

NEWS

Opening Doors
Through Mathematics



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Here Comes Vegas

by Jim Matovina

Expectations will be high when Las Vegas welcomes AMATYC this November. In addition to being treated to newly remodeled rooms at the Riviera, a very strong program, and mild temperatures with loads of sunshine, Las Vegas is known world-wide for its variety of entertainment options. In fact, if you want to be entertained, Las Vegas is where you need to be. So, if you want the real flair that Las Vegas can offer, consider taking in some of the following.



- o Blue Man Group–Venetian Las Vegas
These performances feature three enigmatic bald and blue characters who take the audience through a multi-sensory experience that combines theatre, percussive music, art, science and vaudeville into a form of entertainment that is like nothing else.
- o Cirque Du Soleil Shows
 - KÀ–At the MGM Grand
 - The Beatles LOVE–At the Mirage
 - Mystère–At the Treasure Island
 - “O”–At the Bellagio
- o Penn & Teller–Rio Las Vegas
Penn & Teller’s live show has been a hit on Broadway and around the country and now has a permanent home in Las Vegas at the Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino.
- o Tournament of Kings–Excalibur Las Vegas
This dinner show takes the audience to King Arthur’s Court where they can eat with their hands and are encouraged to be loud, as they watch knights joust and do battle.
- o Riviera Comedy Club
Offering a little more than most chuckle huts on the Strip, the 350-seat Riviera Comedy Club books ventriloquists, magicians, hypnotists and shock comics.

You can get information about and even purchase tickets for some of Las Vegas’ most popular shows at www.vegas.com/shows/. You can also book shows by calling 888.527.8342. Many Las Vegas shows regularly sell out, so if you really want to see a specific show, get

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What to Expect in *MathAMATYC Educator*

by Pete Wildman

After many years of faithful and excellent service, *The AMATYC Review* has gone into retirement! But don’t fret, the AMATYC board has authorized a creation of a new periodical called *MathAMATYC Educator*. You should expect to see this periodical in your mailbox three times a year with the inaugural issue due in September 2009.

The focus of *MathAMATYC Educator* is on mathematics education at the two-year college level. You can expect to see a number of full-length articles like you might have found in *The AMATYC Review*, along with a number of new features. Some of these new features include the following:

- A section called “Use this now!” will feature classroom activities and teaching tips that you should be able to implement in your classroom right away.
- A section called “Walking the Crossroads,” which will feature articles of practical applications from AMATYC’s *Beyond Crossroads* document.
- “Math=Fun”. Throughout the periodical you will see short snippets of math songs, poems, comics or maybe even whimsical mathematical artwork.
- A column reviewing free or inexpensive software that can be used in the classroom or to help your classroom teaching.

Some of the features you enjoyed in *The AMATYC Review* will be continued: the book review section, the technology review section, and the problems section. You should also expect to see some continued visits from the famous “Lucky Larry” of *The AMATYC Review*.

It is the desire of the entire editorial team for *MathAMATYC Educator* to be your journal. This journal is to be a great tool for AMATYC members, and here is how you can help make this a reality:

- Send your articles directly to the editor, Pete Wildman, at petewildman@comcast.net or peterw@spokanefalls.edu. Full-length articles are reviewed by two reviewers and a member of the editorial panel.
- Submit your teaching idea or activity to be published in the “Use this now!” section. We are especially in need of articles for this section. All AMATYC members have great ideas and creative classroom activities. Please consider submitting one of yours!
- Submit a math song or poem or comic or artwork to be included. The more fun, the better!

If you are hesitant because you have never published in a professional journal before, have no fear! Write the editor with your article idea and he will help you develop it into a full length article! Imagine the great feeling you will have when you see your idea or article published!

Be on the lookout for the first edition of *MathAMATYC Educator* in the fall!

