



Newsletter of  
the Virginia  
Mathematical  
Association  
of Two Year  
Colleges

# VMATYC Visions

October 2006

## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Here we are enjoying the cooler weather of fall and the beginning of beautiful color from Mother Nature. Wonder how many of us still remember the hot, dry days, or the enjoyable vacation, or the neat fun things you discovered/relearned about mathematics of only a few months ago? However you spent your summer, I sincerely hope you had a good one and are now settled into another exciting year in the classroom. The fall semester is always special to me as many of our students are just beginning their college career and have so many hopes and dreams. Isn't it invigorating to think that we can in some small way help them try to achieve those dreams and not find them another fairy tale?

I personally want to say welcome to all the new faculty, both full time and adjunct. Each of us are glad to have you as a part of our VCCS Math/Computer Science team, and I look forward to getting to know you through VMATYC.

I want to say thank you to the conference chair and committee of faculty at Germanna Community College who were involved in making the 20th annual spring VMATYC conference an enjoyable and successful conference last April. A very diverse program, wonderful setting and delicious food to keep us going throughout the sessions.

I know you will find several interesting articles throughout the newsletter, some perhaps concerning the same topics I want to mention. We are looking forward to our fall regional meetings that are being planned around the state. Any opportunity to meet with our colleagues, share ideas, and learn new "tricks" for the classroom is a fun time. These fall meetings are free to all individuals who are interested in mathematics/computer science at the two-year college level-what a good deal. I hope each of you will make plans to attend your regional meeting. But remember there is a cost associated with them and they are being funded by your dues in VMATYC. Please check to see if your membership expired on 31 August. If it did, be sure to renew your membership now, don't wait until the annual spring conference. At that time, you can renew your membership for the 2007-2008 academic year and not have to think about this next fall. You may find the membership application on our web site or obtain a membership application form from your regional VP at the fall meeting.

There are big plans already being made for the spring statewide conference to be held at Thomas Nelson Community College in April. Begin to consider now to not only attend but to be a part of the program that is always so interesting. The call for presenters will be coming soon, so plan now to be ready to respond. Remember the conference in the spring is partially funded by VCCS because it is considered the math/computer science peer group meeting. We are grateful to VCCS for realizing the contribution that VMATYC can give to the state and their willingness to work with us to make a worthwhile conference and peer group meeting. As the cost of registration is determined later this year, our VMATYC budget will be carefully analyzed. This is one more reason to renew your membership now, so that it can be considered in the budget for setting the cost. We can only plan based on what we currently have in the treasury, not what we anticipate being there once everyone pays their dues in April.

Election of Executive Board officers will also occur this year. I strongly encourage you to become involved in VMATYC at the Executive Board level. The purpose of VMATYC, as stated in our constitution (which also can be found on our website): "... Its purpose is to promote mathematics and mathematics education by (a) encouraging the development of effective mathematics programs, (b) providing a forum for the exchange of ideas, and (c) promoting the professional development and welfare of its members." Our strength in promoting and influencing such items lies in our strength of our volunteers. Don't wait for someone else to do it-let that "someone" be you!!!

--Linda Taylor, President

# The upcoming November 2006 AMATYC Conference

---

## AMATYC Affiliate Delegate Report

Chris Allgyer, MECC

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you in Cincinnati at the 32nd AMATYC Annual Conference, November 2-5. In addition to the release of *Beyond Crossroads: Implementing Mathematics Standards in the First Two Years of College*, the conference will feature a large number of sessions and workshops that will offer outstanding professional development. If you are attending, I encourage you to consider being a presider for a session. According to the AMATYC web site, there are still presiders needed. To volunteer as a presider, go to [www.amatyc.org](http://www.amatyc.org) and look for the link to the Presider Application.

While at the AMATYC site, please consider nominating a colleague for the 2007 AMATYC Teaching Excellence Award. Nominations are due December 8, 2006.

As your Affiliate Delegate, I will be attending the Delegates Assembly at the conference. At the time I am submitting this article, I have not received any information about issues that the delegates might be asked to consider. If I receive notice of any such issues, I will use the VMATYC list serve to ask for your input.

