

# President's Message



## REFLECTIONS

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It is hard to believe that my first year as president of AMATYC is coming to a close. Throughout this year I have traveled to eleven different states and met many mathematics educators. It was an exciting year, highlighted by my trip to Nashville to attend the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual AMATYC Conference. There, I was able to recognize two very important people with Presidential Awards. It was a time to both meet with old friends and make new ones.



Cheryl Cleaves, Executive Director Emerita, receives a Presidential Award from Nancy Sattler, President.

in 1987 and was appointed the first conference coordinator in 1988. At the first Annual AMATYC Conference that I attended in 1991 in Seattle, Cheryl received a Presidential Award and in 1996 Cheryl received another Presidential Award.

She has been very active in the organization over the years. She assisted in the writing of AMATYC's signature document, *Standards for Curriculum and Pedagogical Reform in Two-Year College and Lower Division Mathematics*, and joined other AMATYC members in an 18-month Strategic Planning Initiative funded by the Exxon Education Foundation which resulted in AMATYC's strategic plan for 2000-2005. She was part of an ad hoc committee that created an endowment plan for Project ACCESS which is beginning its 11<sup>th</sup> cohort. Cheryl attended the 8<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Mathematics Education in Seville, Spain joining six other AMATYC members including our newly appointed Executive Director Wanda Garner. When the AMATYC national office opened at State Technical Institute at Memphis in Tennessee, on September 1, 1993, Cheryl was appointed Executive Assistant to the AMATYC board. Her title later changed to Executive Director of Office Operations and then to Interim Executive Director. This summer, the board changed

her title one last time to Executive Director Emerita. It was an extreme honor for me to present Cheryl with yet another Presidential Award at the conference to thank her for all of her years of service to AMATYC.

It was an honor and a privilege to meet AMATYC's founding president Herb Gross and his lovely wife Louise. I had heard stories about Herb and knew that his breakfast talk would be entertaining to our members. Herb became a pioneer in distance learning in 1959 when he taught a calculus course for high school students via Corning's Educational Television Network. Although he retired in 2003, he continues to share his mathematical knowledge.

I recently read an email written to Herb by 26-year-old Akash Chandra who needed to brush up on basic mathematics before taking an entrance exam for an MBA program in India. He wrote to Herb, "I saw a comment you had left on one of your YouTube videos on differential equations that pointed to the AdjectiveNounMath.com lectures of yours on arithmetic and algebra. It's no exaggeration to say that that was a turning point in my life! I downloaded all 12 modules of the Arithmetic course and watched one lecture every day over the course of a month. And having finished this course now, I have come to the conclusion that you are the greatest teacher of mathematics that ever lived!" He went on to say, "How patiently you guide us through every step of the process, smiling and sharing anecdotes and jokes, with the sole intention of helping students truly grasp the fundamental ideas of arithmetic and the place value system."

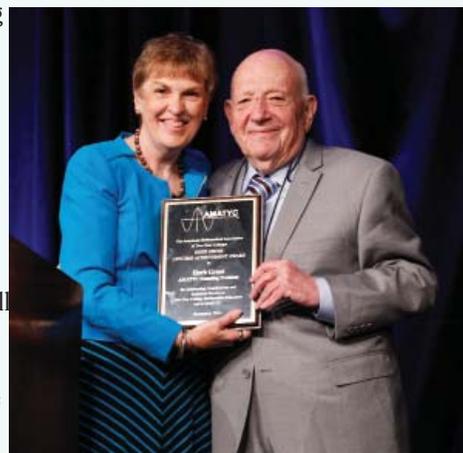
Herb is a strong advocate of the community college system and he also makes it a point to keep up with technology. He believes that in the not-too-distant future, the face of education will change, and the old fashioned one room school house will be reinvented in terms of technology. Following the Saturday breakfast, I presented another Presidential Award, this time to Herb. The board voted to change the name of the Presidential Award to the Herb Gross Lifetime Achievement Award in honor of Herb. It is only fitting that he would be the first recipient of the newly named award.

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Herb Gross, AMATYC Founding President, receives the Herb Gross Lifetime Achievement Award from Nancy Sattler, President.

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