Student News

Competitions

2011 MAA Mathematics Contest
Under the direction of Dr. Thomas Dence at the 2011 Spring Meeting of the Ohio Section of the Mathematical Association of America, nine students braved serious competition – and fared quite well – in the Leo Schneider Ohio Student Mathematics Contest. The contest was held at Youngstown State University, March 25-26, 2011. The nine students who participated were:
Kara Biltz, Niko Blankenship, Clay Harris, Nikki Peterson, Alayna Ruggles, Makenzie Sauder, Cara Whitcomb, Polly Widmer and David Woods.

William Lowell Putnam Mathematics Competition
On December 4, 2010, Nicole Peterson, Cara Whitcomb, Caitlin Music and Anna Payne participated in the 71st William Lowell Putnam Mathematical Competition. For those of you unfamiliar with this competition, they worked on six problems from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and then six more problems from 3-6 p.m. Typically, approximately 50 percent of the people who enter this competition nationwide (and in Canada) receive 0 points on the entire test. Nicole Peterson received a score of 10 and Cara Whitcomb received a score of 12. Cara’s score broke the previous top score, 10, received by an Ashland University student. Dr. Christopher Swanson directed these four students at the competition. This historical competition began in 1938 and is designed to stimulate a healthful rivalry in mathematical studies in the colleges and universities of the United States and Canada.

2010 ACM-ICPC East Central North America Regional Programming Contest
Dr. Paul Cao directed nine students at the Association for Computing Machinery East Central North America Regional Programming Contest, held on October 23, 2010 in Youngstown, Ohio. A total of 115 teams from 60 colleges and universities throughout western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, eastern Ontario and Indiana participated in the contest. Participants from Ashland University included: John Bentley, Thomas Conti, Kees Edwards, Jim Huang, Allen Kowal, Anna Payne, Patrick Shehan, Matthew Smithburger and Marissa Uhrig.
**Student News**

After completing a Special Topics course in Financial Mathematics in the Spring of 2011 with Dr. Chris Swanson, Actuarial Science major Andrew Iden has passed the Society of Actuaries Exam FM—Financial Mathematics. Congratulations Andrew!

**Graduate School**

Two of our May 2012 graduates will be attending graduate school this fall.

Cara Whitcomb, who received a B.Ed. in Integrated Mathematics, will be attending John Carroll University.

Kara Biltz received a B.A. in Mathematics and will be attending the University of Dayton to pursue a Master of Science degree in Financial Mathematics.

**Internships**

Computer Science majors Tom Conti and Matthew Smithburger started their summer internships in mid-May at Smucker's in Orrville, OH. The J.M. Smucker company is consistently recognized as one of the 100 best companies to work for by Fortune Magazine, and in 2004 it was ranked #1. They are also included in the S&P 500 market index. Although their internships are both within the IT department, Tom and Matt are assigned to different groups and projects. Matt works in the Sales and Marketing Administration group of IT, primarily focusing on Finance. He is also working on upgrading R12 content for the company, which is the newest version of Oracle's business suite. Additionally, he is helping with month-end financing processes and testing programs for the Windows 7 roll out.

**College of Arts and Sciences URCA**

Two students represented the department at the 2nd CAS URCA Symposium on Wednesday, March 30, 2011. Nicole Peterson presented the poster “Shared Shortest Paths in Graphs” and Kara Biltz presented the talk “Exploring the Platonic Relationship between Probability and Yahtzee.”

**Ohio Section of the Mathematical Association of America**

The Mathematics Department at Ashland University was well represented at the recent Spring meeting of the Ohio Section of the Mathematical Association of America, held on the campus of Youngstown State University, March 25-26, 2011.

Dr. Cathy Stoffer, Dr. Vickie Van Dresar, Dr. Chris Swanson, Dr. Gordon Swain and Dr. Thomas Dence represented Ashland University at the conference. Several students attended as well, some giving talks and others participating in a mathematics competition.

Dr. Gordon Swain was one of the featured invited speakers to the conference, as he gave an hour talk titled “On Lines and Parabolas, Again and Again.”

Dr. Thomas Dence delivered one of the contributed talks, titled “Residues Modulo a Prime.”

