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AMATYC NEWS℠

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Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Good Eats: AMATYC in Philadelphia

by Celisa Counterman, LEC

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Mathematics – and maybe a little good food along the way! No visit to Philadelphia is complete without experiencing some of the best food in the country. Now, I might be biased as a Pennsylvanian, but does your city have a long-standing debate about cheesesteaks? If you are heading to Pat's or Geno's, start studying your Philadelphia lingo now: "Wit" or "Wit-Out" is an important phrase to know!

And if you think the cheesesteak debate ends there, think again. Philadelphia's food scene has earned plenty of attention, including recognition from Michelin. With so many restaurants, markets, bakeries, and neighborhood favorites to explore, the hardest part may be deciding where to eat!

Philadelphia's food history reflects the many cultures and communities that have shaped the city. Italian, German, Pennsylvania Dutch, and many other traditions have contributed to the foods that make Philadelphia unique. The story behind the food is just as important as what is on the plate.

Mathematics is like that too. Mathematics is more than formulas, procedures, and answers. It's shaped by people, cultures, ideas, and stories. At AMATYC 2026, we will come together to share our own stories: how we engage students in the classroom, how we help students see possibilities beyond their current circumstances, and how we pursue new ideas in teaching and learning mathematics. Together, we celebrate the life, liberty, and pursuit of mathematics that connects us as educators.

And if you want to sample some Pennsylvania favorites, there are plenty to choose from. Try scrapple, a Pennsylvania Dutch tradition that dates back centuries, or grab a soft pretzel, reflecting the influence of German immigrants. Personally, I recommend sweet Lebanon bologna wrapped around a sweet gherkin pickle. For the best Pennsylvania experience, look for Seltzer's Lebanon Bologna, made right here in the Keystone State.

Pennsylvania has its own contributions to the Italian American food story too. While we cannot claim we invented pizza, we can claim the stromboli, which originated here. Wash it all down with a Hires Root Beer or an Arnold Palmer – both Pennsylvania originals.

And of course, there's always room for dessert. Pennsylvania has given the world Hershey's Chocolate, Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, and the banana split. If you are looking for something more traditional, try a slice of shoofly pie, another PA favorite.

Whether your tastes run towards cheesesteaks, PA Dutch specialties, international cuisine, or something completely new, Philadelphia has something for you. And just like mathematics, the best discoveries often happen when we step outside our comfort zones and try something new.

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Exploring the City of Brotherly Love

While you are in Philadelphia for the conference, take some time to immerse yourself in the rich history and vibrant culture of the city. Located just steps from our conference hotel, you can walk the historic cobblestone streets of Old City, visit Independence Hall, stand before the Liberty Bell, or explore the world-class collections at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (and run up the famous Rocky steps!). From the vibrant murals scattered throughout neighborhoods to the bustling stalls of Reading Terminal Market, Philadelphia offers an inspiring backdrop for this year's gathering.

Looking Ahead to Philadelphia

As we prepare for November, now is the ideal time to map out your conference experience. Review the session schedule early, identify the keynotes and strand sessions you want to attend, and coordinate with your colleagues to divide and conquer the packed program. Booking your travel and hotel accommodations early ensures you stay right in the heart of the action at the Marriott Philadelphia Downtown.

Be sure to stop by the Hospitality Suite during the conference for food recommendations, local favorites, and suggestions for places to explore while you are in town.

We look forward to welcoming you to Philadelphia for AMATYC 2026 – where we will celebrate life, liberty, and the pursuit of mathematics!

Cheesesteak from Campo's
Photo courtesy of PHLCVB

President's Message

Modernizing Undergraduate Mathematics

Eddie Tchertchian

Los Angeles Pierce College • Woodland Hills, CA

Earlier this year, I had the pleasure to attend the Modernizing Undergraduate Math Summit at Harvard University. Organized by TPSE Math, the summit was supported by various math organizations such as AMATYC, MAA, COMAP, AMS, ASA, SIAM, and many more. It was a two-day gathering of 60 influential stakeholders committed to transforming post-secondary mathematics education. Taken from the formal description of the event: *"As rapid advancements in artificial intelligence, data science, and technology reshape the workforce, the traditional undergraduate math curriculum is no longer keeping pace."* It is indeed time to revisit and reframe how we teach undergraduate mathematics. With various state education laws taking shape, and with an AI tech revolution sweeping the nation, change is in the air.

It was an honor to be part of the summit. We will soon have a comprehensive white paper which we hope will serve as a "blueprint" for the future of teaching undergraduate mathematics. As the organizers put it, *"This guiding document will outline modern teaching principles, propose flexible and inclusive course pathways, and offer actionable strategies for implementing change across higher education systems nationwide."*

There were plenty of amazing discussions on Harvard's campus! One of the main topics was a discussion I know I've had with numerous math educators in the past – why do we still offer college algebra? This is not the college algebra course that many might teach at their institution as a pre-requisite to calculus. (Some institutions have a trigonometry + a college algebra course as pre-requisites to calculus, while others may call the algebra portion "pre-calculus" or "math analysis," similar to in K-12.) The college algebra referred to here is a transfer-level math course which does not lead to another course but is rather taken by students – usually non-STEM majors – as their math college requirement to graduate. Many of these liberal arts majors end up taking a statistics or quantitative reasoning course to fulfil the math requirement. Even liberal arts major math courses have become popular as of late. But some end up stuck in the quicksand that is college algebra.

Other topics discussed included putting together an even more effective college-level quantitative reasoning class for today's students, data science's influence on the overall system, and a focus on a non-calculus intro to linear algebra course. TPSE Math's Dave Kung did a great job organizing the event. He wrote a nice summary for MAA which I also recommend - https://maa.org/math-values/meeting-the-moment-modernizing-undergraduate-mathematics/.

There will be lots more to come because of the summit! Stay tuned!

