

NMMATYC NEWS

**New Mexico Mathematical Association of
Two-Year Colleges**

Spring 2020

Volume 33 Issue I

31st Annual NMMATYC Conference

NMMATYC and El Paso Community College has made the difficult decision to cancel the 31st Annual Conference scheduled for April 3-4, 2020 in El Paso, TX due to concerns around COVID-19, also known as coronavirus.

We will be working with those who have registered for the conference for refunds. Thank you for being a part of the NMMATYC organization and we look forward to seeing everyone at next year's conference in 2021.

We are asking registrants to continue with their annual membership. Also, members who had yet to register, can also renew their annual membership. These proceeds will help fund the scholarships we still plan on awarding for our hardworking students.

The 2020 scholarship winners that would've been honored at the conference are:

Michelle Jimenez Scholarship Winner

Wendy Puche Umbarita from New Mexico State University

Vicki Froehlich Scholarship Winner

Gage Zacharzuk from University of New Mexico – Valencia Campus

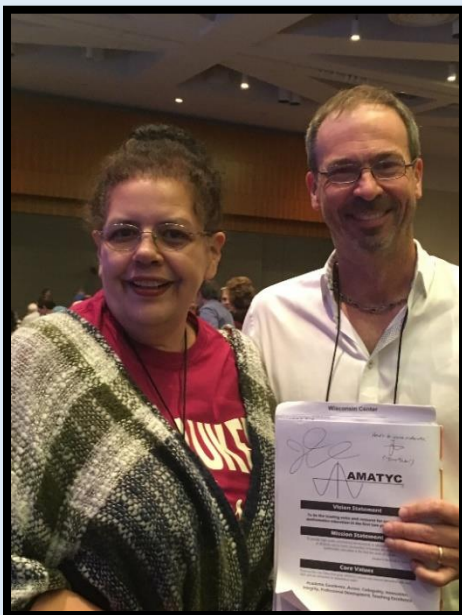
Message from the NMMATYC President

Dear NMMATYC members,

Namaste!

I had the pleasure of attending the 2019 AMATYC (American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges) conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Although famous for its breweries and cheese, Milwaukee is so much more! It's a lovely city with beautiful historic buildings and lighthouses as well as modern attractions such as the Harley-Davidson Museum that houses one of Elvis' motorcycles. Not to be missed is the Bronze Fonz on the Milwaukee Riverwalk which is a tribute to the Fonzie character from the 50s sitcom *Happy Days*.

The conference had a plethora of great presentations, many of them on co-requisite classes, which in my native state of Texas, are now mandatory courtesy of HB 2223. Many other states have implemented them, and it was interesting to note at the conference, that no matter the state, we all have the same concerns and issues that are part and parcel of any new educational initiative. I also attended a fabulous standing-room-only Fibonacci presentation and had the pleasure of meeting John Urschel, mathematician and retired professional football player for the NFL who related his journey from the NFL to MIT and a Ph.D.! A humble and unassuming man, his presentation was truly inspirational. I also met James Tanton, mathematician, math educator, and author who did a humorous presentation titled A Dozen Proofs that 1 Equals 2: A Misguided Review of Mathematics. I highly recommend his books *Without Words: Mathematical Puzzles to Confound and Delight* and its sequel *More Math without Words: Mathematical Puzzles to Confound and Delight*.