Inside This Issue

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Be Creative! Think Out-of-the-Box During Tough Economic Times

RIKKI BLAIR
LAKELAND CC • KIRTLAND, OH

Colleges and universities across the U.S. are facing dramatic budget cuts for faculty and administration. In the current economy, colleges are struggling to maintain the level of support that students and faculty have grown accustomed to over time. Many programs and services, central to the mission of our community colleges, are being reduced, changed, or eliminated. While our students will be greatly impacted by these changes, faculty are also feeling the pinch with cut-backs in class offerings, delay or cancellation of equipment or technology purchases, and cuts in funds for professional development.

This situation brings challenges, but also brings opportunities. Now is the time to think out-of-the-box, be creative, outline/develop a teaching/learning project you have been thinking of for a long time, and write a grant to bring funds to your department and college. Writing a grant could be a way to minimize the financial downturn.

Writing and receiving a grant is a professional endeavor with many advantages. Faculty participating in a grant engage in the "scholarship of teaching and learning" by investigating questions related to teaching and learning, analyzing the outcomes, incorporating the results of the assessment into future actions, and documenting the work for others to learn from. Sharing the results from a grant contributes to the mathematics community by advancing and increasing the research base and knowledge about teaching and learning in two-year colleges.

I know what you are saying - "I don't know how to write a grant. I don't know how to conduct research. I don't have time, given my teaching responsibilities." Many faculty feel the same way. However, there *are* resources available to you that will help. Seek out the Grants Coordinator at your college and talk about your project. There is almost always one person on campus who is knowledgeable and/or has expertise to help craft a successful grant proposal. You just have to find that person! Investing the time and energy in seeking the resources you need will benefit you as a professional, your department, and your students over and over again.

Where might you look for grant opportunities? NSF is making a concerted effort to include community colleges in the grant solicitations (www.grants.gov or www.nsf.gov). With an emphasis on two-year colleges, the NSF's Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program focuses on the education of technicians for the high-technology fields that drive our nation's economy. The program involves partnerships between academic institutions and employers to promote improvement in the education of science and engineering technicians at the undergraduate and secondary school levels. More information can be found at www.nsf.gov/funding/. As a result of the increasing enrollments in two-year college developmental mathematics courses, other funders have cited developmental mathematics as a strategic priority. These funding opportunities in two-year college mathematics education have lately been presented from the federal government and many foundations, such as the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation, Carnegie Foundation, and Lumina.

"Documenting the achievement of mathematics students and the effectiveness of instructional strategies and using the results of that research to make valid improvements in mathematics programs can help to enhance students' learning in mathematics."

—*Beyond Crossroads*, page 67

Examples of other resources helpful to a prospective grant writer are available at the touch of one's fingers. A Google search of "scholarship of teaching and learning" produced over 11 million possible sites. Of particular interest are projects sponsored by The Carnegie Foundation through its Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL). The CASTL Program supports the development of a scholarship of teaching and learning, fostering learning for all students, enhancing the practice and profession of teaching, and promoting recognition and rewards to faculty for their scholarly work.

Embracing the scholarship of teaching and learning may involve significant shift in thought and professional practice for both faculty and administrators. An important component of the scholarship of teaching is viewing teaching not as a private endeavor, but as an activity that should be shared, reviewed, critiqued and discussed with peers. This process results in personal professional growth, enhanced experiences for students, and increased knowledge for the general mathematics education community. The 2008 set of reports, products, and multimedia exhibits from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (*Strengthening Pre-collegiate Education in Community Colleges* (SPECC), available in PDF at www.carnegiefoundation.org/publications/) highlight the scholarly work of a three-year project at 11 participating California community colleges.

While the teaching mission of two-year colleges does not always support faculty engaging in research projects, more research in two-year colleges is needed about how our students can best be served and how they best learn mathematics. Two-year college administrators should identify faculty who are interested in conducting research in their colleges and leverage their talents to assist the college in targeting state and federal funding to support research at two-year colleges. As an additional resource to faculty and encourage more classroom research, AMATYC created a new academic committee, Research in Mathematics Education at Two-Year Colleges (RMETYC). The members of this new committee plan to provide conference sessions and assistance to faculty about outlining a research plan for a project.

