

The Almagest

The bi-weekly newsletter of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science. Your trusted source for news.

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Alma College
Alma, MI 48801

Inaugural issue of our newsletter

The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science is launching a bi-weekly newsletter called The Almagest (pronounced Al'ma jest), and we thought we'd begin by explaining the name we've chosen. Around 150 A.D. Ptolemy compiled a vast work on astronomy and mathematics, which was originally called the *Mathematical Syntaxis*. The book was such an important and significant work that there arose the custom of calling it the *Almagest*, which means "the greatest." Now, we don't believe for a minute that our newsletter will be the greatest of all time, but how could we pass up an opportunity to use such a great name? We hope you'll enjoy our newsletter, and we trust you'll become a regular reader.

Summer R.E.U.'s

There's still time to apply for a summer R.E.U. (Research Experience for Undergraduates). This is a great opportunity to spend 7 or 8 weeks of the summer working on some interesting project in mathematics or computer science. And to make it even more attractive, you'll receive a stipend of approximately \$2500 in addition to free room and board. If you'd like to talk to someone who actually participated in an R.E.U., then speak to **Christine Wheatley** or **Charles Cook**. Last summer Christine visited Virginia Tech and Charles went to the University of Idaho. I should add that this program is intended for students who have just completed their junior year. If you're interested, please stop by Professor Sipka's office for more information.

Best Jobs found in Math & C.S.

After compiling research on 200 different jobs, this year's JobRated.com report ranks *mathematician* as the country's best job, followed by actuary and statistician. The research relied on five criteria: stress, compensation, hiring outlook, physical demands, and work environment. The top ten jobs are:

1. **Mathematician**
2. **Actuary**
3. **Statistician**
4. Biologist
5. **Software Engineer**
6. **Computer Systems Analyst**
7. Historian
8. Sociologist
9. Industrial designer
10. Accountant

For more info, visit the website:

www.careercast.com/jobs/content/JobsRated_10BestJobs

Puzzle of the bi-week

Which of the numbers are in the wrong order?

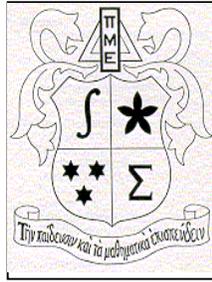
2	7	9	3	8	4
3	6	4	2	6	9
9	8	6	7	7	3
4	4	8	6	2	2
8	9	7	8	3	7
6	3	2	4	9	6

Check this out!

If you'd like a quick review of Calculus 1, then check out the YouTube videos by Dr. Ed Burger from Williams College. Burger gives a fast, furious, and entertaining review of calc 1 in under 20 minutes. You'll enjoy them...I promise. Simply go to YouTube (www.Youtube.com) and search for the titles of his two videos: *Calculus in 20 minutes Part 1* and *Calculus in 20 minutes Part 2*.

Pi Mu Epsilon

Are you aware that Alma College has a chapter of Pi Mu Epsilon, a national mathematics honorary? Well, we do, and the current members are: Charles Cook, Alexandra Conell, Reid Cuddy, James Kruse, Adam Meinzinger, Alex Montoye, Adam Sypniewski, and Christine Wheatley.



In a few weeks we'll be inviting qualified students to join. If you'd like to see the requirements for membership, please contact Professor Sipka or visit the Pi Mu Epsilon web site at: www.pme-math.org.

People

You may have wondered where professors Dai and Nyman are this term. Dr. Dai is on maternity leave, and Dr. Nyman is on sabbatical.

Seniors

Just a reminder that senior presentations will begin in March. The first presentation will be on Tuesday, **March 3rd**. Remember that your topics are due in Mrs. Smith's office (SAC 224) on **January 23rd**, and your paper is due on **February 13th**.

Born around this date



David Hilbert (1862-1943) was born on the 23rd of January in Königsberg, Prussia. He is best known for his work in geometry. Hilbert's work in geometry had the greatest influence in that area after Euclid.

Student assistant:	Matt Mansell
Faculty advisor:	Tim Sipka
Distribution:	Deb Smith

If you would like to submit an announcement or a short article, please send it via e-mail to Matt Mansell (11mgmans) or Tim Sipka (sipka).