

# MSCS MESS

Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science  
St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057  
February 24, 2017 Volume 45, No. 19

---

## Thursday's Afternoon Talk

Title: Can't you just feel the moonshine?  
Time: Reception at 3pm; lecture  
from 3:30 to 4:30pm  
Place: Carleton College, Olin 141

## Thursday's Evening Talk

Title: Gems of Ramanujan and their  
lasting impact on mathematics  
Time: Lecture from 7:00 to 8:00pm;  
reception immediately afterward  
Place: St. Olaf Viking Theater

## Math across the Cannon

Each year, Carleton and St. Olaf partner to host an especially exciting speaker who delivers two exciting talks—an afternoon talk oriented toward math majors and faculty and an evening talk appropriate for a general audience. This year, our visitor is Prof. Ken Ono, a world-renowned combinatorist and number theorist from Emory University.

Both talks are scheduled for Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The afternoon talk, hosted by Carleton College, will introduce math majors to exciting topics from Prof. Ono's research program. The evening, general audience talk, here at St. Olaf will focus on the lasting impact Ramanujan's work has had on mathematics. (Prof. Ono is an Associate Producer of *The Man Who Knew Infinity*, a film dramatizing Ramanujan's life starring Dev Patel and Jeremy.)

Come to either (or both!) of the talks to meet MSCS folks from Carleton, enjoy refreshments, and bask in mathematical majesty.

## A different Budapest experience

You may know about the acclaimed Budapest Semesters in Mathematics (BSM) program, and our interim number theory course in Budapest (MATH 239). But you may not know that there's a new opportunity for students interested in *mathematics education*.

Budapest Semesters in Mathematics **Education** (BSME) is a semester-long study-abroad program. At BSME, students explore the Hungarian approach to learning and teaching, in which a strong and explicit emphasis is placed on problem solving, mathematical creativity, and communication. BSME welcomes students who are (1) currently pursuing secondary mathematics teaching license, (2) planning to pursue other paths to mathematics licensure, or (3) simply curious about learning and teaching of mathematics. To learn more about BSME, visit the program's website at [bsmeducation.com](http://bsmeducation.com).

BSME is currently accepting applications for the Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 semesters. If you're interested in this opportunity, please contact Prof. Matsuura ([matsuura@stolaf.edu](mailto:matsuura@stolaf.edu)) right away, since the St. Olaf deadline for applying to study-abroad programs is approaching soon (February 27).

## Would you like to edit the Mess?

The current MSCS Mess editor being a senior, we are looking for an MSCS-affiliated student to compile and distribute the Mess next year. This work-study job involves communicating with members of the MSCS faculty, student leaders, and—the biggest treat of all—Mess Czar Ellen Haberoth in order to provide a resource keeping the St. Olaf community

abreast of exciting MSCS happenings. The editor next year should be familiar with typesetting in L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, be excited about networking within the department, and be (ideally but not necessarily) a current sophomore. If interested, email the current Mess editor, Corey Brooke, at brooke@stolaf.edu.

### Videographer wanted!

The MSCS department is seeking a videographer to film research seminars and colloquia. If you like taking videos and want to get paid to attend MSCS talks, stop by and talk to Ellen in RMS 307. Typically, seminars are held Mondays from 3-4:30pm and colloquia are Fridays from 3:30-4:30pm.

### Black history in MSCS

As Black History Month comes to a close, we on the MSCS Mess team would like to share some information and resources about and for black experience in mathematics, statistics, and computer science communities. According to a New York Times article published last week<sup>1</sup>, only 20 of the 1802 math graduate students who earned math Ph.D.s in 2015 were black—so it is crucial to pay especial attention to the narratives black mathematicians have to share among each other and with the larger MSCS community. To this end, projects like *Mathematically Gifted and Black*<sup>2</sup> (itself inspired by the project *Latin@s and Hispan-*

*ics in Mathematical Sciences*<sup>3</sup>), which shares accounts of black mathematicians, are important in order for “black mathematicians of the future [to] continue to blaze new trails for those who come behind them.” Mindful of black history, there is also a lot of energy invested in community building through mentorship: peruse the most recent newsletter<sup>4</sup> from NAM, an organization committed to promoting African-American excellence in the mathematical sciences, and take a look at the Inclusion/Exclusion<sup>5</sup> blog hosted by the AMS, which includes entries with emphasis on race and MSCS academia.

Hopefully, you find some of these resources enlightening, constructively challenging, or inspiring; there is no dearth of worthwhile material available relating to black MSCS histories, realities, and aspirations. From now until Tuesday—happy Black History Month!

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/17/nyregion/new-york-math-camp.html?nlid=14038821&r=0>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mathematicallygiftedandblack.com/home.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://lathisms.org/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://secure.portline.com/math/include/pages/files/newsletters/2016%20Fall.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://blogs.ams.org/mathmentoringnetwork/#sthash.9Vi9qTEV.dpbs>

*To submit an article or event for publication in the Mess, email brooke@stolaf.edu; to receive the Mess digitally each Friday, email freking@stolaf.edu; visit <http://wp.stolaf.edu/mscs/mscs-mess/> for a digital archive of previous MSCS Mess issues.*

Corey Brooke, Editor  
Bruce Pell, Faculty Adviser  
Ellen Haberoth, Mess Czar