Final thoughts - Enhancing the profession through research is an important role for all faculty. In tough times, new ideas can be stimulating and efforts redirected to new endeavors, instead of continuing to do the same thing again. Be creative - think out-of-the-box!

Achieve's American Diploma Project

by Tracy Halka and Kate Blossveren

Many American high schools are failing to prepare students for success in college and careers. One-third of high school students fail to earn a diploma in four years and among those who do, one-third are placed in remedial mathematics and/or English courses upon entering college. With eight in ten future job openings in the next decade in the U.S. requiring postsecondary education and/or training, this failure to prepare and support students to succeed makes the need for change even more urgent. Sadly, when high schools set their expectations too low, there are serious consequences not only for individuals, families, and communities but for our nation's ability to compete in a global economy that increasingly values education.

To address this "expectations gap," Achieve launched the American Diploma Project (ADP)¹ to identify the knowledge and skills in English and mathematics that high school graduates need to succeed. ADP - a two-year research project that drew on focus groups, surveys and original research into the expectations of faculty at two- and four-year institutions and employers from over 20 industries - revealed a convergence in terms of what employers and postsecondary faculty say high school grads need for success.

The resulting set of ADP benchmarks - released in 2004 - are unquestionably rigorous: they amount to four years of grade-level English and four years of mathematics, including advanced algebra, geometry and data analysis, and statistics. Much of this content is typically taught in a sequence of courses such as Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II, although increasingly states and districts are considering alternative, more integrated approaches. Achieve recently began revising the benchmarks to ensure they are up to date, internationally benchmarked, supported by a growing research foundation, and organized in a way that ensures they are focused, specific and manageable.

Currently, all but six states have or are planning to align their end of high school expectations with the demands of college and career readiness. This is an important start but aligning standards is only the first step for states: to fully ensure that all students master the important content in their standards, states also need to develop aligned curriculum and assessments. To that end, Achieve launched the ADP Assessment Consortium, a group of 15 states² working together to design and administer common Algebra II and Algebra I end-of-course exams³. One of the purposes of these exams is to help ensure consistency in mathematics courses and instruction within and across the states.

Over time, states hope that the Algebra II exam can serve as an indicator of readiness for college-level mathematics. Faculty from two- and four-year post-secondary institutions have been involved in all aspects of test development from establishing the content standards to reviewing the items to helping determine the passing scores. They have also been involved in research studies to help ensure the exam's connection to credit-bearing college level mathematics. The exams are generally aligned with the ADP mathematics benchmarks, but assess some additional content.

A traditional Algebra II course is not for all students, and many states and districts are looking at ways to provide equally rigorous alternative pathways. What is important is that ALL high school students have access to the same rigorous content - whatever the course is called - that will prepare them for the postsecondary education and/or training they will inevitably need to succeed in college and careers.

¹The American Diploma Project was a joint initiative of Achieve, The Education Trust, The Fordham Foundation, and the National Alliance of Business.

²Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Arizona, Hawaii, Minnesota, North Carolina and Washington

³Pearson Education Measurement developed and owns the exams.

New Life for Developmental Mathematics

Are you satisfied with the success and retention rates in your developmental mathematics classes? If not, you are not alone. What needs to happen to create meaningful, effective change in developmental mathematics programs? Are revisions needed in course content, instructional techniques, or both?

For answers to these questions and to participate in developing strategies to improve student success in developmental mathematics, join your colleagues for a special symposium, "New Life for Developmental Mathematics," during the 2009 AMATYC Annual Conference in Las Vegas, November 12-15. The symposium, organized by AMATYC's Developmental Mathematics Committee, (DMC), features Rosemary M. Karr, Past President of the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE) and 2007 U.S. Professor of the Year for Community Colleges, and AMATYC's own Jack Rotman, DMC Chair.

