

# MAA Prizes Presented in Atlanta

At the Joint Mathematics Meetings in Atlanta in January 2005, the Mathematical Association of America presented the following honors.

## **Gung and Hu Award for Distinguished Service**

The Yueh-Gin Gung and Dr. Charles Y. Hu Award for Distinguished Service to Mathematics is the most prestigious award made by the Association.

The 2005 Gung and Hu Award was presented to GERALD L. ALEXANDERSON of Santa Clara University. The award citation states, "Jerry has a long record of able service to mathematics as a practitioner, teacher, administrator, professional organization leader, publicist, advocate, and enthusiast whose love for mathematics and its people comes through clearly in his public talks and widely-read books." Alexander is known for his work on the *Mathematical People* volumes of interviews with mathematicians. Since 1975 he has been the associate director of the William Lowell Putnam competition. He served as chair of his department for thirty-five years and received a President's Special Recognition Award in 1996 for this service to his institution. Since 1994 he has been chair of the Board of Trustees of the American Institute of Mathematics. During his fifty years of MAA membership he has served in many different capacities, including serving as MAA president and secretary.

## **Haimo Awards for Distinguished College or University Teaching**

The Deborah and Franklin Tepper Haimo Awards for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics honor college or university teachers who have been widely recognized as extraordinarily successful and whose teaching effectiveness

has been shown to have had influence beyond their own institutions.

The 2005 Haimo awards were presented to GERALD L. ALEXANDERSON of Santa Clara University, APARNA HIGGINS of the University of Dayton, and DEBORAH HUGHES HALLETT of the University of Arizona and Harvard University.

"Jerry Alexander is a master teacher, an inspiration to both students and colleagues," the citation states. "In his 47 years of teaching at Santa Clara University (35 years of which he was department chair), he has consistently had the reputation for being not only the best, but also one of the most demanding teachers. His classes are amusing, entertaining, and highly informative, an impressive mix of challenging mathematics and historical anecdotes, delivered clearly and concisely. Many mathematicians (and former students in other careers) discovered the excitement of mathematics in the first course they took with Jerry, and his personal advice and encouragement continues to guide many of those careers today."

"Aparna Higgins is one of the dynamos of the U.S. mathematical community," the award citation states. "Her ease with and genuine connection to students is remarkable; her dedication to teaching and mentoring is recognized by colleagues near and far...[Her] love of all things mathematical and the desire to encourage others fuels her charisma, energy, and enthusiasm. Her joy is contagious in the classroom, at MAA student chapter meetings, in her REU [Research Experiences for Undergraduates] summer programs, and with Project NEXt Fellows." Higgins has received two other teaching awards, from her own university and from the Ohio section of the MAA.

"Deborah Hughes-Hallett is known for her superb skills in the classroom," the prize citation

states. “She excels at all scales, from the classroom to the international educational scene. Her pioneering programs at the University of Arizona and at Harvard will continue to support and inspire the worldwide teaching of mathematics for decades.” The best known of these programs is the Harvard-based Calculus Consortium. Her role in designing mathematics courses for students at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government has won high praise. “[These courses] have involved a fundamental rethinking of either curriculum or method, and are driven by her uncompromising devotion to her students and her rigorous understanding of how they think,” the prize citation says.

### **Beckenbach Book Prize**

The Beckenbach Book Prize is awarded to an author of a distinguished, innovative book published by the MAA. The award is not given on a regularly scheduled basis but only when a book appears that is judged to be truly outstanding.

The 2005 Beckenbach Book Prize was presented to JAMES TANTON, a high school mathematics teacher at St. Mark’s School in Southborough, Massachusetts. He received the prize for his book *Solve This: Math Activities for Students and Clubs*, published by the MAA. The book, the prize citation states, “is much more than just a collection of ideas to use with math clubs. It causes, coerces, and induces the reader to think about mathematics in non-conventional ways, exploring diverse topics from number theory, geometry, combinatorics, probability, knot theory, topology, tiling, and many more. The sections on ‘Take it Further’ and ‘Solutions and Discussions’ expand upon many of the problems and activities to suggest additional directions of exploration, provide notes and proofs on some important areas and theorems of mathematics, and present problems whose solutions are still unknown. Even professional mathematicians are likely to encounter questions and problems that will capture their interest in this creative, innovative, and delightful exposure to mathematics and mathematical thinking.”

### **Certificates of Meritorious Service**

The Certificate of Meritorious Service is presented for service at the national level or for service to an MAA section. Those honored in 2005 were CHARLES CABLE of Allegheny College, Allegheny Mountain Section; JON SCOTT of Montgomery College, Maryland-District of Columbia-Virginia Section; BARBARA OSOFSKY of Rutgers University, New Jersey Section; ROY DEAL JR., of Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma-Arkansas Section; and ERNIE SOLHEID of California State University at Fullerton, Southern California-Nevada Section.