The Chair’s Corner
By Kevin Charlwood, PhD, Chair

The 2009 – 2010 academic year was a very good one for our department. Our number of declared majors continues to climb, from 32 in 2008 to 41 in 2009 to 50 in Fall 2010. Part of the reason for this surge in interest in mathematics (and quantitative disciplines in general) is due to the recent economic downturn and media attention. Many of the better-paying and more secure jobs often have a high degree of quantitative background required, such as the actuarial field or engineering. Among our new declared majors, about 40% are planning on actuarial science, another 40% are interested in secondary education, and the remaining 20% are going into pure mathematics. We are pleased that over 20 of our students received a total of over $22,000 from our departmental scholarships this past year.

As far as events within the department, our Math Day this past Nov. 2nd was a big success, with 18 local high schools represented for our competitive exam and a campus tour. Five of us on the faculty took six students to the Kappa Mu Epsilon regional convention last April 23 – 24. Three students gave presentations, and one, Misty Long, won a “top 3” prize out of ten total presentations to continue our long history of having at least one presenter from Washburn win an award for their work. Plans are already underway for the KME national convention April 14 – 16, 2011 at Harris Stowe State University, near St. Louis.

Back on October 22, our department hosted a special reception for former KME students and their guests. A special “thanks” is in order to Drs. Cook and LaLonde who did much of the legwork to help make this important event possible. Part of the evening was to celebrate the upcoming retirement of Dr. Al Riveland in May 2011, and all that he did for our KME chapter over much of the past 35 years. Attendance was outstanding, with about 70 graduates and faculty from our department to enjoy a nice evening as part of Homecoming weekend. We expect to host another event of this type again some day; announcements will come via postal mail, so please be sure to keep the Alumni Office apprised of your current address. In the meantime, we always enjoy hearing from our graduates to know how you’re doing – please keep in touch!

Spotlight on Seniors 2009-2010

Misty Long  (Fall 2009) graduated with a BA in Mathematics. She is currently working on her MS degree from K-State.

Ian Holtzmann  (Spring 2010) graduated with a BA in Mathematics with Specialization in Pure Math.

Celeste Rojero  (Spring 2010) graduated with a BA in Mathematics with Emphasis in Secondary Education.

William Ediger  (Fall 2010) graduated with a BA in Mathematics with Emphasis in Actuarial Science.

Jessica Luce  (Spring 2010) graduated with a BA in Mathematics with Emphasis in Secondary Education.

News from our Graduates
Some of these entries may be old, please feel free to let us know if something has changed and we will update your information.

Carolyn (Cole) Covington  (2006) graduated from Washburn University with a BA in Mathematics with an emphasis in Actuarial Science. She currently works at Generali USA in Kansas City, KS as an actuary.

Trudy (Killingsworth) Hess  (2002) graduated from Washburn University with a BA in Mathematics with emphasis in Secondary Education. She was hired immediately by Hayden High. Since she has left us, her new husband and herself have had 2 boys: William and Henry. Since 2002 Trudy has taught the whole spectrum of mathematics courses offered at Hayden. This year she teaches Algebra I and II and Geometry.
Stephanie Herbster (2007) graduated with a BA in Mathematics. Today she teaches at Silver Lake High School where she completed her student teaching experience.

Jeff Kingman (2005) graduated from Washburn with a BA in pure mathematics. He is currently teaching mathematics at the KS Juvenile School.

Tamela (Bolen) Lake (2008) was married July 11, 2009 to Jed Lake. She tells us “We bought a house in Topeka in October of 2009. We are expecting our first baby sometime the end of July. I am in my 3rd full year of teaching at Washburn Rural High School (where I student taught).”

Heather Lewis (2009) graduated from WU with BA in Mathematics with emphasis on Secondary Education. She currently teaches at Washburn Rural Middle School.

Richard Nelson (2008) graduated from Washburn University with a BA in pure mathematics. He then earned his MS in Mathematics at Emporia State University. Currently he is very happy at his job teaching mathematics at Highland Community College in Perry, KS.

Christina Potter (2009) Since graduation, Christine has been working as a mathematics teacher for USD 437 at Washburn Rural High School. She has taught Introduction to Algebra, Algebra 1, and Algebra 2. Last summer, she gave birth to baby-girl number 3, Raya Christine Potter. This Spring she received the Destiny Award from the Kansas Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development. In her free-time, she has also co-founded a locally-touring dance company, Band of Dancers, with whom she choreographs and performs.