[callgyer@me.vccs.edu](mailto:callgyer@me.vccs.edu)



Cincinnati and the Ohio River

## AMATYC Conference Registration Reimbursement

The VMATYC Executive Board again offered registration reimbursement for the AMATYC Annual Conference November 2-5 in Cincinnati to members who were willing to select a theme, attend conference sessions related to that theme, and share their experiences with us at the VMATYC Spring Conference April 13-14, 2007, at Thomas Nelson CC.

Cathy Hoffmaster of Thomas Nelson CC wrote in her application that "I plan to concentrate on Instructional Strategies. I believe that no matter how long a person has been teaching, they should always be open to new strategies to improve student learning. Another reason I chose this area is its broad application across all courses. I feel that my learning new strategies and applying them whenever possible will benefit students in all of my courses." We look forward to hearing from Cathy about how those learning strategies are working in her Spring courses.

Sarah Martin of Virginia Western CC will concentrate on developmental mathematics. "As the Program Head for Developmental Math at VWCC, here are some of the issues with which I need help. (1) We are in the process of revising our developmental curriculum, reorganizing and possibly adding course content, and perhaps changing the credit hours for each course. (2) We continue to struggle with placement issues. (3) This fall we eliminated the distance learning option for developmental algebra. (Distance learning worked well for independent learners with strong ability and motivation, but the majority of students who registered for these courses did not fit that description.) Would a hybrid course be a better option, or would the same issues arise? (4) I am participating in a grant funded project that is part of the College's retention program. This program includes "intrusive advising" of developmental students through mandatory individual meetings with me. It also includes building a sense of community and connection among students." We also look forward to hearing the information that Sarah finds in Cincinnati about these topics.

Congratulations to Cathy and Sarah who will be reimbursed for their conference registration. However, we will all benefit from the investment we are making in their professional development.

## The upcoming Spring VMATYC Conference

---

### April 13th & 14th at TNCC “Math: What's the Problem?”

In April we had an excellent conference at Germanna, thanks to the terrific conference planning committee at GCC and great presenters. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Abigail Adams, also received high marks. As usual, the highlight of the conference was the opportunity to interact with colleagues, and to share information, ideas, and concerns.

Our twenty-first annual conference is scheduled for April 13 - 14, 2007, at Thomas Nelson Community College in Hampton. The conference theme is "Math: What's the Problem?" Lodging and the Friday night banquet will be at the Omni Hotel in Newport News, <http://www.omnihotels.com/FindAHotel/NewportNews.aspx>. I visited the Omni this summer with site coordinator Cathy Hoffmaster and other local faculty and found it to be a beautiful facility (with very good food). Cathy has already organized the TNCC faculty into planning subcommittees.

A presenter application form is included with this newsletter and will be sent to all VCCS math faculty during this semester. Please consider making a presentation, conducting a workshop, or chairing a roundtable discussion. An idea you take for granted might be just the inspiration a colleague needs! If you are doing research (perhaps for an advanced degree), please consider sharing your findings. As many of you have requested, we hope to offer more sessions on pure mathematics, computer science, and higher level mathematics courses (calculus, differential equations, linear algebra).

For more information, contact Sarah Martin, [smartin@vw.vccs.edu](mailto:smartin@vw.vccs.edu), 540-857-7223, or any member of the conference committee.

Sarah Martin  
President-Elect and Conference Chair

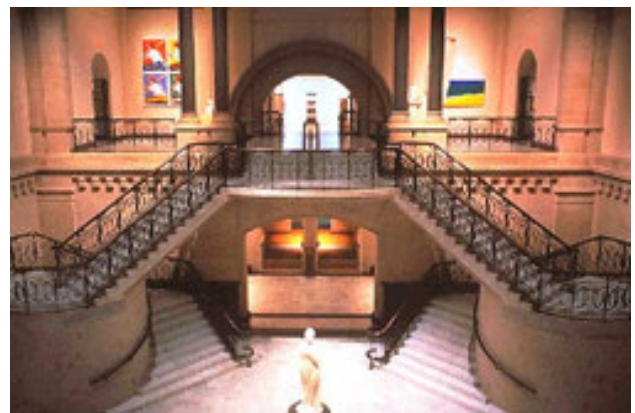
### The Glenn Fox VMATYC Mathematics and Computer Science Scholarship

Congratulations to Assane Ndiaye of Northern Virginia CC, our recipient for the 2006-2007 academic year. He will receive \$400 each semester as he pursues his goal of becoming a high school math and science teacher. Mr. Ndiaye has a varied background of educational experiences. In his native Senegal he worked with the American Peace Corps and the United Nations. Since arriving in the U.S. to further his education, he has tutored privately in math and French, and worked with Sylvan Learning Centers and Fairfax County Public Schools. We look forward to meeting this gentleman at the Spring Conference April 13-14 at Thomas Nelson CC.

