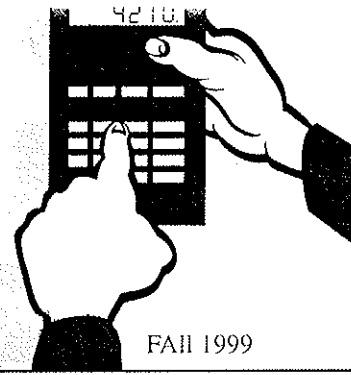


MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

FALL 1999



FROM THE CHAIR

Each year the College of Science honors one outstanding graduate as its Gold Nugget. I am proud to announce that this year's award will go to Mr. Enrique Gomez, B.S. '76, M.S. '78, who studied in this department. Enrique, whose distinguished career has included work on the space shuttle project, is now Director of Development for Retail Store Solutions at IBM in Raleigh, N.C. He will be honored as part of the Homecoming celebration at a breakfast at 9:00 a.m. Friday October 8. Please contact the Dean's office at 747-5536 if you would like to attend.

It is also a pleasure to read elsewhere in this newsletter of the accomplishments and recognition of other graduates and faculty of the Math Department. Congratulations to all.

You alumni and friends of the department may have noticed that you haven't received a phone call recently from a Math student or faculty member asking you to make a contribution to our Excellence Fund. The University has taken responsibility for making these contacts away from

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

UTEP STATISTICIAN ON NATIONAL TV

If you caught PBS' "Life By The Numbers" seven-part series about mathematics in April 1998, you'd have seen our own **BILL KAIGH** featured in a ten-minute segment called "Reading Minds", explaining some of the mathematics behind scientific public opinion polling.

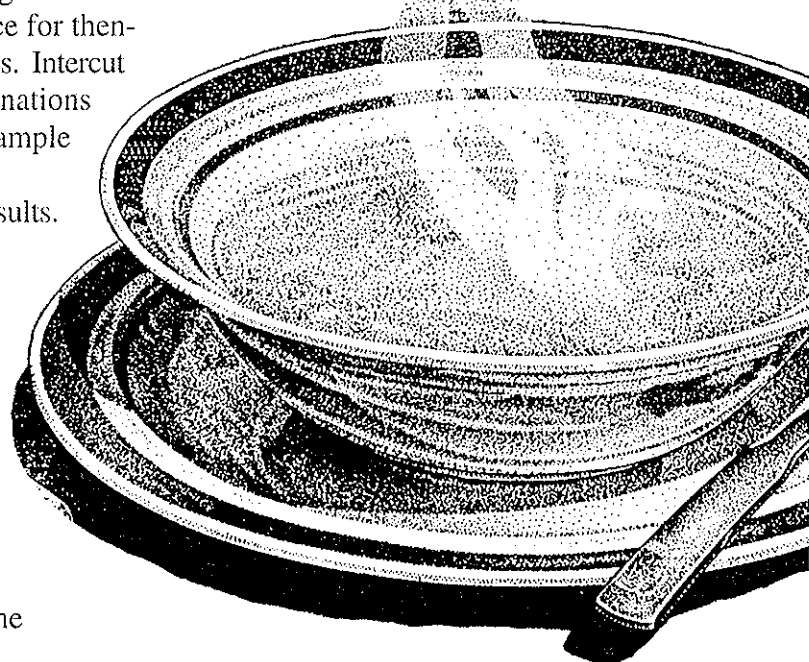
The focus of the segment from the one-hour "Chances of A Lifetime" program is on Dr. Kaigh's work, as head of K Associates, the locally prominent polling firm, predicting the 1995 election for mayor of the city of El Paso. He's shown working at home, on his computer, generating a random sample of the El Paso electorate. The segment ends with him calling the race for then-mayor Larry Francis. Intercut with this are explanations of what makes a sample random enough to produce reliable results.

He offers an analogy to a pot of minestrone soup; if you stir the soup enough, then a small spoonful will give a random sample of the ingredients, no matter how large the pot is.

The minestrone soup analogy was demonstrated in his kitchen with an actual large pot of soup. As evidence of the professional production standards of the series, this scene had to be filmed numerous times before everything was just right. By the end, Dr. Kaigh was asking, "How many of these do I have to do?"

Filming in El Paso took two days, and required a team of two producers, a camera operator, a sound technician, and an additional technician. Although the minestrone soup episode may have been the most extreme example, there were many takes and retakes for other scenes as well.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



STATISTICIAN

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Dr. Kaigh is also seen teaching a class (actually, Dr. Gregory's STAT 3280 class) in the basement of the Classroom building, and shopping at Furr's with his wife Geri.

The story of how Dr. Kaigh came to be part of this production begins a few years back, when the MAA Southwestern Section meeting took place on the UTEP campus, and he gave a talk, one of the more well-attended ones, about gambling on baseball. The MAA's Don Albers happened to be at this meeting, and later they got to talking about polling. So when WQED, the PBS Pittsburgh station producing "Life By The Numbers", called Albers to find a mathematician involved in polling, Albers knew whom to send them to.

The whole series features the latest television technology, specially commissioned background music, and film star Danny Glover as host, in an effort to reach as wide an audience as possible. It was also designed to be used as a teaching tool. Teachers were specifically permitted to tape the shows off the air for use in the classroom, and there are affiliated websites (www.mathlife.wqed.org and www.ti.com/calc) as well as a companion Wiley series book (by Keith Devlin, also entitled "Life By The Numbers").

