

\$2500 per Fellow

Fellows attend workshops at three national meetings and network electronically with peers and mentors. Their institutions pay the travel costs; sponsorship pays the program costs.

For additional information on this opportunity, please contact:

Chris Stevens, Director, Project NExT Program, MAA
STEVENS@SLU.EDU

Lisa Kolbe, Development Specialist, MAA
lkolbe@maa.org
202-293-1170