Community Updates

Trjitzinsky Awards

The AMS has made awards to eight undergraduate students through the Waldemar J. Trjitzinsky Memorial Fund. The fund is made possible by a bequest from the estate of Waldemar J., Barbara G., and Juliette Trjitzinsky. The will of Barbara Trjitzinsky stipulates that the income from the bequest should be used to establish a fund in honor of the memory of her husband to assist needy students in mathematics.

For the 2018 awards, the AMS chose seven geographically distributed schools to receive one-time awards of US$3,000 each. The mathematics departments at those schools then chose students to receive the funds to assist them in pursuit of careers in mathematics. The schools are selected in a random drawing from the pool of AMS institutional members.

Waldemar J. Trjitzinsky was born in Russia in 1901 and received his doctorate from the University of California Berkeley in 1926. He taught at a number of institutions before taking a position at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where he remained for the rest of his professional life. He showed particular concern for students of mathematics and in some cases made personal efforts to ensure that financial considerations would not hinder their studies. Trjitzinsky was the author of about sixty mathematics papers, primarily on quasi-analytic functions and partial differential equations. A member of the AMS for forty-six years, he died in 1973.

Following are the names of the selected schools for 2018, the names of the students receiving the awards, and brief biographical sketches of the students.

Trinity College: Coawardees are AASHWIN BASNET and DANIEL MELESSE. Aashwin Basnet, born in a small village in Kathmandu, Nepal, is a senior at Trinity College with a double major in mathematics and theoretical physics and a minor in religious studies. His love of mathematics has been especially inspired by calculus, linear algebra, and the applicability of mathematics to quantum mechanics. Following a year of study at the University of Edinburgh, Aashwin is now working on a project to make a handheld, efficient, and inexpensive coincidence counting module (CCM) device to be used for experiments such as quantum entanglement and radioactive decay. In his senior year, he will be serving a third term as a calculus teaching assistant while studying Lie algebras and PDEs. He will also be applying to graduate programs with an aim to pursue a doctoral degree in theoretical particle physics. Aashwin is one of Trinity's leading citizens with his constantly cheerful presence as a regular TA and is a role model for STEM double majors.

Daniel Melesse, from Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, is a member of the class of 2020. He is double majoring in mathematics and electrical engineering and minoring in models and data. In his freshman year, Daniel conducted research in the math department on synchronization in nonlinear harmonic oscillators. Since then, he has been working on a research project titled "Data Driven Approach for Automatic Gaze Tracking" in Trinity's robotics lab. This collaborative project involves the use of advanced mathematics to understand and apply different machine-learning algorithms and has resulted in the acceptance of a research paper at the Fourteenth IEEE International Conference in Signal Processing in China. Outside of academics, Daniel is a tutor at the Aetna Quantitative Center at Trinity on topics ranging from college algebra to differential equations. He is a Deans' Scholar for the class of 2020, which recognizes first-year students with the twenty-five highest GPAs at the end of the first year, and he was awarded a Phi Gamma Delta Prize in Mathematics for First-Year Students. His future plans include graduate school to pursue a PhD in signal processing/machine learning.

University of Kentucky: CLAIRE BARRERA grew up in the suburbs of Chicago, where she lived with her parents and older brother. In high school she was a member of the Cares Club, where the focus was on helping underprivileged children in the community by providing materials to aid in their academic success. After high school Claire elected to attend the University of Kentucky to pursue a bachelor of science degree in mathematics. She chose mathematics because she enjoys problem solving and it was always a subject she excelled in. In addition, she is a member of the Center for Academic Resource and Enrichment Services (CARES) program, where they help to provide academic support to students who are underrepresented at the University of Kentucky. She began tutoring many friends in a variety of math classes and, given the good results of her tutoring, she decided to work on a regular basis as an undergraduate assistant in the Mathskeller, the learning

center maintained by the Department of Mathematics at Kentucky. Claire is also minoring in economics and is interested in combining her two passions by pursuing a career in actuarial science or in the business/finance field.

Hobart and William Smith Colleges: HADLEY DEBRINE is a double mathematics and art major in the class of 2020 at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. She has a deep appreciation for mathematics and loves applying mathematical concepts to all aspects of her life, such as in her art classes. Although Hadley has been regularly challenged by nonacademic obstacles that can distract from scholarly activities, she has remained dedicated to exploring mathematics. Her professors have been impressed with her ability to understand the subtleties of proof and believe she has a knack for unpacking abstract ideas.

