

## GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Rachel Schwell  
Spring/Summer 2003

Last year, we said goodbye to many of our fellow graduate students. Ph.D's were granted to Sungwook Lee (who has a tenure-track job at the University of Southern Mississippi), Peng Zhou (Sun Life, Framingham, Mass), and Nataliya Savytska (University of Toledo), who will be spending a couple of months back with us this summer. A Master's in Math went to Christina Brewer (who is now pursuing a Ph.D. in Math Ed at NYU). Graduating with the degree of Master of Science in Mathematics–Actuarial Science were Yi-Chi Chen (Graduate School), Fred Dormekpor, Jiayu Guo (UNUM Provident, Portland, Maine), Kyuho Han (John Hancock, Boston), Xun (Cindy) Huang (Towers Perrin, Boston), Hyung Jae Im, Hugh Lakshman (CIGNA), Isaac Larbi (Mercer, Stamford), Virginia Mello (Watson Wyatt, Boston), Maria Momot (Sun Life, Boston), Evelyn Nyarko (PenTec, Southington, CT), Patrick Otu-Manteaw (Prudential, Newark), Fang (Angela) Ren (still here but in a different graduate program), Fuying Song (Sun Life, Boston), Xianmei Tang (Lincoln Life, Hartford), Victor Victoriano (Ernst & Young), Haining Zhao (UNUM Provident, Portland), Ying Zhao (Sun Life, Boston), and Jingqiu Zhu (who started at Towers Perrin, Stamford, but has since left there for Blue Cross–Blue Shield of Massachusetts).

Although we were sad to say goodbye to these people last spring, this year brought a fresh new batch of grad students who brought with them a lot of life and energy. We were also glad to have two visiting students, Marie Sawicki and Constance Covillard, who completed their year-long exchange, and have since returned to France.

We started the year off with a pizza party where all the new and current students got acquainted and where new students were able to meet their student mentors. This was just the beginning of the fun! The energetic team of Molli Jones, Regina Speicher, and Erin Moss created SIGMA, Social/Intellectual Graduate Mathematics Activities, which was responsible for the many enjoyable gatherings we grad students attended throughout the year. Included were our monthly Dinners and a Movie, Game Nights, and Card Nights (commendably organized by Jaimie Stone). These provided us a chance to relax and socialize after long hours with the books. (SIGMA website: <http://www.math.uconn.edu/Sigma>.)

October brought scary times – no, not the first exams of the semester, but our Halloween party, organized by Regina Speicher, Erin Moss, Jaimie Stone, and Rachel Schwell. Among the festivities were a costume contest (won by Jon Clausen and Jason Borycki for their macho rendition of Hans and Franz), and Halloween Jeopardy (won by the trivia-touting team of Erin Moss and Bob Wooster). We also continued the TA network (Krista O'Neill, Molli Jones, Regina Speicher, Erin Moss, Jianhong Xu, Minnie Catral, and Rachel Schwell) that was started last year, for which Jianhong Xu created an impressive web page – check it out! (<http://www.math.uconn.edu/Sigma/tanet.htm>)

We also had several grad students give talks in the fall and spring. Marc Corluy, Adam Bowers, and Molli Jones gave two talks each: Marc on Web Page design (HTML, tables, etc.); Adam, one talk on Maple, and one entitled “An Algebraic Construction of Three-Dimensional Lorentz Homogeneous Spaces”; and Molli, one talk on Zero-Knowledge Proofs, and another entitled “Good Gradings of Incidence Algebras.” Ioanna Mavrea also gave a talk on the Mathematics of Voting.

Personal milestones and recognition: Gabriela Bulancea was married in April 2003 to Jorge Laboy-Bruno. Ioanna Mavrea and Dave Molnar, one of our former graduate students, were married this summer. Molli Jones received the Connie Strange Graduate Community Award and Regina Speicher was awarded the Louis J. Deluca Memorial Award for Outstanding Teaching Assistant in the department. We also had three inductees into the Pi Mu Epsilon mathematics honor society – Minnie Catral, Krista O'Neill, and Regina Speicher.

As the year came to a close, we realized that, as every year, we had to say goodbye to some of our friends and wish them luck in their new paths. This past semester marked the graduation of the following students with the degree of Master of Science in Mathematics–Actuarial Science: Ning Ding (Hartford

Life, Simsbury), Qing (Grace) Fang (Towers Perrin, Stamford), Gregory Goddu (Hartford P/C, Hartford), Ke Lu (ING, Hartford), Sang Kook Na, Yazhe (Jane) Ren (Watson Wyatt), Yang Yang , Ximing Yao (Phoenix, Hartford), Chungjing Zhang (Towers Perrin), Gang Zhou, Anita Sathe (Deloitte & Touche, Hartford) and Li Zhou (Hartford P/C, Hartford). We are also saying goodbye to two people who have earned their Ph.D.'s this semester, Jianhong Xu, who has accepted a tenure track position at the University of West Florida in Pensacola, and Gabriela Bulancea, who has a visiting position starting in August at the University of Puerto Rico at Cayey. Those of us who are staying are looking forward to seeing a group of new faces, and to starting another great year in fall 2003.



Minnie Catral, Adam Bowers, and Marc Corluy  
perusing *Lectures on Complex Function Algebras*

#### **PH. D. DEGREES GRANTED, 2002-2003**

- Nataliya Savytska (adviser I. Koltracht), “Numerical Methods for Nonlinear Partial Differential Equations of Gross-Pitaevskii Type and Their Discrete Analogues.”
- Jianhong Xu (adviser M. Neumann), “Parallel Computing for Markov Chains via Perron Complementation”
- Peng Zhou (adviser C. Vinsonhaler), “Stochastic Modeling of Post-Retirement Financial Planning.”
- Gabriela Bulancea (adviser S. Sidney), “Sequence Algebras of Continuous Functions.”

#### **Master’s thesis in Mathematics, May 2003**

Maria Elisabeta Gageonea (adviser S. Sidney), “Univalence Criteria.”