
Mathematics People

Feldman Awarded CRM-Fields-PIMS Prize

JOEL S. FELDMAN of the University of British Columbia has been awarded the 2007 CRM-Fields-PIMS Prize. The prize, awarded annually by the Centre de Recherches Mathématiques (CRM), the Fields Institute, and the Pacific Institute for the Mathematical Sciences (PIMS), recognizes exceptional contributions by a mathematician working in Canada. The prize carries a cash award of CA\$10,000 (approximately US\$8,500) and an invitation to give a lecture at each institute.

Feldman was chosen “in recognition of his exceptional achievement and work in mathematical physics.” According to the prize citation, he “has risen to a position of international prominence in the world of mathematical physics, with a thirty-year record of sustained output of the highest caliber. He has made important contributions to quantum field theory, many-body theory, Schrödinger operator theory, and the theory of infinite genus Riemann surfaces. Many of Professor Feldman’s recent results on quantum many-body systems at positive densities and on Fermi liquids and superconductivity have been classed as some of the best research in mathematical physics in the last decade.”

Feldman received his bachelor’s degree from the University of Toronto in 1970 and his master’s (1971) and Ph.D. (1974) degrees from Harvard University. He was a research fellow at Harvard University from 1974 to 1975 and C. L. E. Moore Instructor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) from 1975 to 1977. He has been teaching at the University of British Columbia since 1977. He was an invited speaker at the International Congress of Mathematicians in Kyoto in 1990. He was a plenary speaker at the International Congress on Mathematical Physics in Brisbane in 1997 and an invited speaker at the

International Congress on Mathematical Physics in Lisbon in 2003. He is a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) and was awarded the 1996 John L. Synge Award of the RSC, the Aisenstadt Chair Lectureship of the CRM (1999–2000), and the 2004 Jeffery-Williams Prize of the Canadian Mathematical Society (CMS) for outstanding contributions to mathematical research.

The CRM and the Fields Institute established the CRM-Fields prize in 1994 to recognize exceptional research in the mathematical sciences. In 2005 PIMS became an equal partner, and the name was changed to the CRM-Fields-PIMS prize. Previous recipients of the prize are H. S. M. (Donald) Coxeter, George A. Elliott, James Arthur, Robert V. Moody, Stephen A. Cook, Israel Michael Sigal, William T. Tutte, John B. Friedlander, John McKay, Edwin Perkins, Donald A. Dawson, David Boyd, and Nicole Tomczak-Jaegermann.

—From a Fields Institute announcement

Smith and Holroyd Awarded Aisenstadt Prize

GREGORY D. SMITH of Queen’s University and ALEXANDER E. HOLROYD of the University of British Columbia are the recipients of the 2007 André Aisenstadt Prize of the Centre de Recherches Mathématiques (CRM) of the University of Montreal. Smith was honored for his work in algebraic geometry and computational algebra, and Holroyd was chosen for his work in probability theory, with emphasis on discrete spatial models, including cellular automata, percolation, matching, and coupling.

The André Aisenstadt Mathematics Prize consists of CA\$3,000 (approximately US\$2,500) and a medal. The prize recognizes talented young Canadian mathematicians

in pure and applied mathematics who have held a Ph.D. for no longer than seven years.

—From a CRM announcement

Viale Awarded ASL Sacks Prize

MATTEO VIALE of the University of Torino and the University of Paris 7 is the recipient of the 2006 Sacks Prize of the Association for Symbolic Logic (ASL). The prize is awarded for the most outstanding doctoral dissertation in mathematical logic. Viale received his Ph.D. in 2006 from the University of Torino and the University of Paris 7. According to the prize citation, his thesis “makes fundamental contributions to our understanding of the consequences of forcing axioms in the combinatorics of singular cardinals. In particular, it solves a well-known problem, by showing that the proper forcing axiom implies the singular cardinals hypothesis.”

The Sacks Prize was established in honor of Gerald Sacks for his unique contribution to mathematical logic. It consists of a cash award and five years’ free membership in the ASL.

—From an ASL announcement

Mustata Receives Packard Fellowship

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation has awarded twenty Fellowships for Science and Engineering for the year 2006. MIRCEA MUSTATA, a mathematician at the University of Michigan, has received an unrestricted research grant of US\$625,000 over five consecutive years. He will pursue research in algebraic geometry, particularly on singularities of algebraic varieties.

The fellowships are awarded to researchers in mathematics, natural sciences, computer science, and engineering who are in the first three years of a faculty appointment.

—From a Packard Foundation announcement

AWM Essay Contest Winners Announced

The Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM) has announced the winners of its 2006 essay contest, “Biographies of Contemporary Women in Mathematics”. The grand prizes were awarded to ANNIE DAVIS of the Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Boston, Newton, Massachusetts, for her essay, “Margo Levine, Mathematician”; and to STEPHANIE HIGGINS of Bates College for her essay, “Dr. Bonnie Shulman: A Different Kind of Story”. Davis’s essay won first place in the middle school (grades 6–8) category, and Higgins’s essay won first place in the college category.

As grand prize winners, these essays will be published in the *AWM Newsletter*. The first-place winner in the grade 9–12 category was MARGARITE BECHIS of Mount Saint Joseph Academy, Flourtown, Pennsylvania, for an essay titled “Splendor of the Heavens: Dr. Knapp’s Astronomical Odyssey”. A complete list of the winners and copies of their essays can be found on the AWM website, <http://www.awm-math.org/biographies/contest/2006.html>.

—From an AWM announcement

Correction

The February 2007 issue of the *Notices* carried a list of doctoral degrees conferred in 2005–2006. Because of incorrect information supplied by his institution, David S. Torain II was listed as having received a doctorate in mathematics. His degree is in systems science, with a specialization in mathematics.

—Alyn Jackson

About the Cover (continued from page 502)

whereas nonexperts use only short-term memory. Episodic memory is used to store memory of our own life’s events, and is one of several types of long-term memory recognized by neuroscientists. As Pesenti writes in a survey article in the *Handbook of Mathematical Cognition*, the work supports the suggestion “that high-level expertise is not only accounted for by an acceleration of existing processes and by local modulation of activations, but” ... “also involves new processes involving new brain areas.” Of course mental arithmetic is not the same as higher mathematics, but sometime in the not too distant future it should be possible to analyze what is involved in discovering and proving theorems!

The important role of long-term memory should make us wary of referring disparagingly to “mere memorization”. But neither should it make us pessimistic about the value of attempting to teach our students how to reason. In a brief note by Brian Butterworth about this work (in the January 2001, issue of *nature neuroscience* at <http://neuroscience.nature.com>), Gamm is quoted as saying that at school he was “very bad at arithmetic” because the teachers never explained the concepts in a way he could understand. It was only later in life that he worked these things out for himself.

Pesenti’s home page is at <http://www.nesc.ucl.ac.be/mp/pesentiHomepage.htm>.

—Bill Casselman, Graphics Editor
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