

# Consortium Connections

Connecting campuses to promote excellence in science and mathematics

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Fall is a wonderful time on our campuses; eager first year students, brightly colored leaves, Saturday afternoon football games, cool evenings, and fresh apple pie! I hope the academic year is off to a great start on your campuses. We're looking forward to another busy year for the Midstates Consortium for Math and Science. Please take a few minutes to read through this newsletter so you'll be aware of what the Consortium has to offer this fall.

## Welcome Augustana College

Earlier this summer, Augustana College became our thirteenth Consortium member. Augustana is a private liberal arts college with 2,300 undergraduate students set on a hilly, wooded campus above the Mississippi River in Rock Island, Illinois. Augustana has recently instituted a new capstone research program called Senior Inquiry that aspires to involve all of graduates in some sort of research experience in the senior year. We look forward to faculty and students from Augustana participating in Consortium programs this year.

## Undergraduate Research Symposia



Undergraduate students are invited to present their research projects and results to peers from the 13 MCMS member campuses at either of the 2007 Undergraduate Research Symposia. Students are invited to present their results in a 15 minute oral or poster presentation. In 2006, more than 170 students and faculty participated in these meetings including William Werner (shown at the left) who presented a poster on red-winged blackbird research that he conducted with Ken Yasukawa at Beloit College. These meetings are wonderful opportunities to meet peers and faculty from many colleges, learn a little bit about graduate school in science and math, visit campuses with vibrant, diverse and nationally recognized research programs and have fun in St. Louis and Chicago!

The Consortium covers all the expenses for up to 10 students and 2 faculty members from each campus to attend each meeting. Students are encouraged to discuss registering for the meeting with their research advisor. As part of the online registration, students will need to submit an abstract as an MSWord file (200 word maximum).

Online registration and abstract submission will be open until Thursday October 4th at [www.mathsciconsortium.org](http://www.mathsciconsortium.org).

### **Biological Sciences and Psychology at Washington University, November 2-4**

On November 2-4, Washington University is hosting the Biological Sciences and Psychology Symposium. Students are welcome to make their research presentations on subjects ranging from zoology, biochemistry, medicine, and ecology, to behavioral and cognitive science, pharmacology and neuroscience.

### **Physical Sciences and Mathematics at The University of Chicago, November 9-11**

On November 9-11, The University of Chicago is hosting the Physical Sciences and Mathematics Symposium. This meeting will feature student presentations on topics including computer science, environmental science, chemistry, physics, mathematics and geology.

## Speaker-Consultant Exchange

The MCMS is launching a new program this fall called the Speaker-Consultant Exchange (SCE) aimed at facilitating more regular and more meaningful faculty visits between member campuses. Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Environmental Science, Geology, Math, Physics, and Psychology departments and programs at MCMS campuses will indicate their interest in participating in the SCE this year to their [campus representative](#). Once departments and programs have identified their interest in participating, the MCMS office will make assignments of partner schools that will exchange speaker-consultants sometime during the 07-08 academic year. The SCE program will send one faculty member to their assigned partner campus to present a seminar and serve as a consultant on some identified issue. In turn, that department will also host a faculty member from their partner campus to do the same for them. Our hope is that over the next several years departmental exchanges of speaker-consultants will foster greater familiarity and better connections between faculty, departments, programs and indeed campuses in the Consortium.

Most departments and programs have already indicated their interest in participating in the SCE program this year. But in case you missed the announcement, let your campus rep, or Director Nordell Pearson ([nordellpearson@hope.edu](mailto:nordellpearson@hope.edu)) know that you'd like your department to be part of the 2007-08 SCE program.

For more information about the SCE program, visit [our website](#) or speak with your campus representative.

## New Faculty Workshop: July 13-15, 2007

This summer's new faculty workshop was held at Lawrence's 'northern' campus, Björklunden, in Door County, Wisconsin. Jeanne Narum of Project Kaleidoscope and the Independent Colleges Office and Karen Nordell Pearson the Consortium's director were the facilitators.



The weekend provided the 42 participants from all 13 member campuses numerous opportunities for large and small group discussions as well as some time for personal reflection. One of the goals of the weekend was for each participant to take with them a personal action plan complete with goals, strategies and actions for the next 2-3 years. Participants were assigned a partner who they worked with during the planning process. Partners and other participants offered constructive criticism to each person about their plan. Other sessions included discussions of topics

such as active learning, case studies of situations facing new faculty, writing research proposals, finding a mentor, setting realistic goals and balancing work and life. We challenged groups to several exercises outside including untying 8 or 12 person knots as shown in the picture here. On Saturday evening the 6 cluster groups, each containing 5-8 participants presented skits and poems depicting a new faculty member going to visit the academic dean at their college. They were all very creative and had us hooting with laughter. One participant said "Just having to articulate my goals and plans has been helpful. I would like to shape them into something that I actually use, rather than it becoming just another 'nice idea'." Good luck!

## Comments from the Director

Friends and Colleagues,



This is my second year 'on the job' as the Consortium Director. It was my pleasure to visit each of the 13 member campuses last year. The idea for the Speaker-Consultant Exchange program grew out of conversations I had with faculty and Deans on many campuses. Between our 13 campuses, we have faculty and staff with tremendous expertise in a wide variety of specialties including curriculum development, grant writing, interdisciplinary programs, student recruitment and retention, undergraduate research, and much, much more. Please consider using the variety of consortium programs to strengthen some aspect of the work you do with colleagues and students.

If you've got ideas for how we can strengthen the MCMS, please give me a call at 616-395-7217 or send an email to [nordellpearson@hope.edu](mailto:nordellpearson@hope.edu).

Enjoy the fall!

Karen Nordell Pearson

Augustana College • Beloit College • Carthage College • Colorado College • Grinnell College • Hope College • Knox College  
Lawrence University • Luther College • Macalester College • St. Olaf College • University of Chicago • Washington University