The symposium will address issues facing developmental mathematics education in a two-pronged approach. On Friday, a two-hour session will discuss a "New Life" course curriculum for the future that will serve the needs of developmental mathematics students regardless of their career goals. Draft course outlines will be presented, critiqued, and discussed. In addition, promising classroom strategies for teaching in current and future class and course situations will be discussed.

On Saturday, an implementation workshop will take the strategies and course outlines from the session and design individual plans for implementation, as well as plans for department discussion and implementation of proposed course curricula. Participants will be guided through a process for designing a five-year implementation plan to achieve the basic changes called for in the "New Life" vision. Multiple faculty from each college are encouraged to attend the workshop.

Important Reminder

The AMATYC election will be held this fall. Individual, regular members may vote in this upcoming election. Institutional contacts are not voting members of AMATYC unless they are also individual, regular members of AMATYC. Therefore, institutional contacts, adjunct, retired, and student members interested in supporting colleagues in this upcoming election should join as individual, regular members no later than May 31, 2009, in order to vote.

AMATYC Needs YOU!

Conference Committee Positions Available

Are you an organized person who has a flair for business? Do you enjoy working with a dynamic group of individuals? If so, then AMATYC has a volunteer position for you! AMATYC has openings for the positions of **Advertising Chair** and **Exhibits Chair** and is looking for individuals to fill them! Join the Conference Committee and help plan future conferences for your colleagues!

Gwen Turbeville's term as **Advertising Chair** ends after the 2009 AMATYC Annual Conference in Las Vegas. The individual appointed will begin their two-year term at the beginning of next year. The appointee could work with Gwen at the Las Vegas conference to help with the transition. The general duties of the **Advertising Chair** are as follows:

- Contact publishers, computer software and hardware vendors, calculator companies, assessment companies, and other potential companies that will advertise in AMATYC publications or on the AMATYC website;
- Work with the AMATYC Office to prepare the information for the mass mailing announcing advertising opportunities for the coming year;
- Work with the AMATYC Office to mail out the advertising packet after the AMATYC Conference in November;
- Promote the AMATYC Corporate Partner program;
- Assist with stuffing of the conference bags and assist with other duties as directed by the Conference Coordinator.

Applicants for the position of **Advertising Chair** should email a letter of interest, a current résumé, and letter of support from their immediate supervisor to **Jane Tanner**, Northeast Region VP, tannerj@sunyocc.edu.

The **Exhibits Chair** works closely with the publishers and other vendors who annually display their materials in the Exhibit Hall at each conference. While Jay Martin's term does not end until after the 2010 AMATYC Annual Conference in Boston, AMATYC is seeking to appoint an individual by the Las Vegas conference, allowing that person to work with Jay during the next year to provide a smooth transition. The general duties of the **Exhibits Chair** are as follows:

- Make contacts with publishers, computer software and hardware vendors, calculator companies, assessment companies and other potential exhibitors that will exhibit or make a commercial presentation at AMATYC conferences;
- Work closely with the conference coordinator and the show decorator to design the exhibit area and to assign booths to AMATYC exhibitors.
- Mail out exhibitor packets throughout the year as new potential exhibitors are identified, and/or as potential exhibitors contact the chair directly or through the AMATYC Office;
- Travel to the AMATYC conference on the Monday prior to the conference for committee meetings and be available at the exhibit area prior to the start of the conference as the booths are being set up and the exhibitors arrive;
- Network with exhibitors throughout the days the exhibit area is open, to let them know that AMATYC appreciates their support, to help correct any problems that might have developed, and to encourage the vendors to exhibit with AMATYC at the next conference.

Applicants for the position of **Exhibits Chair** should email a letter of interest, a current résumé, and letter of support from their immediate supervisor to **Kathy Mowers**, Past President, kathy.mowers@kctcs.edu.

