The Lamar Mathematician

New Faculty/New Chair

The department is very pleased to welcome Dr. Charles Coppin as Associate Professor and as Chair of the Department. Dr. Coppin received his B.S. (1963) from Southwestern University and his M. A. (1965) and Ph. D. (1968) from the University of Texas at Austin, working under Dr. H. S. Wall. He joins us after serving for many years at the University of Dallas in Dallas, Texas. We look forward to working under his leadership!

Enrollment increases

The Department has experienced tremendous growth in enrollment this fall that mirrors the overall enrollment growth of the University. 2271 students are enrolled in mathematics courses this semester; this represents a 15% increase over fall 2001 figures.

Minor in Mathematics

The Department has recently established new guidelines for a Minor in Mathematics. Students will be required to have twenty-one credit hours of mathematics with not less than nine of these hours to be at the junior/senior level. We hope to attract all interested students to this minor but we are particularly hoping to attract a large number of engineering students.

Mrs. Bell

Mary Katherine Bell, 93, died June 10, 2002. Mrs. Bell was a Piper Professor and Regents Professor in Mathematics and had retired in 1970. She returned for another 10 years to chair the mathematics department. She is survived by her husband of 65 years, Clarence, and daughter, Charlotte.

Funded grants

The department is pleased to have received funding from the National Science Foundation in the Computer Science, Engineering, and Mathematics Scholarship Program. The project of $157,500, "Growing Mathematicians and Computer Scientists in the Golden Triangle," funds a competitive scholarship program for our majors over a four-year period. This is a joint project with the Department of Computer Science. Key personnel from our department include A. Matheson, V. Andreev, and D. Daniel.

Successes of Recent Graduates

We are once again pleased to report the successes of our recent graduates. Mr. Ravi K. Nukala (M.S., '02) is presently teaching for the Department as well as for Lamar Institute of Technology and Lamar State College-Orange. Mr. Christopher Todd Kennaugh (M. S., '02) completed his thesis, "Concerning Continuous Images of the Lexicographic Square", in the summer of 2002. He is presently pursuing Ph. D. studies at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. Congratulations to each of these alumni - we are proud of you! If you are a mathematics alumnus, be sure that you are registered in the alumni database on the departmental website.

McNair Scholar in Mathematics
Jason James, a senior pursuing a double major in Mathematics and Electrical Engineering is a scholar in the Lamar University McNair Scholars Program. This program, set up in honor of Challenger Astronaut Ronald E. McNair, is designed to direct undergraduate students towards a graduate education. One part of the McNair Scholar experience involves a research project conducted in conjunction with a faculty mentor.

Jason is working on a project with Professor Alec Matheson involving estimations of certain functionals applied to Beurling functions. This problem has its origins in geometric function theory. The specific problem involves a blend of mathematical analysis and careful numerical computations. The successful completion of this problem will fill a gap in the understanding of the famous Chang-Marshall inequality.

Jason has made two presentations related to this project. The first was a preliminary report at the Texas Section MAA meeting in Richardson, Texas this spring. The second presentation was a progress report given at the 10th Annual McNair Scholars Conference, held at Penn State University this August. Jason further plans to make a presentation at the poster session for undergraduate research during the AMS-MAA Joint Meeting in Baltimore in January 2003. Finally this work is expected to result in a research publication coauthored by Jason and Dr. Matheson.

After graduating in May, Jason plans to pursue a graduate degree in Mathematics at the University of Texas at Austin.

Scholarship Recipients

The Department is pleased to continue to support our majors through several scholarships. The scholarships are awarded to continuing students based on grade point average, University service and demonstrated potential in mathematics. This year's recipients are:

Homer Dennis Memorial Scholarship - Natalie Beaugh and Thomas Wood
Margaret Lumpkin-Lakie Scholarship - Joshua Fuller and Clint Jones
Ralph and Ruth Brookner Scholarship - Clint Jones and Jeremy Loukas
Annie Sue and Richard T. Green Memorial Scholarship - Natasha Digges, Katie Tyler, and Thomas Wood
Norman and Harold Orton Scholarship - Jason James and Thomas Wood

Congratulations to these fine students!

Putnam Team

The Department is pleased to once again have a very talented Putnam Team. The participants in this year's Putnam seminar are: Amanda Arnold, Natalie Beaugh, Natasha Digges, Josh Juller, Jason James, Clint Jones, Jeremy Loukas, Carl Price, Frances Read, Katie Tyler, Thomas Wood, and Dena Yoder. Drs. Baker and Mahavier are advisors to the Putnam participants.

Homer Dennis Freshman Mathematics Contest

In the spring semester of each academic year (since 1974), the Department holds the Homer Dennis Freshman Mathematics Contest. The contest covers material from a broad range of the freshman mathematics curriculum. In the spring of 2002, the focus of the contest was Calculus I. The contest was held in mid-April of 2002 and top finishers were recognized on April 30, 2002 at the Annual Departmental Luncheon. Top finishers were:

1st Place - Steven Trahan
2nd Place - Zhi Chen
3rd Place - Josh Trevino

Congratulations to these excellent young mathematicians!
Recent Publications, Research Announcements, and Presentations of Faculty and Students


Paul Chiou (Lamar), and Chein-Pai Han, "Interval Estimation of the Weibull Shape (Extreme-Value Scale) Parameter using Pilot Samples," Journal of Statistical Research, June, 2002.


Professional Appointments

P. Chiou has recently been appointed as Associate Editor of Journal of Probability and Statistical Science. In addition, Dr. Chiou has been appointed Associate Editor of Journal of Statistical Research. D. Daniel has recently been appointed as Associate Editor for Topology and Geometry of the Missouri Journal of Mathematical Sciences.

Problem Section

Assume that ABC is a triangle (with vertices A, B, and C) and the angle bisectors of A and B, respectively, are of equal length. Is ABC isosceles? Prove or provide a counter-example.

Pi Mu Epsilon

Pi Mu Epsilon under the direction of their faculty sponsor Dr. Valentin Andreev have been very active this fall semester. They are reviewing their membership requirements to incorporate the national requirements. At the same time they are actively seeking new members. The organization has been meeting on a weekly basis working on problems from The College Mathematics Journal as well as The Mathematics Association of America Monthly. Prizes ranging from $50 to $100 have been offered for correct solutions. The group is also working on a research problem from graph theory. Current officers of Pi Mu are Natasha Diggs -President, Daniel Shultz -Vice-President, and Crystal Haley/Leatha Hughes - Secretaries. Other members are Mandy Arnold, Jason James, Jeremy Loukas, Lared Luster, Melissa Riley, Jim Weir and Elizabeth Wernig.