



## CITATION

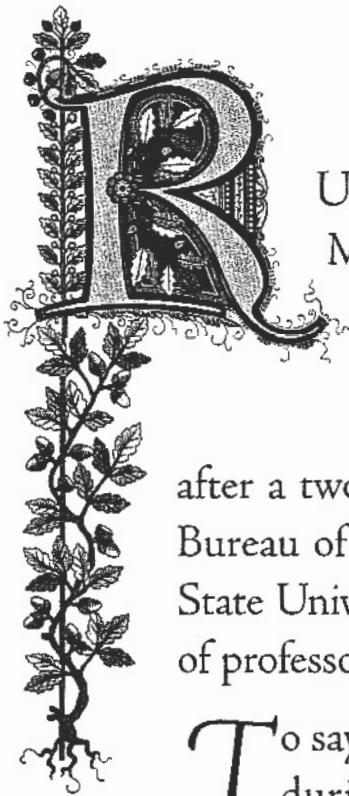
MARCH 5, 2005

In keeping with the resolve of the Mathematical Association of America to take substantive action each year to honor extraordinarily successful teaching at all post-secondary levels, the Northern California, Nevada, and Hawaii Section of the Association is pleased to identify

### RUSSELL MERRIS

as the recipient of its MAA Sectional

## AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY TEACHING OF MATHEMATICS



RUSSELL MERRIS graduated from Harvey Mudd College in 1964 with a B.S. in engineering and took a Ph.D. in mathematics in the field of multilinear algebra from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1969. In 1971, after a two-year postdoctoral position with the National Bureau of Standards, he joined the faculty at California State University, Hayward and was promoted to the rank of professor in 1978.

To say Professor Merris has been professionally active during his tenure at Hayward would be a gross





understatement. He has authored four textbooks, has been a Visiting Professor or invited speaker in eight different countries, and has edited six different journals. He has written several successful grant proposals some of which provided funding for student research. He has published 112 research papers, extraordinary in the CSU system with its emphasis on teaching and a twelve-hour per week teaching load. He is by far the most active researcher in the department, but none of this has been at the cost of neglecting his teaching. Rather the knowledge gained through research allows him to convey a much deeper understanding of mathematics in his classes, which encompass the full range of lower-division, upper-division, and graduate courses.

At one time or other, Russ has served in some capacity on virtually every committee on campus. An advocate of diversity as well as student and faculty rights, he was able to use his membership on some of these committees to improve conditions for both of these groups. During one of his several terms in the Academic Senate, he took advantage of his chair position to reach out to the high school community with an "Entry Level Math" exam to alert juniors of deficiencies in the mathematics needed for college while they still had time to do something about it. Because of the success of this program, it was adopted throughout the CSU system

His documentation strongly supports his effectiveness in the classroom. He has an obvious love of mathematics and communicates that enthusiasm to his students, inspiring them to also love the subject and challenging them to work hard. He has the ability to make a difficult subject understandable and fun. He is a meticulous grader, lots of red, but with clear explanations where necessary. Throughout his teaching career he has influenced his students to pursue mathematics as a profession and continue their training beyond the undergraduate level. They and the new faculty he mentors want to emulate him. He nurtures young faculty providing valuable advice to improve their effectiveness in the classroom as they go through the transition from graduate school to becoming a professor.

The MAA is not the first organization to recognize Professor Merris as an effective teacher. He was twice chosen as the CSU Hayward Outstanding Professor, twice nominated by the Hayward campus for the CSU Wang Family Excellence Award and in 1987 he was chosen by the Trustees of the California State University System as one of two Outstanding Professors from a pool of more than 20,000 full time teachers in the twenty-three campus system.

We are proud to present this year's Section Award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics to Russell Merris.