Teaching Excellence Endowment Campaign Continues

by Anne and David Dudley

AMATYC is working to fully endow the Teaching Excellence Award. During the Reno conference, members contributed more than $15,000. With matching funds, the endowment now exceeds $30,000.

Our goal is to complete the endowment by the end of the 2026 AMATYC Annual Conference in Philadelphia. Your donation is essential to establishing this fund and ensuring its lasting impact.

As former Teaching Excellence Award recipients–David in 1997 and Anne in 2007–we were inspired to create an endowment that will sustain this important recognition. We have also agreed to match every dollar contributed, up to $25,000. Your gift therefore has twice the impact as we build a lasting foundation for the Teaching Excellence Award.

To celebrate the spirit of educational mentorship and excellence, AMATYC has created a special webpage honoring influential faculty. With a donation of $50 or more, you are invited to add the name and institution of a teacher who shaped your journey or someone who inspired, challenged, or encouraged you in ways that still resonate today.

This tribute wall is more than a list of names; it is a living archive of gratitude and legacy. We hope it sparks reflection, conversation, and connection across our teaching community.

Visit the AMATYC Foundation donation page to make a contribution and honor an educator who made a difference. Please do not feel limited to the $50 recognition threshold: the more you give, the more we give. A link to nominate your honoree will appear in your donation receipt.

We are close to our $50,000 goal to fully endow the Teaching Excellence Award. Please take a moment to donate today.

AMATYC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

New to the AMATYC Conference? Suggestions and Tips for Maximizing Your Experience

The 2026 AMATYC Conference in Philadelphia is quickly approaching. Hopefully, you are making plans to attend and your excitement is building! Here are a few tips from a veteran attendee to help make this a great AMATYC Conference experience.

1. **Plan ahead.** Review the schedule before you arrive and highlight a few sessions of interest during each time slot. One thing often heard at AMATYC is, "There are so many good sessions at the same time!" If you are traveling with colleagues, consider splitting up to attend different sessions and then debriefing afterward. If you are traveling alone, make new friends and connections–AMATYC attendees are very friendly–and coordinate session choices with others.
2. **Don't forget to eat!** Attendees can become so engrossed in the schedule that they forget to include lunch plans. Philadelphia appears to offer more nearby lunch options than some past conference locations, which should make things easier. However, remember that several hundred attendees may be heading to the same places at the same time. Consider bringing something with you or choosing a session block to sacrifice for a relaxed lunch break.
3. **Make the most of each session.** AMATYC sessions offer opportunities to learn from colleagues, exchange ideas, and continue the conversation. Engage with presenters and fellow attendees by joining the discussion, asking questions during your designated discussion time, and sharing your own experiences. If a question or conversation needs more time than the session allows, consider connecting with the presenter afterward.

AMATYC Conferences are always a whirlwind of friendship, learning, growth, and fun. The time goes by faster than expected, so plan ahead, make new friends, and enjoy Philadelphia in 2026!

Hidden in Plain Sight Call for Presenters and Presiders for 2027

by Julie Gunkelman, Program Coordinator

You probably know more than you realize–and you may have something your colleagues need to hear. Consider sharing your work at the 53rd AMATYC Annual Conference in Spokane, Washington, November 11–14, 2027.

The conference theme, *Hidden in Plain Sight*, invites us to notice the meaningful practices already happening in our classrooms–those that are making a real difference for students.

Perhaps you have found a way to help students understand a difficult concept. Maybe you tried something new and discovered that it works. You may have changed the way you teach, redesigned an activity, found a better way to engage students, or learned something valuable from a lesson that did not go as planned. You do not need to be a professional presenter to share those experiences. **If you have found something that helps your students learn, you have something worth sharing.**

The proposal-submission window opens November 1, 2026, and closes February 15, 2027. Presentations may be submitted in one of three formats: a 25-minute session, a 50-minute session, or a two-hour workshop. Proposals should clearly describe the goals of the presentation, how those goals will be accomplished, and how the presentation time will be used. AMATYC presentations actively engage attendees and provide ideas they can take back to their classrooms.

If even 25 minutes feels too long, consider attending an AMATYC Academic Network (ANet) meeting in Philadelphia. Your idea may fit an ANet Themed Session, which includes six 15-minute presentations. These sessions take place early Thursday morning during the conference.

If presenting is not for you, consider volunteering as a presider. Presiders are an essential part of every successful AMATYC conference. They help sessions run smoothly, assist presenters and attendees, and provide feedback to the Conference Committee. You may volunteer to preside when submitting a proposal or separately through the AMATYC website.

Before deciding that you are not a presenter, take another look: at your classroom, at what you have learned, and at the things you do that make a difference for your students. Your next contribution may have been *hidden in plain sight* all along.

Future AMATYC Conferences

2026	Philadelphia, PA	November 19–22
2027	Spokane, WA	November 11–14
2028	Phoenix, AZ	November 9–12

For additional information, contact the AMATYC Office at amatyc@amatyc.org.

Teaching Excellence Award: Whom Will You Honor?

by Chris Oehrlein, President-Elect

At the 2025 AMATYC Annual Conference in Reno, Nevada, I was selected as one of the recipients of the AMATYC Teaching Excellence Award (TEA). Receiving the medal and standing on stage with the other outstanding awardees was an immensely proud moment in my life. Being recognized by–and alongside–my remarkable AMATYC peers and colleagues was an honor that will be difficult to surpass.

The real honor, however, came a year earlier. During the week following the 2024 AMATYC Annual Conference in Atlanta, two colleagues from my mathematics department came to my office. They told me they wanted to nominate me for the TEA. After discussing what we needed to do to complete the nomination, they left. I sat quietly for a while, reflecting on how touched and honored I felt that colleagues and friends considered me worthy of the award and were willing to invest the time required to prepare a nomination packet.

