

Co-Sponsored Conferences

The Mathematics Program for the 2012 AAAS Meeting in Vancouver

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), founded in 1848, is the world's largest general scientific society, with over 120,000 individual and institutional members. The AAAS is divided into twenty-four disciplinary-based sections, including Section A (Mathematics). The 2012 annual meeting of the AAAS will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on February 16-20. The theme of this year's meeting is "Flattening the World: Building a Global Knowledge Society". Each year, Section A oversees the creation of the mathematics program at the AAAS meeting.

The AAAS Annual Meeting is organized into symposia which have three or more speakers, and often a discussant who reflects on the talks that are given. Section A is sponsoring four symposia this year, featuring outstanding expository talks by prominent mathematicians and scientists. The four symposia sponsored by Section A this year are:

- Analogy in Applications of Mathematics and Statistics to Other Disciplines, organized by Benjamin Mann, Ayasdi Inc. (Scheduled speakers: Robert Calderbank, Gunnar Carlsson, Michael Deem, Richard Lenski, and Konstantin Mischaikow.)
- Quantum Computing: Current Status and Future Prospects, organized by John Preskill, California Institute of Technology. (Scheduled speakers: John Preskill, Michael Freedman, John Martinis, Scott Aaronson, and Charles Marcus.)
- Excursions into the Mathematics of Medical Imaging, organized by Jonathan Taylor, Stanford University. (Scheduled speakers: Jonathan Taylor, Michael Lustig, and Robert Adler.)
- Illuminating the Obesity Epidemic with Mathematics, organized by Carson Chow, National Institutes of Health. (Scheduled speakers: Carson Chow, Kevin Hall, and Boyd Swinburn.)

Among other symposia that will be of interest to the mathematical community include:

- Updating the International System of Units: The Foundation for Science and Technology
- Data to Knowledge to Action: Computational Science in a Global Knowledge Society
- Physical Sciences Approaches to Cancer: Growing Interdisciplinary Collaborations
- Human Rights: Quantitative Methods in the Age of Information and Communication
- Whole Earth Simulations for Decision-Making: Realistic Goal or Pipe Dream?

- Global Challenges to Peer Review of Scientific Publications
- Mismatched Resources: Underrepresented STEM Faculty in the Global Knowledge Society

The above symposia are only a few of the 175 AAAS program offerings in the physical, life, social, and biological sciences. For further information, including the schedule of talks, go to www.aaas.org/meetings. Section A acknowledges the generous contributions of the American Mathematical Society for travel support for speakers this year.

The AAAS Annual Meeting is the showcase of American science, and the AAAS seeks the active participation by mathematicians and mathematics educators. Looking ahead, the AAAS Program Committee is genuinely interested in offering symposia each year on topics in pure and applied mathematics. For example, in recent years there have been symposia on subjects such as the collective behavior of animals and people, origami, energy, and the changing nature of mathematical proof.

The 2013 meeting will be February 14-18, 2013, in Boston, and the Steering Committee for Section A seeks organizers and speakers who can present substantial new material in an accessible manner to a large scientific audience. All are invited to attend the Section A Committee business meeting in Vancouver on Friday, February 17, 2012, at 7:00 PM, where we will brainstorm ideas for symposia. In addition, I invite you to send me, and encourage your colleagues to send me, ideas for future AAAS annual meeting symposia.

The following are the members of the Steering Committee for Section A from February 2011 to February 2012:

Chair: John H. Ewing (Math For America)

Chair-Elect: Jill Mesirov (Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard)

Retiring Chair: Kenneth Millett (University of California, Santa Barbara)

Secretary: Edward Aboufadel (Grand Valley State University)

Members at Large:

Warren Page (City University of New York)

Tony Chan (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology)

Mary Ellen Bock (Purdue University)

Joceline Lega (University of Arizona)

—Edward Aboufadel, Secretary of Section A of the AAAS
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