Department News

The Math Department welcomed approximately 50 new freshmen and transfer students to the program this past fall. For 2012-2013, there are approximately 260 mathematics and mathematics education majors in the department.

In December 2012, Dr. Tyrone Washington earned his Ph.D. from North Carolina State University in Mathematics Education. Dr. Washington has served as program manager for the Noyce Mathematics Education Teaching Scholars program at NCSU, academic coordinator and quantitative topics instructor for the Summer Medical/Dental Education Program at Duke University, and mathematics instructor at North Carolina A&T State University and Louisburg College. He has a M.S. in Mathematics from NCSU (May 2001) and a B.S. in Mathematics Education Grades 9 – 12 from Fayetteville State University (December 1998). Dr. Washington is interested in the nature of teachers’ content knowledge and the manner in which teachers’ content knowledge affects their teaching. He has already jumped right into an active role in MU’s own Noyce program. Dr. Tyrone Washington is married to Kelly Mance and they have two children: Kimo (age 5) and Kathryn (age 7 months).

$1.2 Million National Science Foundation Grant Completing its Second Year

Last year, the University was recently selected by the National Science Foundation to receive a grant funding the "Increasing the Quality and Quantity of Mathematics Teachers for High-Need Districts," project, in the amount of $1,199,469. During the 2012-2013 academic year, the Noyce program supported five mathematics majors with scholarships to cover tuition, fees, and most living expenses. In March, the scholars welcomed to campus approximately 80 middle school students from the Eisenhower Science, Technology and Learning Academy in Philadelphia. They are actively tutoring in the School District of Lancaster, and looking forward to spending two weeks at the end of May in Philadelphia for an immersion experience. Other mathematics education students at Millersville University of Pennsylvania can get help with their tuition, thanks to this one point two million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF). Applications have just been received for the second cohort, with a third to follow next year. Scholarships will be offered based on merit to outstanding students who will teach mathematics, with a particular interest in teaching in an urban or high-need environment. Students receiving scholarships must agree to teach for two years in a high-need school district for each year of support. This project falls under the immediate direction of Millersville math faculty member Dr. Janet White. Interested students can contact White by email, janet.white@millersville.edu.

Faculty News

- Congratulations to Dr. Kevin Robinson and Dr. Elizabeth Sell for being granted tenure.
- In March 2012, Dr. Sell gave an invited talk at the AMS Central Section Meeting, Special Session on Singularities in Commutative Algebra and Algebraic Geometry, in Lawrence, KS.
- Dr. Robinson presented a paper, "Teaching Statistics – A Joint Endeavor: Construct, Collect, Calculate, Communicate," at the Spring 2012 EPADEL/PASSHEMA conference. He is also serving as the president of the Harrisburg Chapter of the American Statistical Association.
Dr. Sean Laverty (2005) started a tenure-track position in the Dept. of Math and Stat at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond, OK (fall 2012). One of his primary duties is developing a course in Bio-calculus with Dr. Brittany Bannish (Laverty), another recent tenure-track hire in the department and also his wife. He is teaching a graduate course on Mathematical Biology, and applied math courses (such as Bio-calculus and differential equations). He gets tremendous support for research and independent study with undergraduate and graduate students: he is currently co-mentoring two graduate research experiences and one undergraduate independent study. Sean is also developing new interdisciplinary research projects with faculty in the Biology Department. Though much larger than Millersville, UCO has a very similar feel and academic mission. As a teacher, researcher and mentor at UCO, he channels his memories as an undergraduate student, researcher, and mentee at Millersville. He and his wife are proud new homeowners, with a wooded 2.3 acre 'homestead' in the OK countryside - and eagerly await their new chickens (and the purchase of their first riding mower).

Dr. John Gemmer has recently accepted a departmental postdoc in the Divisions of Applied Mathematics at Brown University. This position is partially funded by the NSF Research Training Group "Integrating Dynamics and Stochastics" which is part of the Lefschetz Center for Dynamical Systems. The goal of this Research Training Group is to broaden and enhance the scope and quality of the educational and research training provided to graduate students and postdoctoral fellows by integrating research and education in the fields of dynamics, stochastics, and their applications and to involve more undergraduate students in courses and research experiences in applied mathematics. As a postdoctoral fellow John will be actively engaged in research with professors Govind Menon and Bjorn Sandstede and other senior member of the Research Training Group, teach one course per semester, and mentor graduate and undergraduate students in the group.

Congratulations to Nick Brubaker, a fifth-year graduate student at University of Delaware (UD), who was recently awarded and has accepted an NSF Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowship (MSRF). This prestigious three-year fellowship is awarded annually to 25-35 new or recent mathematics PhDs from around the country. Nick has also successfully defended his dissertation and will officially graduate with a Ph.D. in Mathematics in May. At UD, Nick works with his advisor, Professor John A. Pelesko, on modeling the behavior of capillary surfaces subject to various external forces. Most recently, he has been investigating the shape formed by a soap bubble placed in vertically applied electric field. In his research, Nick uses tools from various areas of mathematics, including variational calculus, nonlinear analysis and geometry. Upon graduating, Nick will go to the University of Arizona to study the equilibrium behavior of micro-scale folding that is driven by surface tension, with Professor Joceline Lega. This area of research, commonly called capillary origami, is at the interface of mathematics and engineering and has applications to microelectromechanical systems and self-assembly.

- Anthony Mastriania (F'12) successfully defended his Honors Thesis, entitled "Resolution Graphs and Splice Diagrams for Certain Surface Singularities". He also gave a talk at EPADel.
- David Paules defended his senior thesis on Fibonacci numbers (May 2012).
- Rachelle (Holnaider) Impink was accepted into graduate school at Villanova to pursue a master’s degree in mathematics.
- Congratulations to Niraj Amin who has been nominated and selected to receive an Outstanding GTA (Graduate Teaching Assistant) award by the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences at West Virginia University. Niraj will be graduating with his MS in Statistics in May 2013.
- Steve McClure (MS in Applied Math, 2012, University of Delaware) is working as a User Interface Quality Engineer at The MathWorks: Natick, MA.
- Dan Moyer is an Associate Actuary with Buck Consultants; Berwyn, PA.
- Dr. Ellen Panofsky is now an Assistant Professor at Temple University.
- Erik Eddy earned an MS in Statistics at West Virginia University in May 2012. He is working as an Actuarial Assistant in the Pricing Department at Transamerica (Exton, PA). Coincidentally, Erik’s immediate supervisor is Millersville grad Chris Rosado. Erik has passed the 3rd actuarial exam in November and is taking his 4th in May.

How can YOU help?
Like what you read about Mathematics alumni, faculty, students, and programs? Encourage potential students to apply and visit our department. We would love to show them why they should study math at Millersville. Look at our department website: http://www.millersville.edu/math/, and help to keep our programs strong by supporting our mathematics majors. Give on-line @ www.millersville.edu. Click on the 'Giving to Millersville' tab OR send your gift to Millersville University, Development Office, PO Box 1002, Millersville, PA 17551-0302. Gifts may be designated to the Mathematics Department Scholarship funds, and can be restricted or unrestricted.