

∫ Integram

EMU Mathematical Sciences Department

Winter 2008

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Math Blog

We are glad to announce the official mathematical sciences department blog at <http://www.emu.edu/blog/math>. We set up this blog to

- present a comprehensive departmental image,
- publish department news in a more timely fashion,
- nurture students outside the classroom,
- connect to alumni and prospective students, and
- have fun.

Alumni, we welcome you to contribute articles to the blog. Tell us your post-EMU experience, share career advice, or just write an interesting story relating to math, CS, physics, or engineering.

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Alumni News

We recently heard from alumnus **Benjamin Browand** who graduated in 2003 with a mathematics major and minors in physics and camping, recreation and outdoor ministry. Ben is now running his own business, CTI Adventure Company in Lovettsville, Virginia.

His rather unusual combination of major and minors are a perfect fit. CTI Adventure constructs, maintains, and inspects challenge courses and trains organizations in their use.

Ben recently wrote a paper justifying a new design for a Giant Swing. He made use of his math and physics with a dynamic analysis of the system showing that the swing was within industry standards.

Tim Martin Johnson, who graduated from EMU in 1982, wrote to tell us that he has taught at a number of schools including one in Uganda while on assignment with MCC since his graduation. For the past 12 years he has been teaching mathematics at Cheltenham High School in Wyncote, Pennsylvania. He reports that 17 of 20 students in his Calculus class got a score of 5 on the AP Calculus BC exam last year. Tim, his wife Carol, and their two children live in West Philadelphia.

(This space intentionally left blank. See below.)

Alumni, what have you been doing since leaving EMU?

Send your personal and professional updates to Deirdre Smeltzer at smeltzed@emu.edu.

You can just give us a quick update so we have a good idea of what our graduates are doing or write a more detailed account that we can publish. In either case we would love to hear from you.

We have received information from a few of you and for that we are thankful, but after getting a small taste, we now want more.

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Department News

Congratulations

We extend our congratulations to **Yong Zhang**, associate professor of computer science, and **Lei Li**, adjunct professor of biology, on the birth of their daughter, **Grace**, born on December 13, 2007.

Math Topics Course

This Fall, we ran a Math Research class for our Topics in Mathematics course. Each student selected a topic to research, hoping to contribute something new to the field. **Lars Åkerson** calculated the number of ways of tiling various rectangles using dominoes. **Briana Gascho** explored the relationship between mathematics and music, finding several ways to describe a Canon mathematically. **Michelle Swartley** researched how to win at Peg Solitaire. **Sarah Kalichman** used mathematical biology methods to model the spread of Christianity. **Ingrid Vendrely** found the growth series function of the lattice-graph in 4-space. **Tyler Yoder** and **Nate Benner** worked

jointly on a Game Theory question, extending the results found by EMU alum Zachary Kurtz from an independent study he did several years ago. It was a stretching experience for all of us!

Prioritization Update

If you majored in Mathematics and Computer Science and Statistics as an undergraduate, what kind of job might you expect in your future? If you're **Charles Cooley**, you could become an associate professor of computer science in a mathematical sciences department. And what if teaching computer science, mathematics, statistics, and computer information systems classes wasn't enough variety? This August Charles also began working part-time in EMU's institutional research and effectiveness office. Why?

- A. Merging the CIS and CS majors eliminated courses.
- B. Working in only one department would be boring.
- C. Making HR staff create complicated contracts is fun.
- D. The provost thought it was a good idea.
- E. All of the above.

Mathematics Scholarship

Congratulations to **Dustin Good**, recipient of this year's Brenneman-Longacher Endowed Mathematics Scholarship. Dustin, a first-year student from Harrisonburg, Virginia, is double majoring in mathematics and computer science. As the recipient of the scholarship, he will receive \$1250 per year for four years. The Brenneman-Longacher fund now exceeds \$130,000 which is enough to award a scholarship each year to an incoming student.

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Science Center Renovation

The ground-breaking ceremony for the Suter Science Center took place forty years ago. Now, EMU is in the beginning stages of fund-raising for a building project that will include renovation of and addition to the existing facility. With the new building, science laboratory facilities will be updated, classroom and computer lab space will be increased, and each department will gain an "identity area". A commitment to creation care and sustainability is central to the project. Go to <http://www.emu.edu/campaign/> to learn more about this exciting project and how you can contribute!

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Problem Corner

We haven't received many responses to our last few problems, so we thought we would give a slightly easier one this time.

Problem:

Is it possible to find a collection of 21 distinct whole numbers where the sum of their reciprocals is 1?

Submit solutions to Deirdre Smeltzer: smeltzed@emu.edu.

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Yes, you are seeing double. We would love to include more alumni stories, but to do that we need to hear from you!

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