Club Mathematica
By Dr. Sarah Cook

Club Mathematica, or Math Club, is off to a good start in 2010. For the third year in a row, the Morgan Mathletes intramural volleyball team represented Math Club with pride. This season they even won a game! Also, President Anna Lischke is busy organizing the purchase of Math Club T-shirts which we hope to have before the end of the fall semester. For our first meeting of the 2010 year, we viewed portions of the documentary Hard Problems. At the October meeting, Dr. Gaspar Porta gave a follow-up presentation by discussing some of our own “hard problems” that have been used in the campus-wide Think challenge. In Fall 2009, Kevin Pitts, Distribution Analyst for Payless ShoeSource, presented Math in Retail Strategy. Kevin is the son of Lecturer Evelyn Pitts and took several math courses from Washburn while attending Washburn Rural High School. Also in Fall 2009, Alumnus Richard Nelson presented Sums of Consecutive Integers and Dr. John Fresen from the University of Missouri discussed Graduate School and Job Opportunities in Statistics.

In Spring 2010, Dr. Porta showed us how to have Fun with Dice. Finally, in April 2010, then President Jessica Luse gave a presentation on Sudoku puzzles titled To Count or Not to Count.

Math Club is always looking for people to give presentations. If you are interested in giving some real-world insight to our students, please contact Sarah at sarah.cook@washburn.edu. We will be happy to schedule meetings around your schedule.

Club Mathematica (aka Math Club) continued the tradition of pizza, pop, and cookies for its monthly meetings. We had great attendance at the meetings and were thrilled to have six wonderful presentations throughout the year.

1st Reunion of the Kansas Delta Chapter of KME

This fall, the Mathematics Department hosted the first-ever reunion of the Kansas Delta Chapter of Kappa Mu Epsilon. KME members gathered with current and retired departmental faculty and staff to reminisce and reconnect. A total of seventy-six people attended the reunion, coming from as far away as Washington DC, Michigan, and Louisiana. You can see pictures of the reunion by joining our Facebook group, WU KME Reunion. At the reunion we recognized Dr. Allan Riveland for his many years of service to KME. Dr. Riveland was initiated into KME as a Washburn faculty member in 1973. For over 30 years Dr. Riveland served as either corresponding secretary or faculty sponsor of KME. He was also the National KME Treasurer for eight years. In 2007, he received the KME George Mach Distinguished Service Award, which is awarded to a single individual every other year. Over the years Dr. Riveland directed 14 papers presented at either regional or national KME conventions. All 14 papers won convention awards and eleven of the papers were published in the Pentagon. The department surprised Dr. Riveland with a collection of stories and memories about him obtained from Washburn KME members. These stories will be bound into a book and given to Dr. Riveland as a keepsake. If you have a story about Dr. Riveland to contribute, you can e-mail it to Dr. Sarah Cook at sarah.cook@washburn.edu by March 15, 2011. Thanks to everyone who attended the reunion. We hope to see all of you (and more!) at our next reunion in about five years.
Al Riveland Retires! Or Al’s Swan Song

Al Riveland came to WU from North Dakota with the Dakotan spirit of survival that keeps people working together to overcome a land of frigid temperatures with a wonderful sense of helping neighbors out and a sense of humor. Al is a natural, he is a caring and helpful person and he has a strong Dakotan work ethic. In fact, Al is a 7 am to 7 pm or whenever- he-is- finished teacher. Certain times of the day and night, students, staff, and faculty in West Morgan Hall can hear Al’s booming voice with his boisterous enthusiasm for sine curves, counting problems and all things mathematical permeating the air. In fact, Al is possibly the last of the generation of bellowing mathematics professors that made the Washburn’s Department of Mathematics and Statistics the friendliest, best (okay, I am biased), and noisest department on campus! Faculty and students alike are saddened by his retirement.

Al started teaching at Washburn University in Fall 1971. I believe Emmanuel Calys (e), and Larry Blumberg came about that time. Al served as associate chair, off-and-on, under four different chairs (Sherm, Stucker, Blumberg, and Charlwood.) For several years, he coordinated Math Day activities, and was involved in several Summer Eisenhower External Grants for high school teachers. He was Vice-President for Phi Kappa Phi for about 20 years.

Al is a very popular and admired teacher. He directed or co-directed 14 student papers presented at KME Conventions all over the US. Most of these papers were published in The Pentagon, the KME journal. He served as sponsor or
Al won at least three excellences in teaching and service awards. But, it is not just Al’s roles and awards mentioned above that make him the superb teacher and person that he is and what we will all miss him for. It is the hours and days and years he has spent with his students and peers helping to make them the best they can be and his dedication to making the Department of Mathematics & Statistics the best it can be! Adieu to our friend!

**WU Department of Mathematics & Statistics Actuarial Science Program**

The Department of Mathematics & Statistics currently has 15 students majoring in actuarial science. Of those, 6 are expected to graduate in May 2011. Several of these students are currently or have in the past worked in actuarial internships with local companies, and we continue to stress to them the importance of taking the actuarial professional exams while still in school. Currently, the pass rate for our students on Exam P (the first exam) is about 50%. While this may not sound that good, it actually is quite good when considered in relation to the national pass rate of 35%. Thanks to Dr. Hwa Chi Liang and Dr. Mike Mosier for all their efforts in keeping this program current and competitive!