AMATYC affords its members with many opportunities to be involved in the form of several committees one of which is the hot topic of the year, developmental mathematics. The Equity Committee's goal is to "increase mathematics achievement for diverse learners." Please take a look at all the other opportunities to become involved: <https://amatyc.site-ym.com/page/AMATYCCcommittees#Equity> . I encourage everyone and especially adjuncts to seek funding from your colleges and attend the 46th Annual AMATYC Conference to be held in Spokane, Washington. I also encourage you to become a member of AMATYC's ANETs Adjunct Faculty Issues whose purpose is "to improve the status of adjunct faculty within two-year colleges, to disseminate and discuss information on issues that impact adjunct faculty..." I'm proud to be an adjunct faculty member and privileged to represent 800 adjuncts at my college as Vice-President of the Adjuncts on EPCC's Faculty Senate. I'm also an active ANET Adjunct Faculty Issues member. Please adjuncts and everyone, get involved with AMATYC and NMMATYC. Please register now!
<https://amatyc.site-ym.com/page/2020ConfHome>

As you may have surmised by now the NMMATYC conference has been cancelled. The scholarships will still be awarded, and refunds will be forthcoming. I was sad and disappointed, as Adrian Delgado and I, as well as a slew of my faithful adjunct friends, some of whom are not in the math discipline, worked very hard to put this conference together. Adrian, my dean who had just met with the president of EPCC, and Dr. Peeples, and I agreed to wait until after spring break to make a final decision. At the time, NMSU and EPCC were still operating with no travel restrictions. Then events unfolded quickly on all fronts and the conference was cancelled, in effect by this surreal pandemic.

I appreciate those of you who exhibited patience and thank you to Arturo for his help with membership, Sara for the great job she did with the scholarship applications, and Philip for assisting Adrian with the conference website. Thanks to Jeremy for the many hats he has worn during my tenure as president.

Stay safe

Pat Barrientos

NMMATYC President

Message from the AMATYC Southwest VP

Hello NMMATYC!

Did you know that AMATYC has a new community platform to help engage faculty in discussions about the teaching and learning of mathematics? It's called my.AMATYC (<https://my.amatyc.org/>) and we are encouraging faculty to jump online, create your profile, and join the various communities that are available to you. Note that a "community" is broadly defined and that AMATYC's traditional "committees" will now be labeled as communities within my.AMATYC. Why? Because we are a community after all! All portions of the IMPACT guide are also available on this community site. Lastly, we are looking for a dedicated and committed leader to help lead the my.AMATYC effort – someone who will provide the continuity and momentum to not only get this community site rolled out broadly across our membership and beyond, but also someone who can help sustain the platform for at least 3 years. If you are interested, please let me know and I can provide more details.



Finally, if you or your colleagues have never been a member of AMATYC and would like to join, please reach out to me at april.strom@cgc.edu. I can provide you with a first-time member discount code for 50% off a one-year membership. A great deal for all new AMATYC members!



Join the **AMATYC Southwest Regional Group** on Facebook!

April Ström
AMATYC Southwest Vice President
Chandler-Gilbert Community College, AZ
april.strom@cgc.edu

My First Experience at an AMATYC Conference

Submitted by

Andisheh Dadashi
Assistant Professor of Math & Stat
Mathematics, Engineering, & Computer Science Division
(MECS)
University of New Mexico – Valencia Campus

As a first-time attendee at the annual AMATYC (American Mathematical Association for Two-Year Colleges) conference, this year in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, I feel I have now attended the most elite conference I could attend so far. One of the things I noticed that elevated the quality of the conference was their use of a “Guidebook” app to help track sessions to attend. Among the many sessions offered, there were a couple of them which grabbed my attention and I am very glad I attended them.

The mindfulness for mathematical leadership was a good start for me to reduce the tension of the past couple of weeks and all the stress that I had gone through this past semester in teaching. Perhaps the best practice for us would be to be less entangled with the inner critic and increase our self-awareness to become a strong leader of our classrooms.

The other related workshop "*Effects of Growth Mindset and Metacognition Interventions in Calculus*" was very beneficial, especially when I recognized their workshop was mostly based on the studies done by the Center for Professional Development at Stanford University. Altogether, this conference and the lectures I am watching in Stanford University's MOOC, "*How to Learn Mathematics for Teachers and Parents*" help me to better understand the effect of a Growth Mindset. Hard work and/or proper attitude are big factors in our students' ability to learn Mathematics. While I was at this conference, I posted a screenshot of one of the slides on Slack (file sharing workspace) for my students which was liked by many of them.



