

# Women of Applied Mathematics Research and Leadership Conference

## Report on Mentoring Activities

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We organized a three mentoring events: one targeted toward the women undergraduate students in the department, one for the women graduate students, and one university-wide event open to all faculty and students.

**Luncheon for Undergraduate Students** For its size (approximately 10,000 undergraduate students), UMBC has a disproportionately large number of undergraduate mathematics majors – 200 or 2%. (The national average is closer to 1%.) At UMBC about half of those mathematics and statistics majors are women. We organized a free pizza lunch, sponsored by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at UMBC, for the female undergrad math and statistics majors. We advertized the event by sending emails to all the female undergrad math and statistics majors, as well as mailing fliers to their campus address. At the event, there was a panel consisting of representatives from several campus programs that provide resources for undergraduate students. Beth Pennington, of the Provost's office, spoke about the undergraduate research awards sponsored by the Provost's office as well as several prestigious scholarships (Rhodes, Marshall, etc.). Anika Green of the Meyerhoff program on campus discussed opportunities available for Meyerhoff scholarships and provided the students with a comprehensive list of websites for summer internships. Finally, Janet Lin, of the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) student group spoke about the networking and social activities provided by WISE. Approximately 10 undergraduate students participated, mostly freshman and sophomores. Although we had hoped for a larger number of participants, we were encouraged by the questions and enthusiasm of those that did attend.

**Luncheon for Graduate Students** The Department of Mathematics and Statistics has approximately 65 graduate students, 27 of whom are women, and 15 who are full time graduate students. We invited all the women graduate students in mathematics and statistics at UMBC to a lunch, sponsored by the NSF ADVANCE program at UMBC. Seven students attended the lunch. Kathleen and Sue ordered pamphlets, information brochures, and membership forms from several professional organizations including AWM, SIAM, AMS, and ASA prior to the event. In addition, the female faculty in the department (Kathleen Hoffman (math), Sue Minkoff (math) and Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch (stat)), spoke briefly and informally about their experiences participating in these organizations and particularly about the importance of attending conferences and networking as a graduate student. The success of this event will be judged by watching for participation

in future conferences by these students. At least one of these students has since applied to and been accepted to three summer workshops for graduate students (IMA, RPI, U. Delaware)

**University-wide event for Faculty and Students** In conjunction with the Women in Applied Mathematics Research and Leadership event at College Park, we invited Linda Petzold to UMBC to give a colloquium talk in the Math Department. In addition, we organized an informal discussion and reception, sponsored by WISE, in which Prof. Petzold outlined her career path from graduate student to well-known computer scientist. There were approximately 25 students and faculty who attended this reception from both the Math Department and the WISE student and faculty groups. We deliberately scheduled the event in an informal setting, that is, a room with couches and comfortable chairs and a fireplace to encourage discussion and questions. Prof. Petzold gave an outstanding summary of her career-path including some of the obstacles she overcame and the opportunities in which she participated over the years. The feedback that we got from the participants was that the event was an overwhelming success.