Dr. Swanson served as a mentor and coordinator for the six Ashland University students who participated in the conference by delivering contributed talks. The students who gave presentations at this conference were:

Kara Biltz – “Exploring the Platonic Relationship Between Probability and Yahtzee”
Niko Blankenship – “A Different Look at March Madness”
Alayna Ruggles – “Weird Dice”
Nicole Peterson – “Sequences and Balanced Distributions”
Polly Widmer – “To Be, or Not to Be, Dry!”
Donnie Dottei – “Baseball's Record Breaking Math”
Faculty News

Faculty Updates

Dr. Justin Young

was selected to fill the tenure-track position of Assistant Professor of Mathematics. Dr. Young earned a Bachelor of Arts in Physics and Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from the University of Kentucky, and recently completed his Ph.D. in Mathematics at The Ohio State University. He spent the past year in the Ashland University Math/CS department as a Visiting Assistant Professor. The department looks forward to many more years with Dr. Young!

Dr. Lori McCune

will be joining the department this fall as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Mathematics. Dr. McCune earned a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from the University of Akron, a Master of Science in Mathematics from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Dr. Thomas Dence

attended the fall meeting for the Ohio Section of the Mathematical Association of America on October 22-23, 2010. The meeting was held on the campus of Ursuline College in Pepper Pike, Ohio. In addition to being a member of both the nominating committee and the centennial committee, Dr. Dence delivered a contributed talk titled, “A Brief Look at the Lambert W Function.” This spring Dr. Dence was honored as the University’s first recipient of the Ashland University Excellence in Scholarship award. He received a medallion and a check for $5,000 at the Faculty Scholarship Luncheon on campus. The award recognizes Ashland University faculty who have demonstrated outstanding scholarship. As part of the luncheon, he spoke on “Keep Your Eyes and Ears Open, and remember to Vary the Parameter.”

Dr. Cathy Stoffer

served as a recent member of the MAA curriculum committee CONCUR. She is also the Director of the Ohio Council of Teachers of Mathematics State Tournament of Mathematics.
Faculty News

Faculty Updates

Dr. Vickie VanDresar is a recent past president of the Ohio MAA Section, and is currently a member of the Nominating Committee.

Dr. Christopher Swanson is a coordinator for Ohio NExT, which is a group to help new math professors in Ohio get acclimated to university life. He presented an invited address entitled “Probability in Look Up and Scream” at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind. on March 10, 2011 as part of the Math for Everyone Series – talks and discussions especially for undergraduates.

Dr. Gordon Swain attended the 18th Biennial Conference of the Association of Christians in the Mathematical Sciences, held at Westmont College, Santa Barbara, Calif., from June 1-4. He presented a paper titled, “The History of the Area Between a Line and a Parabola.”

Honors Reception

On April 21 at 7 p.m., faculty, students, families and scholarship donors met in the Trustees Room to recognize the accomplishments of students within the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science over the past year. In addition to student recognition, the department recognized endowed gifts from Richard A. Good and Dr. Donald Buckeye, plus the following endowed scholarships:

- Dr. Donald Buckeye
- Dorothy Carpenter
- John S. Crumrine
- Richard A. Good
- James & Helen McConaghy
- Alan G. Poorman
- Stanton Rupert
- Ruth Tipton
- Robert & Kathleen Wendling
Congratulations to Our Spring and Fall 2011 Graduates

• David Banyasz
• Kara Biltz
• Brandon Bisel
• Nicholas Blankenship
• Lyndsey Brandt
• Alan Dunson
• Nathaniel Ferron
• Anthony Glessner
• Jeremy Mio
• Michael Nelson
• Philip Pelzer
• Nicole Peterson
• Thomas Valy
• Cara Whitcomb
• Polly Widmer

Your Support Appreciated

If you are interested in making a gift to support endowed scholarships, or department programs, please contact us at 419.289.5620. Your continuing support is important to the success of our program and our students!

Alumni Update

We would love to hear from you. Notes and news may be sent via e-mail to whall4@ashland.edu or mailed to Ashland University Dept. of Mathematics and Computer Science, 401 College Ave., Ashland, Ohio 44805.

Name __________________________________________ (Maiden)______________________________

Major ___________________________________________________________ Year of Graduation __________

Address ____________________________________________________________

E-mail Address ______________________________________________________

Occupation/Title ___________________________________________________

What you are up to: ___________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________