These positions promise to be a worthwhile and challenging opportunity for you! They will allow for significant professional growth as well as the opportunity to foster the building of communities of professional support. The deadline for applications is **July 15, 2009**, or until the positions are filled.

For more information, visit www.amatyc.org. If you have any other questions regarding these important positions, contact Keven Dockter, Incoming Conference Coordinator, keven.dockter@anokaramsey.edu.

Mu Alpha Theta

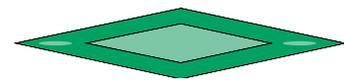
by Kay Weiss

The CC of Philadelphia Chapter of Mu Alpha Theta will host a regional math competition for high schools and two-year colleges on December 4 and 5, 2009, on their campus. The college is located in central Philadelphia, near the museums and the historic district. Colleges do not need to have a Mu Alpha Theta Chapter to compete.

Registration is on Friday from 5:30-6:30 pm followed by an interschool test and social events. College and high school students will compete in three levels: Mu for those students that have had some Calculus, Alpha for those students above Algebra 2 or Intermediate Algebra but who have not taken any Calculus, and Theta for those that have not yet finished Algebra 2 or Intermediate Algebra. There will be separate awards for high school and college students and for each of the levels.

The competition will continue Saturday morning with individual tests, ciphering, and team relays. Math bowls will be after lunch, and there will be entertainment until the awards ceremony, planned for 3 pm.

Registration materials will be available at www.mualphatheta.org soon or email Kay Weiss at matheta@ou.edu for the registration packet. The cost of the competition is \$40 per student and includes lunch on Saturday. Registration should be postmarked by October 29, 2009. One sponsor is admitted free for each four students attending, up through three teams per school. Additional sponsors will be \$20 each. Up to 200 students will be admitted to the competition and registration fees are non-refundable after October 29.



➤➤**Vegas**, Continued from page 1
your tickets early. As an added benefit, all of the productions listed are within just a few miles of the Riviera. For more specific directions and information about many of the things Las Vegas has to offer, please visit the Local Events Committee members staffing the Hospitality Suite, which will be in Skybox Room 205 at the Riviera Convention Center. The Vegas Local Events Committee hopes you are as excited about coming to Vegas as they are for being your hosts. See you soon!

Project ACCESS

by Laura Walkins

Since 2004 a number of dedicated educators have put forth a tremendous effort to offer workshops and sessions specifically designed to meet the professional development needs of new faculty. The first five Cohort Fellows were asked to reflect on the question "How has involvement in Project ACCESS (Advancing Community College Careers: Education, Scholarship, and Service) benefited you?" They indicated their participation has led to accepting leadership opportunities, exploring new pedagogies, networking with colleagues in a variety of professional organizations, professional development, and increased job satisfaction.

One clear benefit of participation in Project ACCESS was that Fellows developed confidence to engage in leadership roles among colleagues. Ana Jimenez, of Pima CC, shared that because of her involvement in Project ACCESS she was not intimidated to assume a leadership role for fellow faculty. Currently, there are a number of Fellows who are serving in leadership positions within their departments, their colleges, or within professional organizations.

Another benefit for Fellows came from the encouragement to explore different pedagogies. Jennifer Cass, of Cabrillo College, says one lasting message was to find teaching methods that complemented who she is and to not feel guilty laying aside approaches that did not work for her. Fellows were encouraged to look for better ways to teach and deliver mathematics and to realize there is value in pushing ourselves outside our comfort zone in our search for new techniques.

The opportunity to network with community college educators from around the country was another highly-valued benefit. Sarah Stanley, of Western Wyoming CC, feels one of the most important benefits of Project ACCESS is the connections she has made. These relationships have evolved into friendships and strong professional partnerships. Sarah's sentiments regarding the importance of the networking opportunities were echoed by a number of other Fellows, who indicate that attending AMATYC conferences is an important aspect of networking. They enjoy returning each year to see each other and meet new Project ACCESS Fellows.

