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# For Your Information

## NSF-Funded Institutes Recompetition

In 1997 the Division of Mathematical Sciences (DMS) of the National Science Foundation (NSF) announced that it would open a new competition for the institutes it funds. Currently the DMS funds the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI) in Berkeley and the Institute for Mathematics and its Applications (IMA) at the University of Minnesota. By the time the deadline for institute proposals passed in February of this year, the DMS had received between ten and twenty proposals. By the end of the summer, unofficial reports held that the field of candidates had been reduced to five: IMA, MSRI, the National Institute of Statistical Sciences in Research Triangle Park, Brown University, and the University of California, Los Angeles. At the time of this writing in early October, the DMS was conducting site visits. The number of institutes to be funded is not known. The final decision about which institutes NSF will fund will be made by the National Science Board, the policymaking body of the Foundation. This decision is expected in May 1999.

—Allyn Jackson

## The National Registry of Women in Science

The Association for Women in Science (AWIS), with support from the Office of Naval Research, maintains the National Registry of Women in Science, a multidisciplinary

database that is used to find candidates for award nominations, job openings, press inquiries, speaking opportunities, and more. The AWIS encourages all women in science to join the database; it is not necessary to be a member of AWIS to participate. For further information see the AWIS Web site at <http://www.serve.com/awis/html/registry.html> or contact Melissa Booker, 1200 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 650, Washington, DC 20005; telephone 202-326-8940; fax 202-326-8960; e-mail: [booker@awis.org](mailto:booker@awis.org).

—From the AWIS Web site

## National Conference on Graduate Education

The National Science Foundation, in conjunction with the University of Missouri, will sponsor a National Conference on Issues Related to Doctoral Programs in Mathematics Education. The conference will be held in the fall of 1999. Faculty of institutions offering doctoral programs are invited to contribute information about their program.

A survey of faculty at institutions where students graduate with doctoral degrees in mathematics education or an emphasis in mathematics education at any level—elementary, secondary, or collegiate—will be conducted to provide background information for the conference. For anyone wishing to participate in this survey, a questionnaire will be posted after January 1, 1999, at [www.showmecerter.missouri.edu/doctoralprograms](http://www.showmecerter.missouri.edu/doctoralprograms).

For further information or questions regarding this conference please contact Robert Reys, University of Missouri,

104 Stewart Hall, Columbia, MO 65211; telephone 573-882-3740; e-mail reysr@missouri.edu.

—Robert Reys

## Kiiti Morita Garden Dedication: The AMS Celebrates Mathematician's Rich Legacy



**Pictured left to right: Tomiko Morita, Shigeo Morita, AMS Executive Director John Ewing, Yasuhiro Morita, and Tim Goggins, AMS Director of Development. Photo by Hiroko Morita.**

The Morita family from Japan recently visited the AMS to attend a dedication ceremony. The entranceway gardens of the Providence headquarters were named in memory of Kiiti Morita. His widow, Tomiko, was accompanied by her son, Yasuhiro; his wife, Hiroko; and son, Shigeo. Kiiti Morita was an eminent mathematician who combined profound work in topology with brilliant insights into algebra.

During the dedication ceremony attended by many AMS staff members, John Ewing presented a Board of Trustees' resolution, thanking the Morita family for establishing the Kiiti Morita Fund.

—Tim Goggins, AMS

## Departments Plan to Coordinate Job Offer Deadlines

A group of major U.S. mathematics departments is developing an informal agreement to adopt common dates by which new doctorates are to accept or reject job offers. In addition, the Division of Mathematical Sciences of the National Science Foundation (NSF) has agreed to announce earlier the names of recipients in its postdoctoral program,

to allow better coordination with the departments' agreement.

The agreement attempts to address the conflict that can arise when an individual is required to accept or reject, by a certain date, an offer of a postdoctoral position (i.e., a non-tenure-track assistant professorship or instructorship or a fellowship in a department or institute). It has sometimes happened that this date is earlier than the date by which the NSF Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowships are announced. This can put an individual in the position of having to make decisions about offers from departments or institutes without knowing whether he or she might be selected for an NSF postdoctoral fellowship.

This situation can also create planning problems for mathematics departments. NSF postdoctoral fellowships ordinarily run for two years and require no teaching, but it is common practice for the fellows to do some teaching in order to lengthen the term of the fellowship to three years. If a department does not know how many NSF fellows are coming and how many wish to teach, then planning for teaching coverage is difficult. In addition, the hiring process has become increasingly rushed as institutions compete for candidates and make offers earlier and earlier in the hiring season.

As a result of discussions among department chairs and NSF staff, the NSF has now agreed to announce the names of the recipients of its postdoctoral fellowships by the last working day in January; for 1999, this date is Friday, January 29. The proposal now under consideration by the departments is that no candidate should be asked to respond to an offer of a postdoctoral position until about a week after the announcement date for the NSF postdoctoral fellowships; for 1999, this date would be Monday, February 8.

The agreement would apply only to postdoctoral positions and only to candidates who are no more than two years past the Ph.D., and it would specifically exclude tenure-track offers. There would be no restriction on how early offers may be made. Departments could continue to make offers in mid-January or earlier; the proposed agreement would say only that a department may not require an answer from the candidate prior to February 8. Of course, a candidate is free to accept an offer prior to that date if he or she wishes. Candidates accepting early offers are expected to inform as soon as possible all the other departments to which they applied. A department can make second-round offers before February 8 if any of its first choices have made other plans. In such cases the deadline for answers from candidates should not be prior to February 8.

At the time of this writing in mid-November, the agreement was still under discussion by the departments involved, but its adoption appeared imminent. Further developments will be announced in the *Notices*.

—Allyn Jackson