Whom will you honor? Whom will you nominate? Which colleague would you like to see on stage at the 2027 AMATYC Annual Conference in Spokane, Washington?

When you nominate a colleague, you honor more than one person. You honor your department, your institution, AMATYC, and our collective vision for teaching and learning in the first two years of college. If the TEA Committee receives at least 23 nominations, it may recommend the maximum of eight award recipients.

AMATYC presents the Anne and David Dudley Teaching Excellence Awards in odd-numbered years. The award is open to regular AMATYC members–including individual, lifetime, retired, and adjunct members–whose primary assigned duties involve instruction in the first two years of college. Nominees must have the equivalent of five years of full-time teaching experience and must not have previously received the award. Faculty at both two-year and four-year institutions are eligible.

For a list of previous awardees, the evaluation criteria, and required nomination-packet materials, visit the Teaching Excellence Award webpage.

The nomination deadline is Friday, December 11.

Teaching for PROWESS: Continuing the Work

by Karen Gaines

After more than six years of supporting meaningful change in community college mathematics, the NSF-funded Teaching for PROWESS project is formally coming to an end. However, the work–and the resources developed through the project–will continue through a partnership with AMATYC.

Teaching for PROWESS has focused on helping mathematics departments strengthen teaching and learning by addressing both classroom practice and departmental culture. In the classroom, instructors use active-learning approaches to engage students in a modern mathematics curriculum. At the departmental level, faculty develop the skills and capacity needed to lead and sustain intentional change.

Over the course of the project, we developed and tested a collection of resources and professional-learning opportunities designed to help colleges move from ideas to action. Through our partnership with AMATYC, these resources will remain available to the mathematics community. They include Summer Institute Guidebooks, Virtual Workshop materials, Active Learning Immersion resources, and Collaborative Reflection Visit resources.

Most importantly, we will continue to offer the Vision and Transformation Workshop–a process that helps mathematics departments develop a shared vision for student success, identify opportunities for change, and create an action plan for moving forward.

The goal is not to provide departments with a single solution. Rather, Teaching for PROWESS offers processes, tools, and opportunities for faculty to work together to determine what will make the greatest difference in their own context. These resources are intended to support departments wherever they are in their journey toward more active, engaging, and student-centered mathematics learning.

We are also seeking funding to offer a Facilitator Training Workshop next summer. This workshop would prepare mathematics faculty and leaders from across AMATYC regions to facilitate these experiences locally, expanding the reach and long-term sustainability of the work.

Although the Teaching for PROWESS grant is ending, its vision is not. Through AMATYC and a growing community of faculty committed to improving mathematics education, the work will continue–building community and cultivating change.

Watch for more information in the coming months about the Facilitator Training Workshop and opportunities to access Teaching for PROWESS resources through AMATYC. We look forward to continuing this work together.

Enrichment Through Global Learning and Building Connections

by Manisha Ranade, International Mathematics ANet Chair

Our ANet has remained active throughout the summer through board meetings and webinars. To help members stay connected after myAMATYC sunsets, we have established a Google Group, **AMATYC International Math ANet**. Please contact Jon Oaks at jonoaks@amatyc.org if you would like to join.

This summer, Barbara Leitherer, Jignasa Rami, and Roy Dwarka participated in professional development on sustainability in international course design through the TRES Project. The training focused on Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) and the use of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs).

Our ANet members also presented several webinars. Links to available recordings are included below.

- **May 12:** Breanne Hooks, Director of Global Education at Santa Fe College, discussed "Global Pathways in Mathematics Education," exploring ways to globalize mathematics through study abroad, virtual exchanges (COIL), and faculty development opportunities.
- **July 24:** Manisha Ranade presented "Internationalizing Mathematics and Global Learning" as part of the FTYCMA Summer Series.
- **July 30:** Jon Oaks presented "Tech Tools for Exploring International Mathematics," focusing on the use of AI, including ChatGPT, and other digital resources to bring international mathematics perspectives into two-year college classrooms. View the recording and slides.

Matthew Watts is organizing our first book club, featuring *The Teaching Gap: Best Ideas from the World's Teachers for Improving Education in the Classroom* by James W. Stigler and James Hiebert. Inexpensive copies are available, and the book may also be obtained through interlibrary loan. The plan is to read the book during fall 2026, hold a few discussions, and meet on Zoom in spring 2027.

We look forward to meeting in person at the AMATYC Annual Conference in Philadelphia. Please join us for our themed session, "Mathematics Around the World: Sharing Practices, Building Connections," and our Not For Review (NFR) session, "Using AI to Integrate International Mathematics into TYC Classrooms."

Calculus in the Desert: Reimagining the Mathematics Classroom at Project DELTA

by Sherry McCormack, Innovative Teaching and Learning ANet Chair

A sweltering 109-degree August in the desert, one room, and three days at the whiteboard alongside more than 50 people turning abstract concepts into a tangible mathematical story–and it was glorious.

Enter Project DELTA: a three-day, intensive, collaborative professional learning experience built around community. The program successfully connected the Building Thinking Classrooms framework with a calculus-focused approach, fostering student success, mathematical thinking, and a genuine sense of belonging.

Teams of approximately two to four participants from colleges across every AMATYC region were introduced to the ways Chandler-Gilbert CC guides students through complex topics using real-world, ground-up modeling. We wore our "student hats" to experience how learners encounter these concepts and then switched to our "teacher hats" to explore the structural details that help students thrive in a Building Thinking Classrooms environment.

Together, we calculated instantaneous rates of change, explored limits through Steve Nash's basketball feats, added a sprinkle of *Back to the Future* calculations, and much more. It was exhausting and exhilarating at the same time.

