Lamzouri awarded CMS Doctoral Prize

Youness Lamzouri, a J.L. Doob Research Assistant Professor in the department, is the recipient of the 2011 Doctoral Prize given by the Canadian Mathematical Society (CMS). The prize recognizes outstanding performance by a doctoral student. Lamzouri received his award and presented a plenary lecture at the 2011 CMS Winter Meeting in Toronto.

Lamzouri, whose research is in the area of analytic number theory, received his Ph.D. in 2009 from the University of Montreal under the direction of Andrew Granville. After receiving his Ph.D., Lamzouri received an NSERC postdoctoral fellowship, and participated in the 2009–2010 special year on Analytic Number Theory at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. He was the recipient of the 2004 Jean-Maranda Award for the best finishing undergraduate student in mathematics from the University of Montreal, and the 2006 Carl Herz Prize from the Institut des Sciences Mathématiques.

McNeilly receives ICTM Post-Secondary Mathematics Teaching Award

Jennifer McNeilly has been awarded the Illinois Council of Teachers of Mathematics 2011 Post-Secondary Mathematics Teaching Award for outstanding teaching in her position here at the University of Illinois. Jennifer was also recognized for her leadership in the Merit Program in Mathematics and the impact she has had on training teaching assistants to deliver student-centered instruction.

Since earning both her Bachelors and Masters in the Teaching of Mathematics from the University of Illinois, Jennifer has been an instructor in the department, teaching large lecture introductory courses such as College Algebra and Preparation for Calculus. She is also a co-PI on a 5-year, $2 million NSF grant to fund an expansion of the successful Merit Program, a support initiative for underrepresented STEM students. Learn more about the Merit Program at www.merit.illinois.edu.

Woods receives Wolfram's Innovator Award

Debra Woods, Director of NetMath in the Department of Mathematics, was awarded an Innovator Award for her innovations in using *Mathematica* in online teaching at the 2011 Wolfram Technology Conference held in October. The first online courses at University of Illinois were taught by the NetMath program in the Department of Mathematics in the early 1990's. The program makes use of Jerry Uhl's award-winning "Calculus&*Mathematica*" courseware. NetMath also employs mentors to deliver high-quality, undergraduate mathematics courses in a flexible and accessible online environment and to provide excellent personal attention to each student enrolled. Over the years, NetMath has taught thousands of students from all over the world. Dr. Wolfram commented on the array of outstanding students Woods had introduced to him over the years and the number of them who now have careers at Wolfram research. Woods has been with the department since 1994.

NSF funds research network

The National Science Foundation has announced the funding of a new $5M Research Network in Mathematical Sciences with central hubs located at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the University of Maryland and Stanford University.

The Network Director and Director of the Illinois hub is mathematics professor Steven Bradlow (University of Illinois). The Stanford University hub will be directed by mathematics professor Steven Kerckhoff (Stanford), and the University of Maryland hub will be directed by mathematics professors William Goldman (University of Maryland), Richard Wentworth (University of Maryland), and Anna Wienhard (Princeton University).

Called GEAR (GEometric structures And Representation varieties), the network will link together researchers at 46 nodes in the U.S., Canada and Europe. The research focus of the network is the interplay between the topology of low-dimensional spaces and the geometric structures that can be built on them. This subject impinges on many areas of mathematics and mathematical physics. The GEAR network will facilitate collaborations across traditional mathematical boundaries and will open new possibilities for graduate student training.

The Network will fund short-term visits, exchanges, network retreats, border-crossing workshops, as well as focused and regional workshops. Approximately half of the resources are dedicated to training graduate students and postdocs. Graduate fellowships and a Summer Research Experiences program modeled on the Illinois REGS (Research Experiences for Graduate Students) program will enable young scientists to intern with a research group anywhere in the network. GEAR Junior Retreats will bring together groups of graduate students and postdocs. The resources will benefit mathematicians from under-represented groups in the mathematical sciences, as well as active researchers at institutions that lie outside the traditional established centers.

Next summer the U of I Department of Mathematics will host the first GEAR Network Retreat. This week-long meeting will bring together participants from all GEAR nodes to discuss current research and emerging areas of interactions between the diverse fields of mathematics encompassed by the network. The local organizers include Chris Leininger and Jayadev Athreya. The Retreat will be preceded by the first Junior Retreat, also at Illinois, for GEAR graduate students and postdocs.

More information about the network can be found at the GEAR website http://gear.math.illinois.edu/.