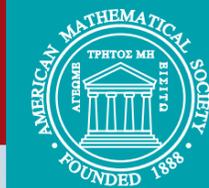




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AMERICAN MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY

# AMS Member News



## Highlights of the Joint Mathematics Meeting – Boston 2012

Nearly 7,200 mathematicians, exhibitors and students came from 36 countries to the 2012 Joint Mathematics Meetings (JMM) of the American Mathematical Society (AMS) and Mathematical Association of America (MAA) in Boston, MA, January 4-7, 2012. Mathematicians presented work, met colleagues, mentors and new friends, attended the annual Prize Ceremony, heard a record-breaking 2,700 talks, and saw a wide range of exhibitors. Other activities at the meeting included banquets, a mathematical art exhibit, a job interviewing program, an undergraduate poster session, and opportunities to meet graduate program representatives.

### Mark Your Calendar

September 22-23, 2012	AMS Sectional Meeting, Rochester Institute of Technology
October 13-14, 2012	AMS Sectional Meeting, Tulane University
October 20-21, 2012	AMS Sectional Meeting, University of Akron
October 27-28, 2012	AMS Sectional Meeting, University of Arizona, Tucson
January 9-12, 2013	Joint Mathematics Meetings, San Diego

See other science and mathematics meetings where the AMS will be represented at [www.ams.org/about-us/ams-at-mtgs](http://www.ams.org/about-us/ams-at-mtgs)

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AMS Member News is published by AMS Membership and Programs Department.

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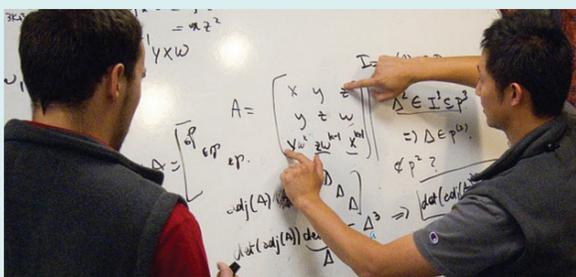


### Mathematics Research Communities

Mathematics Research Communities (MRC), a program of the American Mathematical Society, nurtures early-career mathematicians—those who are close to finishing their doctorates or have recently finished—and provides them with opportunities to build social and collaborative networks to inspire and sustain each other in their work.

The structured program is designed to engage and guide all participants as they start their careers. For each topic, the program includes a one-week summer conference, a Special Session at the national meeting, a discussion network, and a longitudinal study of early-career mathematicians.

The summer conferences of the MRC are held in the breathtaking mountain setting of the Snowbird Resort, Utah, where participants can enjoy the natural beauty and a collegial atmosphere. This program is supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation. More information on the program can be found at [ams.org/programs/research-communities/mrc](http://ams.org/programs/research-communities/mrc).



### Five Questions for Steve Smith



**AMS:** What is your favorite part of doing mathematics?

**SDS:** Personally: The excitement of getting closer and closer to solving a problem. This is especially rewarding in the context of collaboration and seeing students getting the thrill of their first results. And more generally: I think I would echo Bill Thurston's emphasis, in accepting his 2012 Steele Prize, on

the satisfaction of being able to work within a broad community of mathematics. Professional researchers are only a part of a larger community that includes teachers, graduate and undergrad students, and other mathematical professionals that all contribute in rewarding ways to the world of mathematics.

**AMS:** How has the AMS added to your professional life?

**SDS:** The meetings are probably the most crucial—for professional (as well as personal) contact. But also not forgetting, at home: virtually every day I use MathSciNet—a huge convenience; when I started out, in the early 1970s, we had to go over to the library, in order to consult Math Reviews ... (Thanks, Jane Kister and MR staff!) And I seem to have published all my books in Surveys of the AMS. The staff of Surveys has offered an incredible amount of support that has made them a pleasure to work with. The book templates and the other technical assistance available to authors were very helpful.