After implementing a few of these techniques during my first week of calculus, I could already see my students' excitement about this innovative approach to teaching and learning. Rather than sitting quietly through a traditional syllabus review, my students spent the first day standing at vertical whiteboards, actively collaborating and debating what they would need for desert survival or trying to deduce details about their professor.

On the second day of class, we dove directly into limits. Students worked together to calculate exactly what happens to Steve Nash's basketball as time gets closer and closer to 5 milliseconds–right where the video cuts out.

The payoff was immediate. When I later asked students whether limits made more sense than they had after watching a traditional video lecture before class, they told me directly that the concept was "much more understandable now."

I would like to extend a huge thank-you to April Ström, Scott Adamson, Trey Cox, and Ted Coe for the time and effort they devoted to this eye-opening experience.

2027 AMATYC Elections: Consider Serving on the AMATYC Executive Board

by George Hurlburt, Past President

Have you ever considered serving on the AMATYC Executive Board? Or do you know a colleague who would be an excellent candidate for a leadership role within AMATYC?

For the 2027 Executive Board elections, AMATYC will seek nominees for the following positions:

- President-Elect
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Eight Regional Vice Presidents

The deadline for nominations is February 1, 2027.

If you have not previously considered serving on the Board, I encourage you to consider nominating yourself. Board service is an immensely rewarding opportunity to contribute to AMATYC's mission, collaborate with mathematics educators across the country, and help shape the organization's future.

If you know someone who would be a valuable addition to the Executive Board, please send their contact information to me or to another member of the Nominating Committee.

To learn more about the nomination process or what each position contributes to AMATYC, visit www.amatyc.org/ExecutiveBoardNomin. You may also contact any member of the Nominating Committee:

- George Hurlburt, Past President, Chair (georgehurlburt@amatyc.org)
- Myrta Groeneveld, Northeast Region (myrta.groeneveld@ctstate.edu)
- Chris Ward, Mid-Atlantic Region (chris.ward@southernwv.edu)
- Eboness Williams, Southeast Region (ewilli@dcc.edu)
- Amy Pippenger, Midwest Region (pippengeram@ntc.edu)
- Chris Imm, Central Region (cimm@jccc.edu)
- Laurel Clifford, Southwest Region (cliffordlaurel@yahoo.com)
- Jeff Crabill, Northwest Region (crabilj@linnbenton.edu)
- Lindsey Gerber, West Region (lindsey.gerber@uvu.edu)
- Lisa Feinman, Member-at-Large (lfeinman@ccbcmd.edu)
- Rob Eby, Member-at-Large (jeby@blinn.edu)
- Pat Riley, Member-at-Large (patrick.riley@kctcs.edu)

Project ACCCESS: Building Community and Growing Leaders

by Karina Ochs, Project ACCCESS Coordinator

For more than two decades, AMATYC Project ACCCESS has brought mathematics educators together to learn, connect, and grow as teachers and leaders. As we prepare for the 2026 AMATYC Annual Conference in Philadelphia, we have much to celebrate and many ways for the AMATYC community to become involved.

Project ACCCESS–Advancing Community College Careers: Education, Scholarship, and Service–is about much more than professional development. It is about community.

Project ACCCESS Fellows participate in two consecutive AMATYC Annual Conferences, engage with mentors and fellow mathematics educators, take part in professional activities, and complete a project connected to teaching and learning. The experience gives Fellows opportunities to exchange ideas, try new approaches, reflect on their teaching, and build relationships with colleagues who share their commitment to student learning and mathematics education.

Come Support Cohort 21

Throughout their fellowship, Cohort 21 Fellows have worked on projects related to mathematics teaching, learning, and student success. In Philadelphia, the Fellows will share their work with the AMATYC community in four groups.

Come hear their ideas, ask questions, and celebrate their accomplishments. Project ACCCESS alumni are especially encouraged to attend and show their support.

Welcome, Cohort 22

We are excited to welcome 27 outstanding mathematics educators to Project ACCCESS Cohort 22. They bring enthusiasm, talent, and a strong commitment to teaching and learning as they begin their Project ACCCESS journey.

If you meet one of our new Fellows in Philadelphia, please introduce yourself and welcome them to the community.

Beyond the Fellowship: Project ACCCESS Alumni Stories

One of the best ways to understand the impact of Project ACCCESS is to hear from those who have experienced it. In future newsletters, we hope to highlight alumni journeys and share how the program has influenced their teaching, professional growth, leadership, and connections within the mathematics community.

By sharing these experiences, we can celebrate our alumni's accomplishments, offer current and future Fellows a glimpse of where their Project ACCCESS journeys may lead, and inspire other mathematics educators to become part of the community.

Project ACCCESS alumni who are interested in sharing their story in a future newsletter are invited to contact Karina Ochs at karina.ochs@amatyc.org.

Help Project ACCCESS Continue to Grow

Project ACCCESS has grown and thrived because of people who believe in its mission and invest in its community. Each year, AMATYC welcomes up to 30 new Fellows and provides conference registration and four nights of lodging at two consecutive AMATYC Annual Conferences.

As we look toward the future, and with the conclusion of the ExxonMobil grant, continued support from the AMATYC community will play an important role in sustaining these opportunities for future cohorts. Those interested in supporting Project ACCCESS are encouraged to connect with the AMATYC Foundation.

Other meaningful ways to contribute include attending a presentation, becoming a mentor, encouraging a colleague to apply, and staying connected with our community.

We look forward to seeing everyone in Philadelphia as we celebrate Cohort 21, welcome Cohort 22, reconnect with past Fellows, and continue building the Project ACCCESS community.

Liftoff: Propelling Momentum from Theory to Teamwork!

by Sherry McCormack, Innovative Teaching and Learning ANet Chair

In our last update, we lit the fuse under the traditional academic calendar. We explored how compressed timelines–such as the back-to-back eight-week "mini-semesters" at Hopkinsville CC–are reshaping the traditional 16-week model.