Many Fellows indicated that their involvement with ACCESS has led to other professional development opportunities. For example, some have become involved in other professional organizations such as the MAA, NCTM, as well as local and state organizations. Other Fellows are taking courses, pursuing advanced degrees in their efforts to further develop their knowledge and skills and taking on other challenges.

Involvement in ACCESS has led to increased job satisfaction for many Fellows. This satisfaction naturally led to a desire to share her experiences with others for Wendy O'Hanlon, of Illinois Central College. Wendy wishes she could convince more full-time faculty to attend the conference. In her words, "Thank you to all the people who put the Project ACCESS grant together and worked on the project year after year," a sentiment that is shared by a great many of the Fellows.

Teri Glaess

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of Teri Glaess on Sunday, February 22. Teri wore many hats. She was a mathematics teacher, a scholar and researcher, a member of many regional and national mathematics organizations, a doctoral student working on her PhD in Mathematics Education, and she was the president of the Tempe Little Theater. She majored in mathematics and economics at Northwestern University. She completed her master's degree at the University of Chicago, and was almost finished with her coursework for her PhD at Arizona State University.



Teri was a member of the Scottsdale CC Mathematics Department since 1992, and she was one of the authors of the Maricopa Mathematics Modules for Arithmetic, Introductory and Intermediate Algebra, which won the AMATYC Input Award in 2000. Because of her commitment to the preparation of pre-service elementary teachers, the Teri Glaess Memorial Scholarship to support a student majoring in elementary education has been established. For more information about donating to the scholarship fund, please contact April Ström of the SCC Math Department at april.strom@sccmail.maricopa.edu.

Welcome to Las Vegas: New Attendees Social Event

Are you new to AMATYC? Will Las Vegas be your first time at an AMATYC Conference? Then you are in for a special treat.

The AMATYC Board invites you to a special social event on Thursday, November 12. First-time attendees will receive an invitation for themselves and a guest with their mailed conference registration receipt. Don't get left out! Be sure to check **YES** (this is your first AMATYC conference) when registering for the conference. This secures your invitation to the event.

For now, reserve 6-7 pm on Thursday for this can't-miss event. Join other first-time attendees and veteran AMATYC members, enjoy snacks and refreshments, make plans for dinner or to enjoy the many Las Vegas offerings, even find a mentor within our organization.

We're looking forward to this exciting meet-and-greet opportunity and a fabulous conference, so come join us and make the most of your conference experience.

FUTURE AMATYC CONFERENCES

2009	Las Vegas	November 12-15
2010	Boston	November 11-14
2011	Austin	November 10-13
2012	Jacksonville	November 8-11
2013	Anaheim	October 31-November 3

AMATYC Mini-Grants

Do you have a project that needs a jump start? Do you have an idea that needs some fuel to get off the ground? Then apply for an AMATYC mini-grant through the AMATYC Foundation.

Mini-grants offer AMATYC members the opportunity to apply innovative techniques or new techniques in the process of teaching and learning mathematics. Mini-grants offer an opportunity and incentive to faculty to develop innovative projects that go beyond regular classroom responsibilities and to share these projects so they benefit their colleagues and students. All regular AMATYC members are eligible to apply.

Individual or group projects should fall within the following areas:

- Projects involving the application of technology into the learning process in ways that demonstrate creativity, purpose, and effectiveness.
- Projects designed to incorporate innovative teaching or learning strategies into the learning process.
- Research projects in assessing or improving the teaching and learning of mathematics.

Projects or topics that will be considered:

- Creating technology-based instructional materials or tutorials for use in traditional or distance learning classrooms.
- Working with industry and businesses to collaborate on training initiatives in mathematics.
- Creating training materials for faculty in how to use technology in innovative ways in the classroom (e.g., multimedia streaming, computer-based training, web-based training).
- Pursuing grant opportunities that would have an effect on the instructional process.