**KME Annual Meeting**

The Delta Chapter of KME held its annual dinner meeting on March 1st, 2010 at Hunam’s Restaurant. The 2010 initiates were William Beaton, Markie Gallagher, Stephen Littleton, Joshua Thomason, and Megan Thompson. This year’s officers are:

President        Stephen Littleton
Vice President   Sean VanDyke
Sec / Treasurer  Anna Lischke

**Meeting of the Kansas Section of the Mathematical Association of America**

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Washburn University hosted the 2010 conference of the Kansas Section of the Mathematical Association of America on Friday and Saturday, March 26 and 27. 106 people attended from 14 colleges and universities from throughout Kansas, including 53 undergraduate and 6 graduate students. There were two fascinating talks by invited speaker Judy Walker of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, and 17 contributed talks. The 6th Annual Kansas Mathematics Competition was also part of the conference, and 8 Washburn students were among the participants. Everyone appeared to enjoy the conference!

**What’s Happening in the Department?**

WU Math faculty has been very busy over 2010. Here are a few of the activities some of our tenure-track faculty took part in this year.

*Kevin Charlwood*

- Attended the JMM in San Francisco, January 2010.
- Attended and helped host the KS MAA annual Sectional Meeting at Washburn, March 26 – 27, 2010.
- Planned and attended the KME regional convention trip to Central Missouri April 23 – 24, 2010.
- Served on the national MAA Actuarial Education Committee since 2007.
- Served as Coordinator for Washburn’s Faculty Development Program since 2008.
- Served as Past President of Washburn’s chapter of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society.

*Sarah Cook*

- Led workshop on “Game Show Mathematics” at Washburn’s Women in Science Day (with Jennifer Wagner and Hwa Chi Liang)
- Led workshops on "The Mathematics of Games" at Emporia State University’s Sonia Kovalevsky Day (with Janet Sharp)
- Piloted the use of the computer system ALeKS in MA 103 Basic Algebra and MA 104 Intermediate Algebra
- Presented "Developmental Algebra in a Lecture/Lab Environment" at the Sectional MAA Meeting held at Washburn University
- Attended the Regional Kappa Mu Epsilon convention
- Co-organizer of the Kansas Delta Kappa Mu Epsilon Reunion (with Donna LaLonde)
Mike Mosier

- Presented a full day tutorial workshop in conjunction with the Drug Information Association (DIA) annual meeting, in Washington, DC, on June 13, 2010. The title of the workshop was “Clinical Statistics for Non-Statisticians.” The DIA is a global professional society for the pharmaceutical industry.
- Another paper, with Jeffrey Voigt, was submitted for publication in July, 2010, and is currently under revision after comments from the journal editor. The paper is, “An all polyethylene tibial components versus a metal backed - polyethylene tibial component used in total knee arthroplasty - comparison of durability, function, and adverse events: A meta-analysis of 12 randomized controlled trials involving 1,798 primary total knee implants”, which was submitted to *The Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*.
- Was promoted to Full Professor (2009-2010.)

Pat Mower

- Served as Editor for math dept's annual news letter, Slice of Pi. I will be in the next photo!
- Received FIRE grant to develop and teach an online version of MA110 Exploring Mathematics.
- Is completing the writing a third book for her Math Out Loud series, This one is titled PreAlgebra Out Loud. It is due out in 2011.
- Helped develop a new course MA 112 to take the place of our current liberal art mathematics course MA110 Exploring Mathematics. MA112 is tentatively titled Essential Mathematics and focuses on quantitative literacy with respect to the current issues in today’s world.

Gaspar Porta

- I spent two months on a Sweet Sabbatical in Buenos Aires, Argentina working with colleagues there at thePaseo Colon Sede (part of the Engineering School) of the Universidad de Buenos Aires.
- I have submitted two papers to journals for review as a result of this collaboration, and a third has already been accepted as a refereed presentation at an international conference in Tenerife, Spain. [Gaspar has recently come back from this conference with wonderful tales of his adventure in Spain!]
- For the second year I have been putting out the iTHINK challenge questions which we have been promoting through the school newspaper as well as sending the questions out to local high schools that participated in Math Day.
- Kat and my son, Luce, is now 1, so I even get to do arithmetic at home now!

Hwa Chi Liang

- Earned tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor.

*Slice of Pi* is an annual publication of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Washburn University, Topeka, KS, 66621
**WU Department of Mathematics & Statistics**

**Sheet for Alumni Information and/or Recommendation of Potential Student**

Please print or type.

Name: ___________________________  Year of Graduation from WU: ________

Address: ___________________________  Phone: ( ) ______________________

_____________________________  Cell: ( ) ______________________

Employer or Business (address):

______________________________________________  Phone: ( ) ______________________

______________________________________________  E-mail: ( ) ______________________

______________________________________________  Web URL: _________________________

News: (Tell us about yourself; recommend a potential student – name, address, something about her or him; other news of interest or update your last entry.)

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