We want to recognize Jon Wilkin of NVCC who sponsored the candidate. The scholarship plaque will be presented to Jon at the Northern Regional meeting this Fall to be displayed on the Alexandria Campus until next April.

Thank you also to those VMATYC members who served on the selection committee this past summer - N V Fitton, Northern Virginia CC; Jim Newsom, Tidewater CC; Joseph Steever, Wytheville CC; and Joan Tarpley-Robinson, Danville CC.

Keep your eyes on your students this semester as you look for potential scholarship candidates. The application form and selection criteria can be found at the VMATYC web site [virginia.matyc.org](http://virginia.matyc.org). Dates for submission will be announced next Spring.



Cincinnati Art Museum

## Other VMATYC news

---

### News from the Regions

#### Northern

The Fall 2006 VMATYC Conference will be held on November 11 at the Woodbridge Campus of Northern Virginia Community College from 9:30-2:00. Please consider volunteering to make a presentation to your colleagues at the conference, and also, please spread the word to all of the math faculty at your campus, especially adjuncts and non-VMATYC members. If you have any questions, or would like to RSVP, please contact Kevin Chouinard at kchouinard@nvcc.edu. Thanks!

#### Western

The fall 2006 VMATYC meeting has been slated for Friday, October 27. The meeting will be held on the campus of Virginia Highlands Community College in the Higher Education Center. Registration will start at approximately 11:30 a.m. Lunch is provided at no cost and starts at 12:00. I will be demonstrating a new software package called Camtasia. Camtasia can be a very helpful tool in the development of on line classes.

If you plan to attend, please let me know so I can have an accurate head count. If anyone has any additional software or other web class related technology that they would like to demonstrate, their participation would be welcome. Also, if anyone has any other teaching demonstrations that are suitable for a break out session or current topics that they think should be discussed in a break out session, please let me know.

We are working hard to build our membership. If you know of any Math or Computer Science faculty that are not members, please encourage them to attend our meeting and to join our organization. Please help get the word around and share this message with the faculty at your institution, full time and adjunct alike.

Will Galliher, WGalliher@me.vccs.edu

#### Eastern

The VMATYC Eastern Regional Conference, hosted by the Virginia Beach Campus of Tidewater Community College, will be held on October 14, 2006. Thirty to forty mathematics professionals are expected to attend. There are six scheduled presenters. A brief synopsis of the presentations follows.

George Derise      The Absolutely Most Important Application of Linear Algebra and TNCC  
It's Not in the Textbooks  
A very simple application of linear algebra to quantum mechanics and particle physics is presented. In 25 minutes we can understand the essence of quantum mechanics.

Richard Watkins Mathematics Instruction for All Learners TCC, VA Beach An overview of a day-long workshop given by Frank Klucken, Landmark College. This presents strategies that can help all learners while taking little or no time from content instruction.

Krystyna Karminska      Limits without Boundaries TNCC The presenter will compare limit definitions from different textbooks and present different answers to the same problem based on the text referenced.

Mike Kirby      Round Table Discussion TCC, VA Beach Best practices.

Judy Williams      Student Survey Data TCC, VA Beach Judy will show how a survey given during the first day of statistics class can be used as a teaching tool during the semester.

Amanda Roach      TBA Addison-Wesley

#### Central

Our Central Region meeting will be Friday, October 27, 2006 at Danville Community College in Danville, Va. Registration is at 3 pm. Our Theme is "Mathematics at the Community College." We will take a closer look at all math classes at our Community Colleges in the Central Region.

