Greetings from a Co-Chair

It’s that time of year when our thoughts begin to turn more frequently to the coming autumn and the new school year. This year will be different than the last in many ways. We said goodbye to Mary Grace Killmer and David Sze (au revoir!). Rich Bastian is on board in a different role now as a Lecturer, and it turns out that Lou Penge will be with us for one more year. We are pleased to have Rob Pawloski join us as our newest tenure-track hire. There’s an introduction to each of them later in the newsletter.

It looks as though this academic year will be a busy one. We will be searching for three new faculty members and, for the second year in a row, we have about 45 new math majors bringing the total to approximately 140. The students in KME are organizing some events that should be interesting. Keep an eye out for them!

Finally, if you are an alum, we would like to hear how you are doing and how your experience here has helped you. The (new) contact details can be found with the Spotlight on Alumni section on page 2.

Have a good year,
Joe Coyle

NEW! Monmouth University Mathematics Colloquium

The fall semester of 2006 will see the start of the new Monmouth University Mathematics Colloquium. We hope to have three colloquium speakers each semester; one each during the months of September, October, November, February, March, and April. We hope to have department members speaking on their current interests, mathematics students speaking on research projects, members of other departments speaking on mathematical interests, as well as speakers from other institutions.

Our first speaker will be Dr. Bonnie Gold. She will be speaking on the Philosophy of Mathematics on Friday, September 22, 2006 at 2:30pm. Our first talk is scheduled in Howard Hall 548. Refreshments will be available.

If you have any interest in speaking, or have any suggestions for future speakers, please feel free to contact David Marshall at dmarshal@monmouth.edu.
Spotlight on Alumni

Stephen Woelfer, a 2005 graduate, has moved toward a career as an actuary. Stephen was asked to put some thoughts together about his experience in the math department and how it relates to what he is doing now. Here’s what he has to say.

"I have a presentation due in two days for Dr. Gold and an exam on Tuesday for Dr. Szel" I remember thinking this exact thought along with many like it throughout my four years at Monmouth University. Along with this thought came the light at the end of the tunnel where I thought how nice it would be when I graduate and can start working. This is when I would only have to deal with my job and wouldn’t have to balance all these classes at once. Little did I know: this was just the beginning.

As an actuarial student, I have two main job functions. One is to organize, interpret and present large amounts of data that relate to Blue Cross of California’s cost of care. The second is to pass challenging actuarial exams. Preparation for these exams requires hundreds of hours of studying. The workload that I encountered at Monmouth University directly prepared me for this experience.

Along with time management came the math that I learned in the classes. When I analyze data I find myself using many different types of mathematical techniques that I learned in college including probability, statistics, calculus and number theory. The vast mathematical foundation also proved to be extremely helpful when encountering new concepts. Without my background to lean on, I would not be able to tackle the everyday problems I come face to face with as an actuarial student.

Moreover, the math department at Monmouth University demands that the students learn to work well in groups. Every math class that I took had some group work involved. This directly prepared me to work effectively and efficiently in a small group here at Blue Cross.

Monmouth University’s math department is more than just a place to learn calculus and modern algebra. It’s a place of life preparation; somewhere to develop strong relationships with students and faculty.
KME News - Krystle Hinds, NJ Gamma chapter president

As president of Kappa Mu Epsilon for the upcoming school year, I would like to take the time to say welcome back and introduce some of the key goals of KME for the coming year. This year, KME will be a part of a meet and greet occurring on September 6th. This event allows incoming freshman and rising underclassmen to get to know their faculty and upperclassmen peers. Additionally, a volleyball game with students vs. faculty will be pursued. This event was first introduced last year. Hopefully, KME will continue to make it grow.

In the spring, several events are taking place. KME will take part in organizing teams for the MAA spring 2007 meeting. Last spring, Monmouth was represented by several teams for the first time (see photo and caption below). We hope to continue the tradition and increase our performance! Induction ceremonies to KME will also occur in the spring. Aside from all of this, KME is taking any suggestions or ideas for a potential math related trip. In past years, KME arranged for a speaker to come and discuss math related occupations to students. This year, we hope to introduce math to the students outside of a classroom setting.

Again, welcome back and as always, KME thanks you for all the support it continues to receive!

