New Mathematics Majors

The class of 2015 has declared 23 mathematics and 6 math/stats majors for a total of 29 new majors in the department! For comparison, the class of 2014 has 46 mathematics (12 of which are math/stats) majors and 2013 has 39 (6 math/stats) majors. While this new class size seems smaller, most double majors have not yet declared.

Meet a Major: Christophe Dethier

This week’s Gazette presents our first Meet a Major! For those of you who don’t know Christophe, he is a senior mathematics major from the Seattle area.

GG: What led you to become a math major?
CD: My dad is a software engineer and has a PhD in quantum mechanics so I learned a lot as a kid and was ahead in high school. I think that is why I always enjoyed it.
GG: What are your plans for next year?
CD: Graduate school; PhD program at Oregon.
GG: Anything else the math department should know about you?
CD: I don’t like mint chocolate chip ice cream. It tastes like toothpaste.

How are the angles of this new quadrilateral related to the angles of the original one?

2. In the game of bridge, four “hands” of 13 cards each are dealt from a standard 52-card deck. It is customary to estimate the playing strength of a bridge hand by using a point-count system popularized by Charles Goren, in which an ace is worth 4 points, a king 3 points, a queen 2 points, a jack 1 point, and all other cards are “worthless”. Because the deck contains one ace, one king, one queen, and one jack in each of the four suits (spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs), there are 40 points in all, and so on average, a bridge hand will be worth 10 points. Of course, if someone deals you a hand at random, that particular hand may not (and as it turns out, it probably won’t) be worth exactly 10 points. Is it more likely to be worth more, or to be worth less? Or is it equally likely to be worth more (than 10 points) as to be worth less?

Both problems from last week were solved by Dylan Peifer, who can stop by CMC 217 for the usual reason, and also by John Snyder in Oconomowoc. Meanwhile, solutions to the problems from March 1 and March 8 have now been posted. At press time, the forecast for the weekend doesn’t involve any “spring-like” temperatures, so if you’re going to be inside anyway, why not try your hand at a problem or two?

-Mark Krusemeyer