Attitude

Math is accessible with hard work and/or proper attitude.

“Becoming confident in math requires a growth mindset and furthermore it requires patience and perseverance through struggle.”

“[Y]our brain grows when you make a mistake and, when you realize you made that mistake, so you know what to change and how to get it right in the future.”

Among the rest of the sessions and talks that I attended during this conference, there were a couple of them which were my most favorites and gave me many interesting ideas to enhance the quality of my math courses.

"The Doing Statistics with 'Cheesy' Goldfish" (by Professors Sterrett and Monterisi), "Ask Good Questions" (by Professor Rossman), and "Is it Magic? No, it is Mathematics!" (by Professor Krieger) introduced an enormous amount of math projects and practices that increase Statistical/Mathematical thinking. In these sessions, we had some hands-on Math and Stat activities to learn how to engage our students in such projects and activities. My plan is to implement these into my mathematics courses to reduce the students' anxiety over finishing their tasks rather than understanding them.

Overall this conference gave me a good view and expectation of my teaching to plan my lessons in order for my students to think deeply rather than memorizing.

For Spring 2020, I am reconstructing my Statistics courses in a way to increase my student's creativity and critical thinking. Some of the projects I am assigning them requires group activity, and the other projects are individual work. The group work gives my students a chance to hear other students' opinions and ideas about problem-solving. The individual work contains multiple tasks that require them to create a statistical question following step by step instructions and solving the question that they have created.

I believe this course reconstruction gave me a chance to analyze my students' professional development skills. And I hope to observe a successful result which mainly promotes students learning and achievement.

2019 Scholarship Winner: Gabriel Lopez

by Gabriel Lopez

2019 Michelle Jimenez Scholarship Winner



It has been almost a year now since I was fortunate enough to be selected to receive the Michelle Jimenez Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship has helped me in my college career in tremendous ways. With the aid of this scholarship money, I was able to take and pass Calculus II during the summer 2019 semester. I am happy to say that having that opportunity to take the summer class has helped me get ahead in my Civil Engineering courses at The University of New Mexico.

As of today, I am a second-semester sophomore, attending both The University of New Mexico-Valencia and Main Campus. I am taking my last prerequisite class while also taking Sophomore Civil Engineering courses at UNM-Main Campus. As job-wise goes, in October 2019, I was fortunate enough to retire as a Starbucks Barista and receive an internship as a Project Engineer with a general contractor corporation based in Albuquerque, NM called Jaynes Corporation. At my internship, I handle submittals, drawings, requests for information from the architects, meeting minutes and walkabouts to move the project forward and to stay on schedule.

My current project is a six-story hotel called Springhill Suites. I am gaining a tremendous amount of experience from the short time I have been here at Jaynes. I love every moment of it which helps motivate me to become an Engineer and finish school. Because of this one scholarship, it has opened the door to many opportunities for me and I hope that it does the same for the next recipients to come. I would like to thank the NMMATYC for the opportunity to help me achieve my goals in my college career of becoming a Civil Engineer with a focus on construction.

2019 Scholarship Winner: Tomasa Vasquez

by Tomasa Rebeca Vazquez

2019 Vicki Froehlich Memorial Scholarship Winner



My name is Tomasa Rebeca Vazquez. On April 12, 2019 I was honored to obtain the Vicki Froehlich Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship helped me pay for my last semester in order to achieve my Associate Degree on Elementary Education at Doña Anna Community College in Las Cruces, New Mexico. As a student that must pay tuition from her own pocket, winning this scholarship was a big help. It made my semester less stressful since I didn't have to worry about how I was going to pay for the semester.