Participating in the competition

Team #3 - Debra Cagliostro, Krystel Hinds, Andrew Peel
Team #4 - Christine Arsego, Terry Caliste, Nick Manchero
Team #24 - Jill Banholzer, Leslie Cordaro
Team #25 - Kelly Fitzgerald, Jenny Sloan

Others Attending

Lisa Marchalonis, Catherine Russamano, Mike Barnahan, and Augustine Anumah
The department was successful in filling a tenure track position last year. We are excited for Rob Pawloski to begin his role as an assistant professor. Rob comes to us as a recent Ph.D. graduate of the University of Arizona.

**What brought you to Monmouth?**
When applying for jobs, it was immediately apparent that Monmouth is a school that is truly dedicated to undergraduate education. I look forward to teaching and learning from all of my students and colleagues. Also, I am originally from Connecticut and went to college in New Jersey and was excited about the possibility of returning to the northeast after spending five years in graduate school in Arizona.

**Tell us a bit about your research.**
My primary research interest is in computational group theory. As numbers measure quantity, groups measure symmetry. Symmetries occur in nature, in geometric objects, codes, crystals, molecules, roots of equations, and many other places. I design algorithms and implement them onto a computer to study the structure of large and interesting groups.

**What are you look forward to this autumn?**
I look forward to beginning my new job at Monmouth, meeting and teaching all of my students, the birth of my daughter, and the leaves changing colors.

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**New Faculty - Rob Pawloski**

When did you decide you wanted to go into a mathematical career?
A couple of years after college I was offered a job as a middle school math teacher. I loved teaching and mathematics and so it was a logical choice. While teaching I took one math course each semester and began to get more and more excited about higher mathematics. I did not want to give up teaching but also wanted to experience the challenge and rewards of studying math. Therefore, I decided to go on to get my Ph.D. in math with the goal of someday being a professor at the university level.

**What do you like about teaching?**
I enjoy the personal interaction with students. Mathematics is an exciting, challenging, and extremely important subject, and I love sharing my enthusiasm for math with others.

**Tell us something people might not know about you.**
I have been married to my wife Kristen for 10 years, have a 3 year old son Robby, and a chocolate lab named Leia. I was a history major and then a middle school and high school math teacher before going on to earn my Ph.D. in mathematics.

**Tell us about some of your interests.**
I like to play soccer, run, and mountain bike. I enjoy watching all types of movies and playing with my son.

Dr. Pawloski settles into his office.
New Faculty - Rich Bastian

Rich Bastian has recently taken the position as Lecturer in the mathematics department. He is a former adjunct.

When did you decide you wanted to go into a mathematical/science career?
In high school I was told I'd never be any good at math or science. I guess that got my competitive juices going - I received my PhD in electrical engineering and worked at Bell labs for 20+ years.

What do you like about teaching?
Seeing the light go on in someone's eyes when they "get it". I also like re-learning material myself.

Tell us something people might not know about you.
I'm fascinated by "connections" between disciplines, and I don't just mean math and science - how about math and religion, or physics and poetry? I'd love to teach a course/seminar on topics like these.

What are some of your interests?
I swim, love classical music and stereo/video equipment, the theatre, ballet, cooking (and eating), ballroom dancing and junk novels.

What brought you to Monmouth?
After retiring from Bell Labs & from a consulting business, I decided it was time to give something back of what I had learned. I'd taught an honors course here 15 years ago and liked the atmosphere; my daughter went here for her master's, so I applied for an adjunct position 2 years ago and now I'm a Lecturer!

What are you looking forward to this autumn?
Teaching math majors - I've taught MA 105 five times, so I'm looking forward to the challenge of teaching more advanced students as well.

The Math Center

The Mathematics Learning Center provides peer tutoring in all levels of undergraduate mathematics courses. The goal of the Center is to offer assistance in a supportive environment that individualizes the service to the specific needs of a student. Want to know more? Stop by when they are open and see for yourself or contact Judy Toubin at toubin@monmouth.edu. The center is open Monday through Thursday 9:30 to 6:00 and Friday 9:30 to 1:30 and is located in Howard Hall 543.

Need to contact the department?

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Doreen Brown is our office coordinator.
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