Now, with the AMATYC Annual Conference on the launchpad, it is time to *ignite* our engines and move from theory to teamwork. True academic acceleration cannot happen in a faculty vacuum. To reach escape velocity, it requires a strong structural ecosystem.

We face high-stakes logistical questions that we must solve together before we clear the tower. How can mission-control advising help students navigate multiple entry and re-entry points? How do we build student "heat shields" so accelerated students are not overwhelmed, burned out, or left in freefall?

Join flight commanders Keith Nabb and Wendi Dass as they guide us through the cosmos of the seven-week semester model at Annual Conference in Philadelphia during their high-octane session, "Shortening the Semester: Come Share Your Experiences on Acceleration in Mathematics."

Bring your curiosity, your most challenging institutional roadblocks, and even your skepticism. Together, we can engineer the support systems and academic "shock absorbers" needed to keep accelerated students from losing educational momentum. Let's map out advising and academic-support structures that help students stay connected and avoid falling through the cracks.

As more colleges adopt accelerated models, our ANet is stepping up to pilot this mission through continued discussion and collaborative sharing of best practices.

Don't be left behind! Be sure to attend the Innovations in Teaching and Learning ANet meeting at AMATYC to stay informed about our strategic direction and help build the future of student success as we reach for the stars.

Learning by Doing: ACCTION Faculty Experience New College Algebra OER

by Karen Gaines, Online Community Coordinator

What happens when faculty experience active-learning materials as students before bringing them into their own classrooms?

That question guided the ACCTION* OER Summer Institute, held July 13–15 at Randolph CC. Twelve community college mathematics faculty gathered for three days of learning, collaboration, and hands-on exploration in preparation for piloting the new ACCTION College Algebra open educational resources (OER) this fall or next spring.

Led by members of the ACCTION OER development team, the institute invited participants to experience the activities from a student's perspective. Faculty worked through problems together, explored the mathematics and pedagogy behind the activities, and considered how to use the materials in their own classrooms.

The activities engage students in doing mathematics through collaboration, discussion, problem solving, and mathematical reasoning. Faculty experienced these approaches firsthand.

> "Having the opportunity to experience the content as a student before teaching it gave me insight into a student's perspective"
> *~ Rebecca Harris - Randolph CC*

ACCTION OER Summer Institute

After each activity, participants stepped back into their roles as educators to reflect: What mathematical ideas were students being asked to notice? Where might they struggle? What questions could help advance their thinking? How could an activity be adapted for a particular class or institutional setting?

These conversations helped participants examine both how the activities work and why they can support student learning.

> "I think my perspective has changed in that I want to give the students even more ownership of the class by showing their own thinking methods in problem solving. In doing so, they will be more involved, perfect their team building and presentation skills, and hopefully become more proficient in the objectives of the course." *~ Matthew Price - Randolph CC*

The institute also built a community of faculty preparing to implement the materials. Participants now have colleagues with whom to exchange ideas, discuss challenges, and share experiences as they incorporate more active learning into their College Algebra courses.

> "Experiencing the curriculum first hand with my colleagues along with having an ongoing learning community of colleagues as we implement this in our classrooms provides a foundation of collegial support and encouragement."
> *~ Brent Hamilton - Northern Iowa Area CC*

What Comes Next?

ACCTION's goal extends beyond developing a collection of open educational resources. The project seeks to create research-informed, active-learning materials that help community college mathematics faculty transform the student experience in College Algebra.

The Summer Institute marked an important step toward that goal. The next step brings these activities into classrooms, where faculty and students will help inform their continued development.

> "I am excited to watch students think, make connections and have fun in a college math class." *~ Annie Hughes - Randolph CC*

The ACCTION team looks forward to learning alongside these faculty and their students as the pilot gets underway.

[*ACCTION is an NSF-funded project (DUE:2439731 and DUE: 2439732) designed to accelerate the adoption of research-supported active learning strategies in community college mathematics through high-quality OER materials, professional development, a documentary and ongoing faculty support.]

Student Mathematics League

by Matthew Pragel, Coordinator

The fall Student Mathematics League round will be held from **Friday, October 30, through Friday, November 13, 2026**. The spring round will take place from **Friday, February 26, through Friday, March 12, 2027**.

Competition registration is open on the AMATYC website through **October 31**. Contest problems are drawn from topics in precalculus mathematics, and questions from previous competitions are available on the AMATYC website.

Teams consist of the five highest-scoring students from each college and compete for both regional and national awards. More than 100 teams participate annually, and we hope your college will join us!

If you have questions about the competition, please contact the Student Mathematics League coordinator, Matthew Pragel, at sml@amatyc.org.

For those attending the AMATYC Conference in Philadelphia, the 22nd Annual Faculty Mathematics League competition will be held on **Friday, November 20**. Bring your graphing calculator and compete for individual prizes as well as the coveted regional championship trophy. The Northeast will be defending its regional championship trophy–come help your region rise to the challenge!

The AMATYC News is the official newsletter of the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges. It is published four times each year in Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall. Your articles and announcements are welcome. Submission deadlines are November 25, February 25, June 1, and August 15 for the respective issues.

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Building Mathematics Research Communities at Two-Year Colleges

by Dana Clahane, Research and Mentoring Experiences for Students and Faculty ANet Chair

The Innovation in Two-Year Colleges (ITYC) Program in the National Science Foundation's Division of Undergraduate Education has awarded Fullerton College a three-year grant, **"Building Mathematics Research Communities in Two-Year Colleges"** (NSF Award No. 2610229). The $499,793 award will support the project from October 2026 through September 2029.

This project is a collaboration between Fullerton College and AMATYC. Its purpose is to develop and study a scalable model for supporting mathematics research cultures at two-year colleges across the United States. Undergraduate research is a recognized high-impact practice that can strengthen student engagement, persistence, and preparation for STEM pathways. Through locally supported Mathematics Research Communities, the project seeks to expand meaningful research opportunities for two-year college students and faculty.