Being able to have the opportunity to personally attend the conference and be honored with an award was a unique experience. I never had the opportunity to attend to a mathematical conference and being able to do so was an educational experience. I had the opportunity to be able to learn from great instructors and well-prepared individuals that cared for education and wanted to make a change in the classrooms. As a future math teacher, I will apply what I learned in this conference and won't forget this educational experience. I met a lot of great instructors that shared advice, personal experiences, and a lot of motivation on continuing and achieving my degree on Education.

I'm currently still pursuing my bachelor's degree in Elementary Education at New Mexico State University. I would also be getting a double major in Spanish Education and my endorsement on TESOL to become a bilingual teacher. Becoming a teacher is one of my biggest passions and goals that I have right now in my life.

I'm so grateful and honored to be able to achieve this scholarship. I'm particularly thankful for all the people that is behind this mathematical association that makes this happen. Thank you for choosing me and contributing with my education. I will always be grateful since my education is very important for me.

Best regards,

Tomasa Rebeca Vazquez

Tribute to NMMATYC

Submitted By:

Marilyn Mays, Ph.D.

Past SW Vice-President and AMATYC President



Thank you very much for the plaque honoring my contributions to the founding of NMMATYC. It is this organization that has contributed so much to my life. To see it come into being and grow and bring the community college mathematics community together has been one of the most rewarding and genuinely fun things of my life. I love the plaque with your clever logo on it.

Back in the 1980s, when I became Southwest Vice-President for AMATYC, one of my duties was to call—no, there was no email—one faculty member or math dean at each community college in the region. There was no state affiliate in New Mexico at that time. I needed to find out the names of all persons teaching math at each college so AMATYC could contact them. About the 2nd or 3rd time I reached someone at a college, and they said, “I am the only math teacher here,” I knew they needed the support that a mathematics organization such as AMATYC could provide.

I called an organizational meeting in Albuquerque and a group of extraordinary people at the meeting took it from there. That list of people is on your web page. Two people took the reins, Max Cisneros and Sharon MacKendrick. It took a lot of blood, sweat, and tears (many of the tears were tears of laughter), but you created a fine support system for the mathematics community of New Mexico. And one that looked like the state’s population. I have not visited any of the affiliates in several years, but I know at one time NMMATYC was the most vibrant, active and fun affiliate I had gone to.

Best wishes in your future endeavors. May they bring you satisfaction and your students’ success.

NMMATYC Executive Board Nominees

Nominee for President-Elect

Pat Barrientos

El Paso Community College

Hi NMMATYC members! My name is Pat Barrientos from El Paso Community College. I would like to run for President-Elect of NMMATYC. It was an honor and privilege to have served as your president for the past two years. I feel I was successful in accomplishing many of my goals as president of NMMATYC. Our website has a great new look with improved features, our founding members and others who have contributed to the association were honored, our newsletter was the best I've ever seen, the conference link was up and running in record time, and I secured the internationally acclaimed and recognized Dr. Ken Ono to speak at our 2020 conference. I also endeavored to complete NMMATYC's history on our website and add the role of historian to the board. I would like to accomplish the rest of my goals for our organization as president which include increasing NMMATYC and AMATYC membership and acquiring funds to increase scholarships and secure internationally known speakers.



I am a math instructor at El Paso Community College, Transmountain campus in El Paso, Texas. I have worked at EPCC for 16 years. I have been a NMMATYC member since 2008 and have served on the board for the past four years. I am an AMATYC delegate and an active member of AMATYC's ANET's Adjunct Faculty Issues. As part of this group, I contributed to the AMATYC position statement titled "Best Practices in Employment of Adjunct Faculty." I am the newly elected Vice-President of Adjuncts on EPCC's Faculty Senate. I have been a member of EPCC's Hispanic Heritage Committee from 2016 to the present. I organized a walking tour of the Transmountain campus a year ago in order to identify areas where improved access for the disabled could be implemented. I have been fortunate to have been honored with several EPCC awards which include the TM Faculty of the Month Award in 2012, the Adjunct Faculty Achievement Award in 2009 and 2015, and the EPCC Diamond Award in 2016.

