Mathematics Colloquium

On Thursday, October 3, David E. Zitarelli will be speaking at 4:00pm in CMC 206.

Rascals and Heroes: A Fresh Look At Colonial Mathematics

A recent examination of the Colonial Era revealed a host of fascinating figures that worked on surprisingly rich mathematics. Four came from the only two American colleges established in the 17th century. At William & Mary, the first mathematics professor misbehaved so badly he was dismissed within a year; his successor behaved more properly. At Harvard the first Hollis Professor of Mathematics had a drinking problem; his successor was sober. But some mathematics came from emerging organizations, like Benjamin Franklin and David Rittenhouse at the American Philosophical Society. Other topics were mastered by individuals with little formal education. Overall, we present several examples from the Colonial Era of material that might be appropriate for classes ranging from beginning algebra to Calculus II.

About the Speaker

David E. Zitarelli received his Ph.D. from Penn State in 1970 and accepted a position at Temple University with the intention of staying for only a few years. Instead, he remained in Philadelphia until his retirement 42 years later. During that time he led three mathematical lives. The first was as a researcher in the algebraic theory of semi-groups. The next was as a textbook author, with royalties helping pay his two children’s college tuition. Finally, the history of mathematics became his passion. Beginning in 1998, he taught a course in the history of mathematics in America and six years later, got the idea to write a book on this subject. The first chapter contains the basis for the topic of his Carleton lecture.

U of M Biostatistics Open House

You are invited to the 14th annual Open House for the Division of Biostatistics Graduate Program in the School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. For a half-day on Friday, October 4, there will be short talks and info sessions on graduate programs, research, job prospects, financial aid, and the application process. RSVP on the Open House web page (www.biostat.umn.edu) by 4:00pm on Tuesday, October 1, 2013.

Winter Break Research Funding

Doing math or science research over winter break? Apply to receive funding from The Towsley and Kolenkow-Reitz Endowments! Funding is available to both students working with Carleton faculty on campus and those working at other institutions. For more information and application materials, visit: apps.carleton.edu/mathscience/faculty/studentresearchaway/
Meet the SDA: Martin Bobb

Q: Introduce yourself and tell us about your experiences with math!

A: My name is Martin, and I'm from Delaware, Ohio. Surprisingly, I hated math until I had a really great geometry teacher in high school, who made it interesting and engaging for me. I've come to love problem solving, and learning about new structures in math, and I encourage others to keep exploring too! My interests right now are mostly in analysis and topology, and I'm a senior, so my plans for the near future are exploring graduate programs in math research.

Q: What do you do as a Student Departmental Advisor (SDA)?

A: As the SDA, it's my job to act as a connection between students and faculty. I help organize events and get students involved in the department's community. As far as the job goes, I'm here to help students figure out what classes to take depending on their goals, and let them know how they can get involved in the department (Wednesday's problem solving club, social events, department t-shirts, student and faculty talks, and the Gazette). I'll be holding office hours before registration time so that students can come ask questions about classes.

Our other SDA, Hilary Marshall, is off-campus this fall, but will be returning in the winter.

Problem of the Week

There are 435 members of the U.S. House of Representatives, all of whom wish to attend New Year's balls. Due to political tension in the last session, every Representative hates exactly three other Representatives. (It can be the case that B hates A even though A does not hate B.) New Year's balls are very expensive to host, but the Social Secretary hopes to avoid any unseemly incidents. What is the least number of balls that can be thrown while ensuring that it is possible for every Representative to attend without hating any other guest?

Acknowledgements:

Ben Matson, Dylan Peifer, and Isaac Garfinkle submitted correct solutions to last week's problem; Leo Betthauser also submitted an essentially correct solution. Additionally, John Snyder in Oconomowoc submitted an interesting Mathematica analysis.

Job Postings

The Brattle Group, a consulting firm, will be conducting on-campus interviews at Carleton on Wednesday, Oct. 9 for potential Research Analysts. To be considered for an interview, please submit necessary materials by Tuesday, Oct. 1. For more information, visit the Career Center Tunnel.

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is looking to fill a full-time entry level Actuarial Assistant position and a summer 2014 actuarial internship position. For details, visit www.thrivent.com/careers/.

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