The project builds on a longstanding model at Fullerton College and will support faculty as they adapt and implement Mathematics Research Communities appropriate to their own campuses. These communities may include colloquia, research seminars or courses, structured faculty-student mentoring, research labs, and connections to national mentoring networks.

Over the next three years, the project plans to expand in stages to eight participating two-year colleges. Its primary goals are to:

- Develop and study a flexible, multi-component model for Mathematics Research Communities at two-year colleges.
- Prepare and support Faculty Research Coordinators in implementing local research-community activities.
- Investigate how institutional contexts affect the implementation and sustainability of these communities.
- Share adaptable resources, research-supportive materials, and project findings through AMATYC and other professional networks.

The project will draw on the national reach and activities of AMATYC's Research and Mentoring Experiences for Students and Faculty (RMESF) ANet. It will use a mixed-methods approach to study implementation across participating colleges, including student and faculty experiences, mentoring capacity, student engagement, and pathways to continued STEM learning and research.

I would like to thank AMATYC Past President Laura Watkins for her excellent work as co-principal investigator on the grant proposal. I also thank the AMATYC Board for its continued encouragement and support of our ANet since its establishment in 2024.

Our ANet aims to serve as a two-year college analogue to the Center for Undergraduate Research in Mathematics (CURM), with which we have increasingly collaborated. We look forward to deepening that partnership and helping make mathematics research opportunities common rather than rare on two-year college campuses.

Recent advances in AI-assisted mathematics also make this work especially timely. For example, AI-generated work on the Erdös unit-distance conjecture has produced a human-verified counterexample, illustrating both the promise of AI in mathematical discovery and the continued importance of expert human review. As students gain access to increasingly capable AI tools, we must think carefully about how oral examinations, projects, and mentoring can support genuine inquiry while helping students use AI responsibly and critically.

Formal proof-assistance tools, particularly Lean 4, are also becoming more visible in mathematical research and education. Staying engaged with these developments can help faculty and students participate thoughtfully in conversations that will shape the future of mathematics.

The RMESF ANet holds two Zoom meetings each month:

- **Organizational and Mentoring Meeting:** First Friday of each month
- **Math Exploration Research Forum (MERF):** Third Friday of each month

Both meetings are held from **11:00 am to noon Pacific Time**. Please email dana.clahane@amatyc.org to join the ANet, receive meeting information, or suggest future speakers.

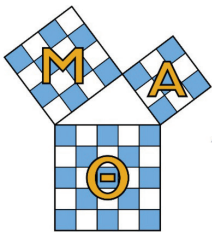
Our summer MERF speakers were Elliot Brunelle and Yehia Abduelnasr. Elliot, who transferred from Fullerton College to the University of California, Santa Barbara, introduced the Agoh-Giuga Conjecture. Yehia, a current Fullerton College student, presented "An Introduction to the Bateman-Horn Conjecture." Both students completed Fullerton College's two-unit Honors Pure Mathematics Seminar, participated in the AMATYC Student Mathematics League, and submitted mini-theses on assigned research problems.

We welcome students and faculty members who would like to present at a future MERF. Choose a favorite unsolved problem or a new application of mathematics and make it a project. Exploring something new can revitalize our teaching and show students that mathematics is more than a collection of skills–it is an active, evolving field of inquiry.

For those interested in joining an existing project, I also maintain a collection of LaTeX documents in Overleaf that could benefit from student and faculty collaboration. Please reach out anytime at dana.clahane@amatyc.org.

Mu Alpha Theta

by Mari Menard, Mu Alpha Theta Representative



We hope the AMATYC Conference is as worthwhile and exciting as promised–perhaps even leaving you rejuvenated and invigorated with a desire to learn more about Mu Alpha Theta. The best place to start is the AMATYC Mu Alpha Theta website: www.amatyc.org/mu-alpha-theta

The Mu Alpha Theta chapter at your college provides student grant and scholarship opportunities, regardless of major. If you are ready to learn more or would like to schedule a virtual informational meeting, email marimenard@amatyc.org.

When AI Can Do the Algebra, What Should Students Do?

by Trey Cox, Chandler-Gilbert CC

Artificial intelligence can now do much of what we teach students to do in an algebra course. It can solve exponential equations, generate graphs, fit models, simplify expressions, and explain steps in seconds. That reality raises an uncomfortable question for College Algebra instructors: If AI can readily perform the procedures that have traditionally occupied so much of our classrooms, what should students be learning?

I do not think the answer is to abandon procedural fluency. Students still need notation, vocabulary, algebraic skills, and efficient methods. These tools enable them to express ideas, communicate reasoning, interpret results, and determine whether solutions–including those generated by AI–make mathematical sense. But AI does force us to confront a question mathematics educators should have been asking all along:

Have we sometimes confused doing procedures with understanding mathematics?

For me, this is an opportunity to move Big Ideas to the center of the course. A Big Idea has context and meaning, is generalizable, and can serve as a foundation for other ways of thinking. In College Algebra, one such idea is *covariation*: understanding how two quantities change together and how changes in one are related to changes in the other.

Linear, quadratic, and exponential relationships are not simply different collections of formulas and graph shapes. Each has a distinctive pattern of change. Students should learn to recognize, describe, represent, and explain those patterns. Doing so helps them distinguish among function families and decide which relationship appropriately models a situation.

This focus changes what happens in class. Instead of beginning with a definition, demonstrating a procedure, and assigning similar exercises, we can begin with an *Anchor Problem*: an interesting real-world context or open-ended conceptual problem in which a Big Idea is deeply embedded and naturally emerges through investigation.