Please consider voting for me as your next President-Elect. It will be my pleasure to serve you and our organization once again!

Thank you,
Pat Barrientos

Nominee for Treasurer

Verónica Murga

Doña Ana Community College

Verónica is running for treasurer. She looks forward to fulfilling her duties as treasurer by keeping accurate financial records, collecting membership dues, paying bills in accordance to the annual budget approved by the executive board and president, and providing financial reports at each meeting. As an officer and member of the executive board, she looks forward to working with its other members in carrying out NMMATYC's objectives.

Verónica was born in El Paso, Texas. She graduated from The University of Texas at El Paso in May 2007 with a Master of Arts in Teaching Mathematics. She has taught at the community college level for 10 years, courses ranging from developmental mathematics to business calculus. She currently teaches College Algebra, Integrated Algebra Skills/Intermediate Algebra, and Statistics. Her passion is to instill in her students the relevance of mathematics by utilizing projects as part of her teaching. As part of keeping her students engaged, she also likes to incorporate new technology in the classroom. During her personal time, she enjoys traveling, watching movies, and spending quality time with her husband and three children.



Nominee for Secretary

Miguel Mendoza

El Paso Community College

I recently attended my first MAA MathFest in Ohio and it has inspired me to get more involved in our regional Mathematics groups. I especially like the idea of presenting/understanding mathematical topics through the lens of subjects that lend themselves to certain math concepts, such as gaming and art. I would like to help foster this type of atmosphere within the NMMATYC organization and conferences.

Miguel Mendoza is an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at El Paso Community College. Mr. Mendoza has been at EPCC for 3 years teaching STEM and prospective-teacher mathematics courses. He has a Master's in Teaching Mathematics from the University of Texas at El Paso and has previously presented twice at the Psychology for Mathematics Education North American Conference with Dr. Kien Lim (UTEP) on analytic versus impulsive learning dispositions. Mr. Mendoza has also presented at a previous NMMATYC conference and a New Mexico Mathematics Summit on what it is like to teach a Dana Center course.



Tribute to Srinivasa Ramanujan

I beg to introduce myself to you as a clerk in the Accounts Department of the Port Trust Office at Madras on a salary of only £20 per annum. I am now about 23 years of age. ... After leaving school I have been employing the spare time at my disposal to work at Mathematics.

Srinivasa Ramanujan



More science quotes at Today in Science History - todayinsci.com

Reply to – The number 1729 is 'dull':

No, it is a very interesting number; it is the smallest number expressible as a sum of two cubes in two different ways, the two ways being $1^3 + 12^3$ and $9^3 + 10^3$.

Srinivasa Ramanujan



More science quotes at Today in Science History - todayinsci.com

Srinivasa Ramanujan was the strangest man in all of mathematics, probably in the entire history of science. He has been compared to a bursting supernova, illuminating the darkest, most profound corners of mathematics, before being tragically struck down by tuberculosis at the age of 33 ... Working in total isolation from the main currents of his field, he was able to rederive 100 years' worth of Western mathematics on his own. The tragedy of his life is that much of his work was wasted rediscovering known mathematics.

~ Michio Kaku



Plenty of mathematicians, Hardy knew, could follow a step-by-step discursus unflinchingly—yet counted for nothing beside Ramanujan. Years later, he would contrive an informal scale of natural mathematical ability on which he assigned himself a 25 and Littlewood a 30. To David Hilbert, the most eminent mathematician of the day, he assigned an 80. To Ramanujan he gave 100.

Robert Kanigel



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Articles for the Next Newsletter?

If you want to share any exciting news going on in your college, interesting presentation, best practices in the classroom, or events happening in the world of mathematics, have it published in the next NMMATYC Newsletter! Submit your articles to Jeremy Ramirez at newsletter@nmmatyc.com

Visit us at www.nm.matyc.org