NEW MSU FOUNDATION FUND
Kenneth J. Tiahrt Fund

A special thank you to all who were involved in recognizing the contributions and talents of Kenneth J. Tiahrt (1935–2016) through the creation of the Kenneth J. Tiahrt Fund, established through the MSU Alumni Foundation. Professor Tiahrt joined the Department of Mathematics (now the Department of Mathematical Sciences) in 1967. For the next 27 years until he retired in 1994, Ken was a dedicated mentor and leader in the department as it expanded from its tradition of exceptional undergraduate and graduate teaching and research through training through the PhD level, fundamental and applied research, innovative education and professional service. By the time Ken retired, the department was widely recognized in all those areas. Especially during his 16 years as the head of the department (1977–1993), Ken's energetic and imaginative guidance was well-suited to MSU as it successfully transitioned from an undergraduate college to a dynamic research institution.

KOPRIVA OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWSHIP

Congratulations to Chris Barbour, a doctoral student in our Statistics program, for winning a Kopriva Outstanding Graduate Student Fellowship for 2017–2018. Each year, through MSU’s College of Letters and Science, the Kopriva fund makes a fellowship award of up to $5000 to two outstanding graduate students. The award is intended to enhance the student’s research, including funding for travel to meetings or for instruction, books, supplies and special research services. Chris’s research consists of understanding current methodology used in the study of proteins in biological systems, with an emphasis on accounting for various forms of measurement error in measured proteins. Chris is working with his advisors, Dr. Mark Greenwood and Dr. Riikhana Belokova of the National Institutes of Health, on problems related to biological processes present in Multiple Sclerosis patients.

MATH THE FOCUS OF PROVOST’S DISTINGUISHED LECTURE

The head of the Department of Mathematical Sciences, Beth Burroughs, Ph.D., delivered an address as part of MSU’s Provost’s Distinguished Lecturer Series this past January. Her talk, “Transcendence and Wisdom: Perspectives on Mathematics and the Preparation of Teachers,” put research in mathematics teacher preparation and collaboration between the university and public school teachers in the spotlight.

PROMOTIONS

Mark Greenwood and Jennifer Luebeck were recently promoted to the rank of Professor. They were recognized at the University Promotion and Tenure Ceremony in May. Congratulations!

RETIRING FACULTY

We have recently extended well-wishes to our retiring professors, Steve Cherry, PhD, who retired this spring, and Jim Robison-Cox, PhD, who retired in 2016. Both Steve and Jim influenced and encouraged so many of our students with their statistical wisdom.

NCTM’S RESEARCH TO PRACTICE AWARDS

In April, mathematics education faculty members Jennifer Luebeck and Megan Wickstrom each won NCTM’s Linking Research and Practice Outstanding Publica tion Award. Only three awards are given each year, one each for works at the elemen tary, middle and high school levels. The award recognizes publications that integrate research and practice in a way that highlights how teachers can use the results of that research in their classrooms. Jennie’s award is for work with a graduate of our M.S. program, Lynette Grypp, for their paper in The Mathematics Teacher, “Rotating Solids and Flipping Instruction.” Megan’s award is for her collaborative work in a first grade classroom examining students’ understanding of measurement.

Congratulations to all the recipients of these awards for their important contributions to the field of mathematics education.

New faculty in the department

Ryan Grady, with a PhD from the University of Notre Dame, joins the mathematics research group after stints at Boston University and the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics. His research program is (broadly) to study the geometry and topology of manifolds through techniques of quantum field theory (QFT) in a mathematically rigorous setting. In addition, Grady studies some fundamental connections between QFT, derived geometry and higher Lie theory.

Stacey Hancock has returned to her native Montana; she earned her Master’s from MSU followed by her PhD in Statistics from Colorado State University in 2008. Hancock’s research interests include statistics education, time series analysis and environmental statistics. Her primary research interest lies in statistics education. Currently, Stacey is exploring how students use metaphors and metonymies when learning statistical concepts related to sampling distributions and informal statistical inference. Additional research topics include time series analysis, specifically, change-point detection and statistical applications in ecology.

Andrew Hoegh also joins the statistics research group. He completed his PhD at Virginia Tech. Hoegh’s research includes Bayesian Statistics, Statistical Ecology, Spatiotemporal Modeling, Computational Statistics, Sports Analytics and Applied Environmental and Ecological Studies.

Jing Qin received her PhD in Applied Mathematics from Case Western Reserve University in 2013. She comes to MSU after a visiting professorship at UCLA. Her research interests include variational image processing and analysis and its applications, compressive sensing-based image reconstruction, and numerical optimization and applied partial differential equations.

Dominique Zosso earned his doctorate from EPFL, Lausanne, Switzerland. His research interests are variational and PDE methods, and efficient algorithms to solve inverse problems in imaging, computer vision, and related machine learning applications. Zosso’s research explores the relationships between problems and methods in imaging on the one side, and data science and machine learning on the other side.
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