Inside the AMS

AMS Announces Congressional Fellow

The American Mathematical Society (AMS) is pleased to announce that KATHERINE CROWLEY of Washington and Lee University has been chosen as the AMS Congressional Fellow for 2009–10.

The AMS will sponsor Crowley's fellowship through the Congressional Fellowship Program administered by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). The fellowship is designed to provide a unique public policy learning experience, to demonstrate the value of science-government interaction, and to bring a technical background and external perspective to the decision-making process in Congress.

Katherine Crowley

Fellows spend a year on the staff of a member of Congress or a congressional committee, working as a special legislative assistant in legislative and policy areas requiring scientific and technical input. The fellowship program includes an orientation on congressional and executive branch operations and a year-long seminar series on issues involving science, technology, and public policy.

Katherine Crowley was chosen from among several very competitive applicants. She earned her Ph.D. in mathematics from Rice University after completing her thesis, titled *Discrete Morse Theory and the Geometry of Nonpositively Curved Simplicial Complexes.*

For more information on the AAAS Congressional Fellowship Program, visit the website `http://www.fellowships.aaas.org`.

—AMS Washington Office

AMS Announces Mass Media Fellowship Award

The American Mathematical Society (AMS) is pleased to announce that BALDUR HEDINSSON has been awarded its 2009 Mass Media Fellowship. Hedinsson is a Ph.D. student in mathematics at Boston University. He will be working at the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* for ten weeks over the summer under the sponsorship of the AMS.

The Mass Media Fellowship program is organized by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and is intended to strengthen the connections between science and the media, to improve public understanding of science, and to sharpen the ability of the fellows to communicate complex scientific issues to nonspecialists. The program is available to college or university students (in their senior years or on any graduate or postgraduate level) in the natural, physical, health, engineering, computer, or social sciences or mathematics with outstanding written and oral communication skills and a strong interest in learning about the media.

Baldur Hedinsson

It is a highly competitive program, and the AMS wishes to congratulate Baldur Hedinsson on his accomplishment.

The program is in its thirty-fifth year and has supported more than five hundred fellows.

—AMS Washington Office

AMS Testifies Before House Appropriations Subcommittee

American Mathematical Society Past President James Glimm testified on April 2, 2009, before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies. The testimony was part of a joint statement by the American Mathematical Society, the American Chemical Society, the American Physical Society, and the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology urging a federal investment of $7 billion for the National Science Foundation (NSF) for fiscal year 2010.

Glimm emphasized that this level of support "would allow the NSF to continue innovative and transformational scientific research

James Glimm that fuels the American economy,

upholds national security, maintains our global competitiveness, and improves health and quality of life for millions of Americans." The full text of the testimony can be read at `http://www.ams.org/government/testimony-approp-april2009.pdf`.

—AMS Washington Office

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, now US$100,000, is being held by the AMS until it is awarded for a correct solution to the Beal Conjecture (see `http://www.math.unt.edu/~mauldin/beal.html`). At Beal's request, the interest from the fund is used to support the Erdős Memorial Lecture.

The Erdős Memorial Lecturer for 2009 was Jeffrey Lagarias of the University of Michigan. He delivered a lecture titled "From Apollonian Circle Packings to Fibonacci Numbers" at the Spring Central Section Meeting at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in March 2009. In 2008 the Erdős Memorial Lecturer was William Timothy Gowers of the University of Cambridge, who spoke on "Decomposing Bounded Functions" at the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences, New York University, during the Spring Northeast Section Meeting in March 2008.

—AMS announcement

AMS Sponsors Exhibit on Mathematical Modeling

David Hiebeler of the University of Maine represented the AMS at the fifteenth annual Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) Exhibition on Capitol Hill held March 24, 2009. Hiebeler's research, funded by the National Science Foundation, was presented to members of Congress, congressional staff, administration representatives, and members of the scientific community in an exhibit titled "Modeling Outbreaks in Agricultural Systems, Human Communities and Computer Networks".

Hiebeler's exhibit used information and computer simulations to describe his work in three different areas: (1) determining the best strategy for applying pesticides or other measures to control invasive insect species in Maine's agriculture while using fewer chemicals; (2) using epidemiological models to explore the implications of clustering within certain socioeconomic groups of people who choose not to be vaccinated or to have their children vaccinated against infectious diseases; and (3) modeling the effectiveness of new biological dispersal strategies in the spread of computer viruses and "worms" by malicious software and also exploring methods for helping to control such outbreaks.

David Hiebeler with Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12).

The annual CNSF exhibition highlights research made possible through funding by the National Science Foundation. The 2009 exhibition included thirty-four exhibit booths displaying a wide range of scientific research and education projects. For more information, see `http://www.ams.org/government/cnsfex09.html`.

—Anita Benjamin, AMS Washington Office

AMS Holds Workshop for Department Chairs

The AMS hosted its annual one-day workshop for mathematical sciences department chairs at the 2009 Joint Mathematics Meetings in Washington, D.C. This session is organized in a workshop format so as to stimulate discussion among attendees. The workshop focused on mentoring faculty through the professional life cycle; on the mission of the mathematics department within the context of the institution's mission; on positioning the mathematics department for the future in an environment of budget cuts; and on creating a productive, positive collegial environment.

Workshop leaders included Guillermo Ferreyra, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Louisiana State University; Lawrence Gray, former head and director of undergraduate studies at the School of Mathematics, University of Minnesota; and Stephen Robinson, chair, Department of Mathematics, Wake Forest University.

