Inside the AMS

AMS Committee on Education Examines Issues

The AMS Committee on Education (CoE) held its annual meeting October 26–27, 2001, in Washington DC. Committee chair Roger Howe of Yale University chose as the theme for the meeting the involvement of professional mathematicians in K–12 education. About 45 people attended the meeting, including mathematics department chairs, congressional staff, and representatives from federal agencies and other mathematical organizations. Over the course of the two days, discussions ranged over the extent of AMS involvement in current mathematics education issues and initiatives.

Howe set the tone by noting that, as a result of recent CoE comments on the draft of the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) Mathematics Framework for 2004, presented by Herb Clemens of the University of Utah at a recent public session, the committee has been invited to write introductions to three of the five subject areas in the Framework. CoE is currently working on the drafts.

Representatives from publishers of K–12 mathematics textbooks were for the first time invited to CoE. Pat Brill (Harcourt School Publishers) and Rosi Marshall (Scott Foresman) described how they worked with mathematicians in their projects, the kind of input they found most valuable, and some of the difficulties encountered. CoE members learned about the constraints under which textbook publishers work and felt that the ensuing dialog was helpful. A particular problem faced by publishers is the lack of uniformity of the various state standards that must be met, and they would be very grateful for whatever mathematicians could do to promote national standards.

Carole Lacampagne of the U.S. Department of Education and Deborah Ball of the University of Michigan spoke on the progress of the Rand Mathematics Study Panel, whose draft report will soon be available on the Web. Howe has also been involved in this panel, which arose out of the department's concerns about the quality of research in education, and mathematics education in particular. Research is scattered, did not accumulate into a large research knowledge base, and, even when of high quality, did not translate into practice. What is proposed is a coordinated research agenda, focused on teaching and learning of algebra (broadly defined), identification and development of mathematical practices, the nature and uses of knowledge in mathematics teaching, and how such knowledge can be effectively deployed in practice. There was much discussion about this project, and CoE was asked to participate in refining the draft. Both CoE members and department chairs were asked to organize review groups to provide feedback.

CoE heard from George Walker about the Carnegie Project on the Doctorate, the largest ever engaged in by the Carnegie Foundation. In the first stage of the project, disciplines are being asked to define "stewardship" in a disciplinary context. Carnegie will then work with four to six departments in each discipline to implement innovative, multi-department programs. After examining the results of these experiments, Carnegie will work to facilitate broad adoption of successful models. Walker asked CoE, "What does stewardship entail for mathematics?" and "How do we structure a doctoral program to prepare stewards of the discipline?" Carnegie has commissioned essays from mathematicians (AMS President Hyman Bass has been asked to write one) and will organize discussion sessions at disciplinary society meetings and Carnegie-sponsored "convenings".

Jim Lewis of the University of Nebraska outlined the recent report "Mathematical Education of Teachers" (MET), the outcome of a project of the Conference Board on the Mathematical Sciences. The report has been distributed to all mathematics departments, colleges of education, deans, and professional organizations, and a national summit was held in November 2001. Naomi Fisher of the Mathematicians and Education Reform (MER) Forum reported that the AMS-MER Professional Master's Program project ended in November 2001, having conducted three workshops and created a directory of Master's programs (on the AMS Web site, `http://www.ams.org/tools/masters.html`). A new 3-year AMS-MER project has received funding from the National Science Foundation (see "Excellence in Undergraduate Mathematics: Confronting Diverse Student Interests," *Notices*, November 2001, pages 1194–95).

—Monica Foulkes, AMS Washington Office

Scholarship Fund to Assist Dependents of Victims of September 11 Attacks

Together with about 35 other scientific and engineering societies, the AMS is participating in an effort to create a scholarship fund to assist financially needy dependents of the victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The American Physical Society (APS) is leading the effort to establish the fund, called the Science and Engineering Scholarship Fund. It is part of the Familes of Freedom Scholarship Fund, established by the Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of America (CSFA) and the Lumina Foundation for Education.

Eligible participants will be financially needy dependents, including children and spouses, of those persons who died or are permanently disabled as a direct result of the attacks or rescue activities. The CSFA will manage the fund and will work with the appropriate government agencies to compile a list of potentially eligible participants.

For further information about the scholarship fund, visit the website `http://www.aps.org/sciencefund.html`.

—Allyn Jackson

Deaths of AMS Members

Pierre Faurre, École Polytechnique, Palaiseau, France, died on February 6, 2001. Born on January 15, 1942, he was a member of the Society for 18 years.

Albrecht Frohlich, emeritus fellow, Robinson College, Cambridge, England, died on November 8, 2001. Born on May 22, 1916, he was a member of the Society for 39 years.

Edgar J. Howard, professor, San Diego State University, CA, died on September 20, 2001. Born on March 4, 1932, he was a member of the Society for 36 years.

David B. Kirk, retired, of Yardley, PA, died on August 7, 2001. Born on November 18, 1921, he was a member of the Society for 57 years.

John G. Leschen, of Schenectady, NY, died on November 17, 2001. Born on December 3, 1918, he was a member of the Society for 29 years.

Helmut Siemon, retired, Pädagogische Hochschule Ludwigsburg, Germany, died on August 4, 2001. Born on June 30, 1926, he was a member of the Society for 24 years.