Videos for the "Chances of a Lifetime" one-hour program (as well as the other programs in the seven-part "Life By the Numbers" series) can be purchased for \$19.95 each by calling WQED at 1-800-274-1307. The production of the series, which took over three years, was funded primarily by Texas Instruments, the National Science Foundation, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

AWARDS

Since our last newsletter, several faculty and students from our department have received recognition for their accomplishments.

A total of 2510 students from 419 colleges and universities in Canada and the United States participated in the Fifty-Eighth (December 1997) William Lowell Putnam Mathematical Competition, the most prestigious and challenging mathematics competition in the United States. RICARDO SAENZ of UTEP was one of three students from Texas universities (the other two are from Rice) to place in the top 100. This was the third consecutive year that Ricardo placed in the top 200. Ricardo has now just completed his first year of graduate school at Princeton University.

At the Spring 1998 Convocation, Dr. NANCY MARCUS was awarded the Chancellor's Council Outstanding Teacher Award. Her citation reads, in part, "One of the most innovative faculty members on the campus, Dr. Marcus has worked tirelessly to design and implement strategies to

engage the interest and strengthen the mathematics skills of the many UTEP students with whom she has come into contact ... Dr. Marcus' students consistently rate her as an outstanding teacher, and they enthusiastically applaud her efforts to build their self-confidence and encourage them to improve their performance. She has high expectations for her students, and she successfully communicates to them that she will be their partner in attempting to meet them."

Also in Spring 1998, Dr. WILLIAM LEAHEY received the College of Science's inaugural John R. Bristol Teaching Award. This award is given to one outstanding teacher in the College each semester. That Dr. Leahey was the very first to be recognized with this award is a testament to his many years of excellent teaching.

In Spring 1999, Drs. Leahey and DELMAR BOYER were awarded the rank of Professor Emeritus upon their retirements, for their many years of service to UTEP.

FROM THE CHAIR *continued from page 1*

the departments, so the person who calls may not ask you whether you want to earmark your contribution for Math. Please remember to designate your gift to either the Gladman Scholarship or the Mathematics Departmental Excellence Fund. It will be greatly appreciated.

Don't forget the Math Department's Homecoming Coffee 10:00 a.m. to noon, Saturday October 9 in Bell Hall. This summer, Bell Hall was

recarpeted and painted for the first time since the department moved here in 1982. Please come by to see the building's new look, have a cup of coffee, and visit with faculty, students, and fellow alumni.

We also hope to see you at the College of Science Barbecue at 4:00 p.m. the same day in Leach Grove, next to Bell Hall. Both events are free, and no reservations are needed.

Joe Guthrie

ALUMNI NOTES

ALBERTA DAWSON, B.A. '54, is retired in Washington State.

JOE M. DORGAN, B.A. '57, is retired from the Defense Department, and restoring a 64-year old house in Wisconsin with his wife Ann. He is also traveling, golfing, and volunteering with the Methodist church.

TOBY TOVAR, B.A. '65, teaches math at El Paso High School, where he was 1992-93 EPISD Teacher of the Year, and has coached numerous teams to titles in a variety of mathematics competitions.

CARSTEN HERMANN, M.S. '74, lives in Germany where he translates Mathematica and Statview into German and distributes technical software. He has also written a book on Mathematica.

KAREN FLORES, B.S. '78, is an information technology consultant for El Paso Energy Corporation here in El Paso.

LICO REYES, is an actor, DJ, impressionist, promoter and singer in Arlington, Texas. He has been on TV's "Walker, Texas Ranger" and other shows, has opened for

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performers ranging from Danny Thomas to the Mamas and Papas to Paul Rodriguez, and impersonates Father Guido Sarducci, Michael Jackson, and Elvis.

To get YOUR doings in our next newsletter, just return the form below.

Alumni Data Update Form

Department of Mathematical Sciences

Please fill in the form below so we can update our records

Name: _____

Maiden Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____

Degree(s) and Major: _____

Year(s): _____

Employer: _____

Position/Title: _____

Birthdate - Month:Day: _____ / _____

Let us know what you have been up to
(To be included in the Math Department Newsletter).

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____ for the 1999 Alumni Fund For Excellence.

Yes, I want to support the Department of Mathematical Sciences.

Enclosed is my check for:

- Mathematical Sciences Endowment Fund
- Math Department Enhancement Fund
- C. H. Gladman Scholarship Fund Other
- In Memory/Honor of:

or you may use: Mastercard Visa Discover

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Please return to:
The University of Texas at El Paso
Department of Mathematical Sciences
El Paso, Texas 79968-0514

STATISTICAL CONSULTING LABORATORY

The former BioStatistical Laboratory has broadened into the Statistical Consulting Laboratory, under the direction of the department's Dr. Joan Staniswalis. The Laboratory offers professional statistical support for the El Paso region, both on-campus and off-campus. Through the laboratory, UTEP faculty provide all aspects of statistical consulting. The laboratory is physically located in the northern wing of Bell Hall.

Clients have ranged from UTEP faculty and students to researchers in the local community, including those from Fort Bliss, Sierra Medical Center, and Texas Tech University School of Medicine. For further information, please call (915)747-6992.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