Awards:

Applicants can apply for up to \$750. There will be up to a total of \$3000 available each year for the mini-grants. For 2009 and 2010, the AMATYC Foundation will sponsor this process.

Process:

1. Members must apply by November 1, 2009, using the online submission form found at www.amatyc.org/documents/minigrant.html.
2. The mini-grant recipients will be notified by December 15, 2009, of the amount of each award. Members with non-successful applications will be notified by this date also.
3. The recipient will receive half of the award by December 31, 2009. The other half will be disbursed at the successful conclusion of the project.
4. The project must be completed by July 1, 2010. The final report will include a written summary of the project and findings to be published in an AMATYC publication or on the website.
5. Recipients will also be encouraged to present at the annual AMATYC Conference and/or affiliate meetings.

In Search of 2010 Mathematics Excellence Award Nominees

Who comes to your mind when you think of someone who has made significant contributions to mathematics or mathematics education at the two-year college? Has this person been recognized with an AMATYC Mathematics Excellence (ME) Award? If not, nominate that person. The criteria for the ME Award are national reputation, leadership and activities in professional organizations, professional talks and presentations, awards and grants received, publications, professional activities on a regional, state, and national scale, teaching expertise, and other contributions to mathematics and/or mathematics education.

The ME Award is presented every other year in even-numbered years. If you miss this year's deadline, it will be two years before you will again have the opportunity to submit a ME nomination. There is something very satisfying about honoring a colleague by nominating them for an award such as the ME Award. A nomination consists of a résumé, not to exceed three pages, and three letters in support of the nomination, one of which is the letter of nomination. At least one of the letters of support should be from a region other than the nominee's AMATYC region.

Nominations must be received by the chair, Kathy Mowers, by Monday, November 2, 2009. The signed originals and eight copies of each nomination packet must be sent by US Mail, FedEx, or other carrier. Emailed packets will not be accepted.

Additional information about the Mathematics Excellence Award may be found at www.amatyc.org/awards/MathExcellence.

Assessment – Using Mathematics in Life

by Connie Buller, chair, PAC

Students always wonder where they are going to use mathematics. Mathematics is more than arithmetic, algebra, graphing, or calculus—those are valuable tools, but mathematics is thinking and problem solving.

Assessing what students learn is very important to really understanding what is being done well and not well in a class, course, or program. To learn more about assessment, go to placement.amatyc.org/. Another really good resource is AMATYC's document, *Beyond Crossroads*, which provides colleges and individuals help in the area of continuous, creative assessment.

Do you have a helpful assessment tool for a class, a course, or a program? Consider submitting that tool as a resource to others. It can be submitted through placement.amatyc.org/digprodform.html.

In teaching, remember that on-going, constant assessment is a powerful tool. Enjoy teaching!

JOIN AMATYC

BECOME A MEMBER OF AMATYC TODAY

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Working Together for Inspired Teaching

by Patrick Averbeck

Would you like a new tool to use to engage your students? Do you want new activities that stimulate mathematical concepts for your students? There's a new workshop at the 2009 Annual Conference that's not a gamble...it's a sure thing.

AMATYC and Texas Instruments (TI) are collaborating to bring you a special pre-conference workshop titled *Inspire Your College Algebra Classroom* on Wednesday, November 11, 2009. During this one-day workshop presented by Wade Ellis of West Valley CC, you will experiment with activities that model real-world applications of college algebra concepts, create and analyze various types of inquiry questions, and collaborate on effective teaching strategies. Participants will also create simple mathematical objects and discuss the mathematical concepts and skills intended to be developed along with the inquiry questions that should encourage student reflection. The software used will be TI-Nspire(TM) computer software.