One of my favorite examples is *The Mathematics of Music: Don't Fret.* Students begin by looking at a guitar fretboard. I do not announce that the lesson is about exponential functions. Instead, I ask, "What do you notice? What do you wonder?" Their observations may focus on strings, frets, color, the bridge, or the nut. I welcome those ideas rather than immediately steering students toward the mathematics I have in mind.

Eventually, a productive question emerges: Why do the frets become progressively closer together? I give students data showing the distances from the bridge to successive frets and ask them to explain how those distances change as the fret number increases.

Students test ideas using what they know about linear and quadratic relationships. When neither constant first differences nor constant second differences account for the pattern, they need another way to think about change. Typically, one or two groups begin comparing distances multiplicatively and notice an approximately constant ratio. Their insight becomes a resource for the class, and the exponential relationship emerges from students' collective thinking.

AI can identify the exponential model almost instantly. But when students ask the machine first, they may receive an answer before they have had the opportunity to notice the pattern that gives it meaning. The efficiency that makes AI powerful can also remove the productive struggle through which understanding develops.

Perhaps our responsibility is to decide not simply whether students may use AI, but when it deepens thinking and when it replaces thinking. In *Don't Fret*, I would rather have students argue about data, test familiar patterns, sketch graphs, construct a model, and interpret its parameters before asking AI to analyze the same situation. Then they can critique its work: Does the model make sense? What evidence supports it? Does the graph fit the physical situation?

When procedures are available on demand, reasoning, interpretation, modeling, justification, estimation, communication, and movement among representations become more important, not less. The teacher's role becomes more sophisticated, too: identifying worthwhile Big Ideas, designing Anchor Problems, anticipating student thinking, and connecting strategies so mathematics becomes visible to everyone.

This is why I am excited about the *Advancing Community College Teaching, Innovations to Overhaul Norms (ACCTION) Project*, a National Science Foundation-supported initiative (NSF DUE: 2439731 and DUE: 2439732). As part of this work, we are developing open educational resources for College Algebra that ask what students should understand and do when answers and procedures are increasingly easy to obtain.

AI may be very good at doing algebra. Our challenge is to ensure that our classrooms remain places where students learn to *think algebraically.*

AMATYC Foundation 2025 Honor Roll

The AMATYC Foundation sincerely thanks all who gave generously in 2025. These donations support a variety of AMATYC initiatives, including Project ACCCESS, student competitions, and member grants. Contributions also fund travel and opportunity grants, as well as AMATYC awards such as the Margie Hobbs Award and the Leila and Simon Peskoff Award.

Every donation helps AMATYC advance its vision of being a leading voice and resource for excellence in mathematics education during the first two years of college. As always, we appreciate your support and look forward to seeing your name on the AMATYC Foundation 2025 Honor Roll.

AMATYC strives for accuracy in this Honor Roll listing. If any information is incorrect or missing, or if you prefer your name to appear differently, please accept our sincere apology and contact Beverly Vance at amatyc@amatyc.org so corrections can be made.

President's Club - Platinum
Anne & David Dudley

President Club - Gold
Fred Peskoff

President Club
Judy Ackerman
Cheryl Cleaves
Rob Eby
David Ellenbogen
Karen Gaines
Martha Goshaw
James (Jim) Ham
Alice Kaseberg
Nancy Sattler
William Steenken
April Strom
Eddie Tchertchian

Patron
Allen Angel
ArizMATYC
Philip Cheifetz
Greg Foley
George Hurlburt
Chris Oehrlein
Laura Watkins

Sponsor
Agnes Azzolino
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Xander Henderson
Nicole Lang
Margaret (Peggy) Rejto
Jennifer Travis

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Aron Altose
Alvina Atkinson
Alexander Atwood
Brian Beaudrie
Fan Chen
Milena Cuellar
Ernie Danforth
Johanna Debrecht
Dennis Ebersole
Sophia Georgiakaki
Bukurie Gjoci
Julie Gunkelman
Carol Hannahs
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Mary Beth Orrange
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Susan Harthun
Todd Hendricks
Lori Holdren
Jayashree Hurlburt
Kendall Jacobs
Dale Johanson
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Carrie Lineberry
Tim Mayo
Michael Miller
James Moore
Keith Nabb
Jon Oaks
Russ Penner
Julie Phelps
Natalia Postrigan
Manisha Ranade
Christopher Riola
Shannon Ruth
Samuel Spire
Michelle Younker

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Carmen Andert
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Colleen Babilya
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Ben Moulton
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Ahmed Rashed
Pat Riley
Christopher Riola
Miesha Robinson
Patricio Rojas
Martin Romero
Matt Rondeau
Megan Rourke
Alejandro Sanchez
Sean Saunders

➢ *Cont'd on page 10*

➢ ***Honor Roll, Cont'd from page 10***

Robyn Scalzo
Andrea Schaben
Steven Schoenbaechler
Laura Schueller
Arthur Schultz
Velvet Scoggin
Melissa Scranton
Aja Shabana
Jeremy Shaw
Joseph Shaw
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Katharine Sims-Drew
Britt Slade
Spencer Slade
Christa Solheid
Kelly Spoon
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Siobahn Suppa
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Gabriel Tarr
Anthony Tavares
Andrew Taylor
Ashley Taylor
Jo Lynn Theobald
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Shawanda Thomas
Julie Thompson
Vicki Todd
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Elizabeth Trunk
Matthew Tsutsui
Amy Tucker
Jerome Tuttle
Kaylee Tuttle
Luke Walsh
Kimberly Walters
Chris Ward
Matthew Watts
Elizabeth Weaver
Jennie Weber
Matthew Weber
Jonathan Weisbrod
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Matthew Westerhoff
Michelle White
Emily Whittington
Crystal Wiggins
Peter Wildman
James Wolfle
Prudence York-Hammons
Chris Yuen
Tonka Zelenkova
Steven Zollinger

Highlights of the Executive Board Summer Conference Meetings

by Nikita Patterson, Secretary

The AMATYC Executive Board remained busy this summer, meeting remotely on July 16 and August 20 for its 2026 Summer Conference Calls. During these meetings, the Board approved two important appointments:

- **Ernest Danforth** was reappointed to a third term as an at-large member of the Foundation Board.
- **Kouok Law**, of Georgia State University–Perimeter College, was appointed Assistant Coordinator of the Student Research League.