### VMATYC Nominating Committee

Judy Williams, TCC

As Past President, one of my duties is to chair the Nominating Committee. The Constitution states that the committee will be comprised of one member from each region. Several months before the Spring Conference, we must present to the members a slate with two candidates for each office; the slate must also contain a brief biographical sketch of each candidate. Ballots are returned to the Past President for tabulation. Then the results are announced at the Spring Conference, and the officers assume their duties May 1.

This year's nominating committee will consist of each of the regional Vice Presidents and myself. VMATYC President Linda Taylor is an ex officio member of the committee. I have asked each of the incumbents if he or she wishes to continue in office. Now I am asking each of you if you will accept the call to serve your peer group. Let one of us on the committee know of your interest. Send me an email at [jwilliams@tcc.edu](mailto:jwilliams@tcc.edu) if you have any questions about the duties of a particular office. I must tell you that there is work involved with each position, but if we all do our part, the workload is quite manageable, and you can actually have fun while you are working.

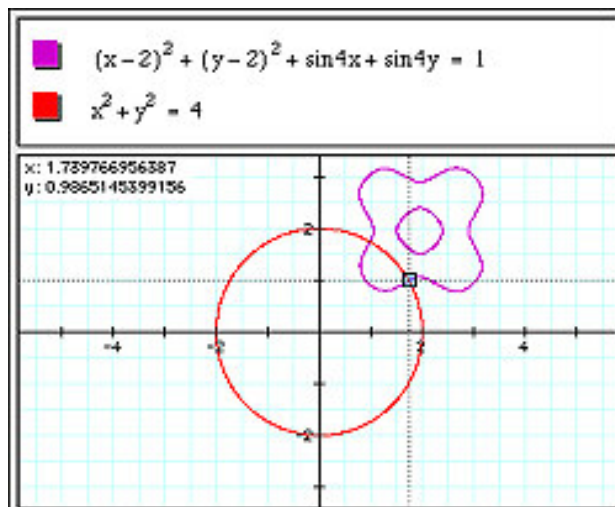
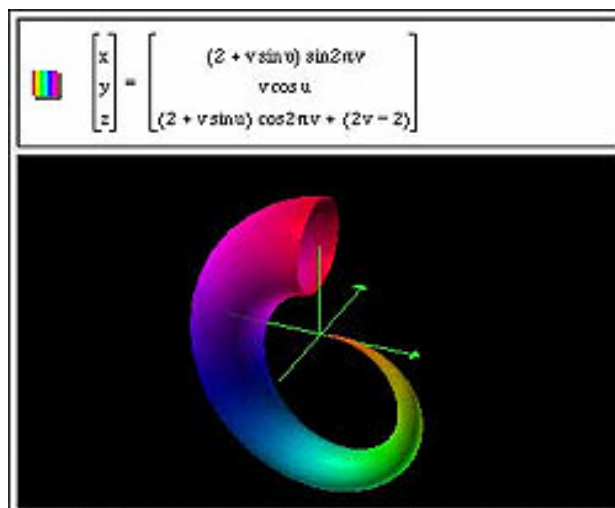
You can read about each office in the Constitution on our web site <http://www.virginia.matyc.org/constitution-vmatyc.htm>. The President-Elect assumes the Presidency and the President becomes Past President. All other offices are open for candidates. Here is the major duty of each official.

- President-Elect chairs the Annual Conference Planning Team.
- Each Regional Vice President schedules and plans a Fall conference.
- Membership Secretary keeps records of current and past members.
- Recording Secretary is responsible for the minutes of our meetings.
- Treasurer keeps track of our finances.
- Affiliate Delegate keeps us aware of our relationship with our national organization.

Where do you see yourself or a colleague serving in one of these positions? Write out your ideal slate and send it to me. When we create a slate with two qualified people for each position, we are showing the strength of our organization. No matter who is ahead when the votes are counted, VMATYC is the real winner on election day.

### From the editor ...

At the VMATYC conference this past spring, Barbara Falkner gave a talk on math software. A package she discussed is just named Graphing Calculator. It is graphing software, and it is very impressive. It graphs 2D and 3D, and allows the user to graph using different coordinate systems. It is available for faculty and students for \$60, as a download from <http://www.nucalc.com/Home.html>. It is available in both Mac and Windows flavors. The images below were created with the software.



Jon Wilkin, editor