



CITATION

MARCH 2, 2002

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 Section of the Association is pleased to identify

PAUL A. ZEITZ

as the recipient of its MAA Sectional

AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY TEACHING OF MATHEMATICS



PAUL Zeitz began his teaching career at a young age, organizing daily practices for the Stuyvesant High School Math Team. He himself was a stellar student, not only placing first in the USA Math Olympiad, but also placing first in the Westinghouse Talent Search.

Being unhappy with how math was taught at Harvard, he switched to history, but after graduation spent six years teaching high school mathematics in San Francisco and in Colorado Springs. After returning to his roots, Paul received his Ph.D. at Berkeley and has been teaching at the University of San Francisco for the past ten years.





At the University of San Francisco, Paul's influences were immediate and dramatic. He is, by all accounts, a charismatic teacher and a person of overwhelming (even manic) enthusiasm for his subject and he keeps the class involved with humor and intensity and lots of class participation. Even though he is so clearly gifted mathematically, he is sensitive, nurturing and, above all, patient, with students who need the extra support.

Students spoke repeatedly about the marvelous positive way with which Paul conducts his classes. As one put it, "I now firmly believe that [Paul's] class should be the model for math education at every level. Paul's class was a perfect balance between group oriented work and individual struggle. The groups Paul assigned were such that even the talents of a math rookie like myself were essential and beneficial to the group as a whole, but at the same time I was learning from what my math elders had to say."

Paul's influence, however, goes far beyond the USF mathematics classroom. For the last ten years he has worked tirelessly to improve the opportunities for the mathematically gifted students. He has helped compose and edit problems for the American High School Math Exam, the American Invitational Math Exam (for those who do well on the previously mentioned test) and the American Math Olympiad. He was one of three coaches at the training camp for the American IMO team for 1994-96, and was a member of the Problem Committee for the 2001 IMO competition in Washington along with Ron Graham, who strongly supported his nomination.

In addition to all of the problem writing, Paul has helped to organize two different Bay Area groups dedicated to bringing together mathematically talented high school students for both competitions and the opportunity to discuss deep mathematics with local luminaries. In all of this his energy, organization and commitment are as important as his profound understanding of the psyche of bright secondary students.

Finally, his recent book, *The Art and Craft of Problem Solving*, has won rave reviews and garnered Paul an invitation to be one of two featured speakers at the European Conference of International Schools in 1999.

Thus, it is with great pleasure, affection and respect that we present this year's Award for Outstanding Teaching to Paul Zeitz.