The Department Chairs Workshop is an annual event hosted by the AMS prior to the start of the Joint Meetings. Past workshop sessions have focused on a range of issues facing departments today, including personnel issues (staff and faculty); long-range planning; hiring, promotion, and tenure; budget management; assessments; outreach; stewardship; junior faculty development; communication; departmental leadership; and undergraduate and graduate education.

If you are interested in attending a future workshop, please look for registration information sent out in advance of the Joint Meetings or contact the AMS Washington Office at `amsdc@ams.org`.

—Anita Benjamin, AMS Washington Office

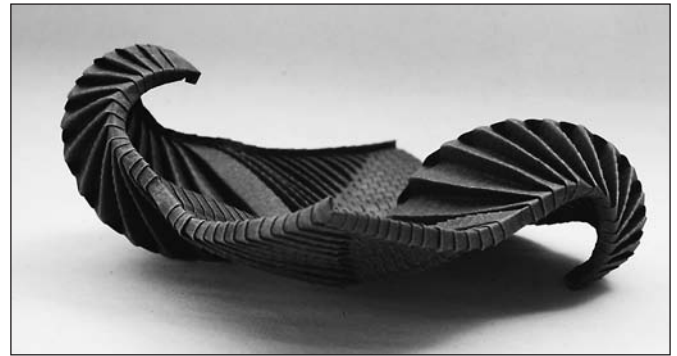# From the AMS Public Awareness Office

"Wave (32)", by Goran Konjevod, 2006.

• **AMS Graduate Student Blog**. The AMS Graduate Student Blog is a new blog by and for math graduate students, managed by Frank Morgan, AMS vice-president and professor of mathematics at Williams College. "Graduate students are the future of the AMS, and they have a lot to talk about," says Morgan. The Graduate Student Editorial Board members are Asher Auel, Adam Boocher, Diana Davis, Daniel Erman, Fernando Galaz, Brian Katz, Alex Levin, Kathryn Lindsey, Andrew Obus, David Shea Vela-Vick, Clay Shonkwiler, Annalies Z. Vuong, and Tom Wright, and Morgan hopes that more grad students from around the country will be interested in joining the board. The blog entries to date concern organizing a reading seminar, how to give a good mathematics talk, advice for beginning teaching assistants, navigating seminars, and finding an advisor—topics of great importance to graduate students, who are all are invited to join the community by posting comments, questions and advice on the blog. The American Mathematical Society encourages all graduate students in the mathematical sciences to visit and use the AMS Graduate Student Blog, hosted by Williams College, at `http://mathgradblog.williams.edu/`.

• **Math in the Media**. Recent media coverage of mathematics and mathematicians includes the winner of the 2009 Intel Science Talent Search competition (Eric Larson of Eugene, Oregon "for his classification of new fusion categories, a type of algebraic structure with applications in string theory and quantum computation"); a profile of Ken Golden ("Cold Equations," by Dana Mackenzie, *Science*, April 3); the 2009 Abel Prize awarded to Mikhail Gromov; a series of articles on mathematics by Arvind Gupta (MI-TACS) published in the *Vancouver Sun*. View the most recent issue of Math in the Media and explore the archive of "Tony Phillips' Take" and Math Digest summaries at `http://www.ams.org/mathmedia/`.

• *2009 Mathematical Art Exhibition* **album on Mathematical Imagery**. The Mathematical Art Exhibition held at the 2009 Joint Mathematics Meetings in Washington, DC, included 49 works in various media by 36 artists. Images of these works—which can be sent as e-postcards—are now posted as an album on Mathematical Imagery. Robert Fathauer was the curator of the exhibition, and the exhibition was juried by Fathauer, Anne Burns, Nat Friedman, and Reza Sarhangi. The album includes winners of the inaugural Mathematical Art Exhibition Prizes: first prize to Goran Konjevod, for his origami work, "Wave (32)", 2006 (pictured here); second prize to Carlo Séquin, for his

sculpture, "Figure-8 Knot", 2007; and third prize to Robert Fathauer, for "Twice Iterated Knot No. 1", 2008. The prize "for aesthetically pleasing works that combine mathematics and art" was established in 2008 through an endowment provided to the AMS by an anonymous donor who wishes to acknowledge those whose works demonstrate the beauty and elegance of mathematics expressed in a visual art form. See `http://www.ams.org/mathimagery/thumbnails.php?album=22`.

—Annette Emerson and Mike Breen
AMS Public Awareness Officers
`paoffice@ams.org`

Deaths of AMS Members

VLADO CIGIC, professor, Strojarski Fakultet, Bosnia-Herzegovina, died on November 22, 2008. Born on August 21, 1946, he was a member of the Society for 7 years.

KARL WALTER GRUENBERG, professor, Queen Mary University of London, died on October 10, 2007. Born on June 3, 1928, he was a member of the Society for 50 years.

JOHN R. KUCHER, from Quincy, MA, died on July 28, 2008. Born on September 28, 1946, he was a member of the Society for one year.

JACK LORELL, professor, Caltech, died on March 13, 2008. Born on October 7, 1916, he was a member of the Society for 68 years.

CHARLES E. RICKART, from North Branford, CT, died on April 17, 2002. Born on June 28, 1913, he was a member of the Society for 63 years.

ANDREW J. TERZUOLI, from Brooklyn, NY, died on January 23, 2008. Born on October 5, 1914, he was a member of the Society for 60 years.

EUGENE R. TOMER, from San Francisco, CA, died on July 2, 2007. Born on June 15, 1932, he was a member of the Society for 47 years.

BENNIE B. WILLIAMS, University of Texas at Arlington, died on September 9, 2007. Born on January 16, 1922, he was a member of the Society for 40 years.

RHODA WOOD, from Pasadena, CA, died on June 22, 2006. Born on July 2, 1912, she was a member of the Society for 67 years.