**AMS:** Which activities with the AMS have been the most personally rewarding?

**SDS:** Looking back over various panels I've served on, maybe the most exciting was the NSF postdocs: an inspiring glimpse of the rising stars of the profession. Over the years I've also enjoyed organizing various special sessions at meetings. The work isn't that burdensome, and is usually very interesting. I really recommend volunteer activity to anyone interested. I was lucky enough to be the featured speaker at one session, and getting to pick the topic was great. In 1995, Michael Aschbacher and I were able to present a state of the field concerning our shared research. The special sessions do a great job of allowing topics or methods of presentation that wouldn't be able to be heard any other way.

**AMS:** What advice can you offer to mathematicians just beginning their research careers?

**SDS:** Always be thinking about the problems that seem important. This may involve some balancing between conventional wisdom, what is fashionable, and your own instincts. Of course, these big conjectures are the hard ones, so young people shouldn't get discouraged beating their heads against them. But on the other hand, there is a temptation for a young researcher to not branch out very far from his thesis. It is by young researchers considering these important problems as they move through their careers that the problems eventually get solved and the field moves forward as a whole. Additionally, the AMS is a natural forum, as well as an

entry into national networking. People can look for opportunities which specifically appeal to them, from among the many avenues already offered by the AMS. And there is always room for new ideas.

*Always be thinking about the problems that seem important. This may involve some balancing between conventional wisdom, what is fashionable, and your own instincts.*

—Steve Smith, Professor of Mathematics at the University of Illinois-Chicago and co-recipient of the 2012 Steele Prize for Mathematical Exposition

**AMS:** What would you like to see the AMS be able to do for the mathematical community in the future?

**SDS:** I may already be too old to be trying to predict the future. But I'm confident that the Society will respond to needs as they arise! I suspect the Washington office of the AMS will need to have a still greater future role in defending the importance of mathematics—given the recent national budget controversies. Most faculty members can expect to serve some turn at department administration—and I know the Society has some information and workshops for department chairs. I wonder if there would be interest in expanding the small focus group currently offered at the January meetings to a full day comprehensive workshop for Directors of Undergraduate and (especially) Graduate Studies. It might provide a forum for ideas on common problems, as well as some initiation for those new to administration. This might be implemented in the standard panel or session formats; but conceivably the roundtable format might also be useful here.

### The Inaugural Mathematical Congress of the Americas



The Mathematical Congress of the Americas (MCA) will be held August 5 – 9, 2013 in Guanajuato, Mexico. This meeting is the first of its kind, and aims to highlight mathematical excellence in the Americas and foster mathematical cooperation between researchers, institutions, students, and mathematical societies in an international context. The Congress's plenary speakers include James Arthur, Artur Avila, Manjul Bhargava, Luis Caffarelli, and Ingrid Daubechies. The MCA, hosted by the Center for Research in Mathematics A.C., will be presenting the MCA Prize to five awardees for their individual achievements, the Solomon Lefschetz Medal to two awardees for excellence in research and contribution to mathematics, and the Americas Prize to one individual or group for fostering international collaboration between mathematicians in the Americas. The MCA Awards Committee is accepting nominations through January 31, 2013. Additionally, the MCA Steering Committee is accepting proposals for special sessions on mathematical topics well represented throughout the Americas until July 31, 2012. Additional information and details on the MCA can be found at its official website, [www.mca2013.org](http://www.mca2013.org).



### Math Reviews



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### AMS Professional Opportunities



Joint Mathematics Meetings, San Diego, California, January 9-12, 2013. Deadline to submit an abstract for a Special Session:

**September 25, 2012**

Deadline for attendee advance registration:

**December 17, 2012**

AMS Centennial Research Fellowships Program Deadline to apply for research support of (North American mathematicians):

**December 1, 2012**

AMS-AAAS Congressional Fellowship Deadline for U.S. citizens to apply for a year-long post as a special legislative assistant:

**February 15, 2013**

The AMS Fan China Exchange Deadline to apply for support of research collaborations between U.S. (or Canadian) and Chinese mathematicians:

**March 15, 2013**

Joint International Meeting of the AMS and the Romanian Mathematical Society, Alba Iulia, Romania Deadlines TBA; meeting dates are:

**June 23-30, 2013**

For more information on these programs and others, please visit [ams.org/programs](http://ams.org/programs).