California State University, Los Angeles: LUIS RUIZ earned his GED at the age of twenty after dropping out of the South Los Angeles school system in ninth grade. Shortly after, he enrolled in a local community college, where he began his mathematical journey with an arithmetic class. His instructor saw something special in Luis and encouraged him to pursue a degree in mathematics. No one he knew had ever attended college, let alone graduated. He felt he was wasting his time going to school. That view quickly changed as he continued through the community college, earning the Walter O'Connell Endowment in 2016 and being selected by the National Science Foundation as a STEM Scholar. He was recruited to help student retention at the college's math tutoring center and was hired two consecutive years as a supplemental instruction mentor (SI) for the math department. Currently, Luis is a senior at California State University, Los Angeles, pursuing a bachelor of science in mathematics. He works as a high school math tutor. Luis plans to pursue a PhD in pure mathematics. His dream is to become a mathematics professor and instill his passion for mathematics in others.

University of Dayton: MARY GHILONI is a junior who is pursuing degrees in mathematics and in adolescent to young adult education at the University of Dayton. She is a member of the Ohio Zeta chapter of Pi Mu Epsilon and the secretary of the Math Club. In the summer of 2018, she received a Dean's Summer Research Scholarship. She researched the curricula of Finland, Singapore, and the United States and looked in depth into how these countries develop the concepts of addition and subtraction through their textbooks. Mary is passionate about both education and mathematics and hopes to become not only a teacher but also a mentor to her students.

Western Washington University: STACY STONES is a junior math major who is also interested in computer science and has completed a minor in French. She has been fascinated with mathematics all her life and enjoys solving challenging problems. A first-generation college student who worked for a few years prior to starting college, Stacy at first found it difficult to navigate college and to understand what was necessary for success. She feels that hard work, genuine interest, and the support of faculty and classmates are all essential to succeed. She began her mathematical studies at Western Washington with precalculus, was interviewed and selected for the honors calculus track the following year, and has continued to grow in her upper-division coursework. While she does not know exactly what she would like to do after graduation, she is excited about exploring career opportunities and is considering graduate study in the field. No matter where life takes her, she knows that math will be an important part of it.

South Dakota State University: YIRONG WANG was born and raised in Liaoning, China, and moved to the United States when she was seventeen. Throughout high school, she worked hard on studying English and discovered her strong interest in mathematics. She graduated from Brookings High School in South Dakota with GPA of 4.0 in 2017 and decided to study mathematics at South Dakota State University. The study of math is important to Yirong because she feels mathematicians have an opportunity to make a lasting contribution to society by helping to solve problems in many different fields, such as medicine, the economy, health systems, biology, and finance, among others. Her goal is to become a data scientist. Yirong worked at the Bioinformatics and Mathematical Biosciences Lab of South Dakota State University this past summer. This lab uses efficient data mining and modeling skills to solve problems and develop bioinformatics tools. She feels she learned a lot from this experience. Yirong is grateful to be a recipient of the Waldemar J. Trjitzinsky Scholarship, as it will help her to support her college life and to pursue her academic goals.

—AMS Trjitzinsky Fund announcement

NEWS

Erdős Memorial Lecture

The Erdős Memorial Lecture is an annual invited address named for the prolific mathematician Paul Erdős (1913–1996). The lectures are supported by a fund created by Andrew Beal, a Dallas banker and mathematics enthusiast. The Beal Prize Fund is being held by the AMS until it is awarded for a correct solution to the Beal Conjecture (see `www.math.unt.edu/~mauldin/beal.html`). At Mr. Beal's request, the interest from the fund is used to support the Erdős Memorial Lecture.

LAUREN K. WILLIAMS of the University of California Berkeley will present the 2019 Erdős Memorial Lecture during the Fall 2019 Central Sectional Meeting at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 14–15, 2019. See `https://www.ams.org/meetings/lectures/meet-erdos-lect`.

—AMS announcement

From the AMS Public Awareness Office

AMS Blogs, written by mathematicians, cover a range of topics of interest to mathematicians at all stages of their careers. Recent posts include "Math Games That Make You Think," "Good News! Great Reports Now Available to All!" (on the release of Congressional Research Service reports), "Requesting Letters of Recommendation," "Converging on a Solution: A Playwright's Path," "Illuminating Skills Learned from Teaching," "#thestruggleisREAL: Reflection in a Real Analysis Class," and "Giving Bad Colloquia." Browse the collection of AMS Blogs at `https://blogs.ams.org`, share feedback in the comments, and subscribe to receive email notifications of new posts.

—Annette Emerson and Mike Breen
AMS Public Awareness Officers
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Introducing the Next Generation Fund

The Next Generation Fund is a new endowment at the AMS that exclusively supports programs for doctoral and postdoctoral scholars. It will assist rising mathematicians each year at modest but impactful levels, with funding for travel grants, collaboration support, mentoring, and more!

To learn more or to make a gift, go to `www.ams.org/giving`.

—AMS Development Department