This workshop is sponsored by Texas Instruments. TI will support one night's hotel expenses (Tuesday night, November 10) for you to attend the workshop and provide breakfast and lunch for you. You will receive a TI-Nspire learning handheld calculator and a single user license of TI-Nspire computer software teacher edition. As you can imagine, space is limited to 25 participants; so register now for this special AMATYC/TI workshop at the 2009 AMATYC Annual Conference in Las Vegas, Wednesday, November 11, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Please visit www.tw.amatyc.org to register. For more information, contact Patrick Averbeck, Traveling Workshop Coordinator, at patrick.averbeck@edcc.edu or 425.640.1093.

During these difficult economic times, collaborations are more vital than ever. TI and AMATYC are collaborating to advance the appropriate use of technology into two-year college mathematics classrooms. AMATYC does not specifically endorse any commercial product.

2009 Conference Themed Sessions

The 2009 AMATYC Annual Conference scheduled for November 12-15 in Las Vegas will include themed sessions Thursday morning on teacher preparation and assessment. Themed sessions, organized by AMATYC's academic committees, consist of several short presentations and are scheduled so that participants may attend part or all of a themed session or may switch between the two themed events. This year's themed sessions are:

"Assessment: One Facet of Placement and Assessment" includes presentations on using a first-day assessment diagnostic test in algebra for better course placement and general education assessment in mathematics courses. Other talks will provide information on the impact of frequent course assessment on success and retention as well as the pros and cons of assessing mathematical comprehension through writing, and information about free course assessment software capable of intelligent grading.

"Making Connections to Algebra" presents several strategies and activities that can be used to prepare future teachers of K-8 students to connect basic mathematical concepts to later algebra concepts. Research indicates that these connections are critical for students' future success in algebra. Learn what your colleagues have found successful and take home ideas you can use on Monday in your own classroom.

Online Store!

Visit the AMATYC Online Store and see interesting items and apparel with the AMATYC logo by following the link on the AMATYC webpage.

Student Mathematics League (SML)

by Susan R. Strickland

At the time of this writing, the Round 2 SML scores are still being recorded and checked. The next newsletter will contain the final results from the 2008-2009 academic year.

If you are not already doing so, please consider forming a team to participate in next year's SML. You may not have a student who will score well enough to rank in the top 10, but you and your students will enjoy working together prior to the tests and going over problems after the results have been released. It's a win-win situation for you and for your students.

Many traditional two-year institutions have begun to offer four-year programs and degrees. Depending on those programs, a school may or may not be eligible to participate in the SML competitions. If an institution would like to participate, a committee has been formed which will review the programs offered at the school and make a determination as to their eligibility for participation in the SML. Any such college may request a review by sending an email to the SML Coordinator, Susan Strickland, at sml@amatyc.org.

If your school is eligible to participate, don't forget to register for next year's competition on AMATYC website.

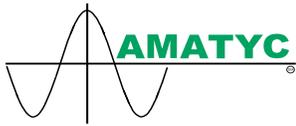
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AMATYC Foundation

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Visit the website for more information, or simply mail your check made out to "AMATYC Foundation" to AMATYC Foundation, 5983 Macon Cove, Memphis, TN 38134.

Dates To Remember!

Apply for Conference Committee
Positions Deadline:
July 15, 2009

Mu Alpha Theta Math Competition
Registration Deadline:
October 29, 2009

Mini-Grant Applications Deadline:
November 1, 2009

Mathematics Excellence Award
Nominations
Receipt Deadline:
November 2, 2009

Application to Host a Refocused
College Algebra Traveling Workshop:
As Soon as Possible
www.TheRightStuff.AMATYC.org/

**For more information visit
www.amatyc.org**

Guest editorials and letters to the editor are invited. Submissions must be related to mathematics, mathematics education, or AMATYC. Suggestions for reprints must include the correct citation as well as permission from the original source. Send editorials and letters to Kathryn Kozak at AMATYCNews@amatyc.org.