In addition to these appointments, Board members explored several topics that will help shape AMATYC's future. Discussions focused on the 2026 Summer Spark Roundtables, strengthening connections with Affiliates across regions, expanding access to *MathAMATYC Educator* resources, and considering AMATYC's future direction.

These conversations reflect the Board's continued commitment to supporting members, encouraging engagement, and ensuring that AMATYC remains responsive to the evolving needs of mathematics educators.

Math and Its Application to Careers ANet

by Jay Martin, Chair

The Math and Its Application to Careers (MAC) ANet focuses on helping students see mathematics as more than a collection of procedures and formulas. By connecting classroom mathematics to authentic workplace situations, we can help students understand why they are learning mathematics and how it can support their future academic, technical, and career goals.

A growing collection of industry-based lessons and resources is now available to community college mathematics faculty. These materials were developed through partnerships among mathematics educators, local industries, and workforce organizations. They highlight the mathematical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and decision-making skills that employers value in today's workplace.

Three recent projects have contributed substantially to this work.

From 2020–2023, Wake Technical CC administered the NSF ATE project **Connecting Industry to Mathematics Instruction (CIMI)**. High school and community college mathematics faculty collaborated with local industry partners to identify authentic workplace applications of mathematics and develop industry-based tasks for senior-level high school and entry-level community college mathematics courses. Although many industry interactions occurred virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic, the project produced engaging lessons that connect course content to real workplace situations.

From 2019–2024, Hofstra University administered the NSF ATE project **Needed Math**, which explored the mathematics skills most needed in manufacturing industries. The project combined a large-scale industry survey with site visits to better understand workplace expectations. It also developed industry-based scenarios that illustrate how mathematics is used in authentic manufacturing contexts.

More recently, during 2025–2026, the Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD) administered a North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) Perkins-funded project focused on **CTE in Mathematics Instruction**. Six North Carolina community colleges partnered with local industries to identify workplace mathematics skills and develop contextualized instructional materials for entry-level college mathematics courses.

CORD is hosting **monthly webinars at no cost** featuring resources from all three projects. Each session highlights an industry-based lesson for an entry-level community college mathematics course, provides links to additional ready-to-use materials, and explores workplace expectations identified by industry partners. We invite AMATYC members to participate and discover practical ways to bring meaningful workplace mathematics into their classrooms throughout the academic year.

Register to receive the Zoom webinar links here: https://tinyurl.com/CIMI-RegistrationForm or use the QR code provided here.

Let's get on the bus and take our students where mathematics is really being used!

AMATYC 2026

Calendar of Events

The most current list of events may be found on the AMATYC Event webpage at www.amatyc.org/events/showmonth/current.

November 7: **MATYCNJ Fall 2026 Conference,** Rowan College of South Jersey, Sewell, NJ. Contact: Keith Bosler, kbosler@middlesexcollege.edu

November 19–22: **52nd AMATYC Annual Conference,** Philadelphia Marriott Downtown, Philadelphia, PA. Contact: AMATYC Office, amatyc@amatyc.org

Add or update affiliate conference information at www.amatyc.org/affiliate-conferences.

Asli Mutlu, Editor
AMATYC News
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Memphis, TN 38134

Focus on Affiliates: OhioMATYC

by Kinga Oliver, President

OhioMATYC: Ahead of the Curve Since 1973

OhioMATYC has brought mathematics educators together for more than 50 years. In November 1972, educators from Ohio's two-year colleges began discussing an organization devoted to their professional interests and concerns. OhioMATYC was officially founded in Columbus on April 28, 1973–one year before AMATYC was established. Apparently, Ohio mathematicians were ahead of the curve!

Our annual spring conference is at the heart of what we do. Traditionally, a different Ohio college hosts each year, with locations planned several years in advance. To simplify planning, we are considering holding future conferences at the same college for two consecutive years before moving to a new location. Even mathematicians appreciate eliminating a few extra variables!

Our 2026 conference, held at Sinclair CC on March 27, offered a day of engaging presentations, fresh ideas, and opportunities to reconnect with colleagues. We also discovered that mathematics discussions are even more enjoyable when accompanied by a baked potato bar–a definite hit!

A conference highlight was recognizing Nick Shay of Columbus State CC with the 2026 OhioMATYC Teaching Excellence Award. Nick's dedication to his students and mathematics education makes him a deserving recipient. Congratulations, Nick!

Our next spring conference will be held at Rhodes State College on April 2, 2027. We look forward to another day of learning and sharing with colleagues who understand why we get excited about a good mathematics problem.

For special occasions, we expand our conference into a two-day event at one of Ohio's beautiful state park lodges. The extra day provides more time for presentations, conversations, and socializing–and we have found that professional connections grow especially well around a bonfire. We are planning our next state park conference at Mohican State Park in 2028, with great mathematics, great company, and, weather permitting, a bonfire. A few math jokes are probably inevitable!

OhioMATYC may be a state affiliate, but good teaching ideas and professional friendships extend well beyond state borders. We warmly welcome mathematics educators from Ohio, neighboring states, and farther afield. Whether Ohio is a road trip away or worth a flight, come for the mathematics, stay for the people, and perhaps join us around the bonfire in 2028!

To learn more about OhioMATYC's conferences, awards, scholarships, and membership opportunities, visit www.ohiomatyc.org.