

### Governor's report, MathFest 2012

The Board of Governors took several significant actions at its meeting at MathFest 2012. First, the MAA has been working on a strategic plan, "MAA: Planning for the Second Century." This document was distributed and approved in principle by the Board. The purpose of the new document is to refine the MAA's mission in the mathematical sciences community, strengthen MAA's core business operations and existing revenue streams as well as look for new opportunities, and improve the quality and efficiency of its operations. One of the challenges is that, for the last seven years, the operating budget has run at a significant deficit (in three of the last four years, two to four percent, that is, roughly \$150,000 to 300,000). This isn't a major threat for the moment, but it is not sustainable for the long term. The major initiatives being planned (some already started) include expanding development efforts (principally, the Second Century Campaign), redesigning the MAA website, increasing participation in national meetings and enhancing the perceived value of the MAA at section meetings, increasing book sales (print and electronic), and broadening participation in MAA AMC contests. These will involve an investment of money in the short term to yield long-term benefits.

Related to the goal of increasing book sales, the Strategic Planning Working Group on Books, chaired by Associate Treasurer Rick Cleary, gave a draft final report. Its main conclusions and recommendations are:

- (1) The MAA Books Program serves members and the larger mathematical community well as a source of excellent expository writing, but to serve as a revenue source for the organization, it needs to sell more books to non-members.
- (2) The MAA should look into developing and selling more textbooks.
- (3) To make the books program a revenue source, it will need to hire some staff (acquisitions editor, perhaps stipends or release time for book editors, or professional editors).
- (4) The MAA must be ready to respond to the rapidly changing market for electronic books.

The Board approved a policy, proposed by the AWIS-MAA Joint Task Force on Prizes and Awards, on avoiding implicit bias in selecting recipients for MAA awards. This policy includes considering diversity of the committee when appointing committee members, working to generate a large and diverse pool of nominees, and taking care during the selection process to avoid implicit bias. Currently the policy can be found at [sections.maa.org/avoiding\\_bias.pdf](http://sections.maa.org/avoiding_bias.pdf). Part of the job of the Board is to approve awards proposed by the assorted prize committees. This is largely pro-forma: normally the whole slate is approved as a block. However, I made a substantial statement when the Haimo awards came up, noting that for the third year out of the last four, two of the three awardees will come from California (and the remaining year, one did), and that none have ever come from New Jersey. This led to a resolution, approved by the Board, requesting that the Council on Prizes and Awards investigate the issue. (We did approve all the proposed awards, to be presented at the January Joint Meetings.)

After significant discussion, the Board approved a policy of double-blind refereeing for all MAA print journals. Currently only the *College Mathematics Journal* has such a policy, and some editors have opposed such a policy feeling that some authors, such as students, should receive gentler treatment than others, such as well-known mathematicians. However, concerns about implicit bias dominated the discussion. The possible change in policy had been discussed at previous Board meetings, and the head of publications had requested some time for editors to discuss the implications. The Board felt that it was now time to approve this policy. The policy will be implemented as current editors are replaced, so that no current editors are bound by the policy.

By-laws revisions for seven sections were approved: by-laws are on a 10-year cycle for being revised. Ours were last revised in 2005; so we'll need to work on those again soon.

**Other actions:**

It was announced that the MAA/NCTM joint position on teaching calculus had been approved by the Board by e-mail vote in March; it can be found at [maa.org/news/2012\\_maanctm.html](http://maa.org/news/2012_maanctm.html).

The MAA's investment policy was last approved in 2005. When the MAA was considering firms to manage its investments, each recommended changes in our investment policy. The Investment Committee, working with the MAA fund manager, recommended revised guidelines, which were approved by the Board. One major aspect was to revise the spending policy so that, in times of market strength, the principal will be allowed to grow, rather than spending all the income, to ensure adequate funds during times when the market is down. It has been the policy in the past to approve the operating budget for the following year at MathFest; however, this turns out to be too early to have good information for good predictions. So a proposed budget was distributed, but will be revised and voted on sometime in the fall.

Michael Pearson announced the selection of Linda Braddy as the new Deputy Executive Director (a new position). It was announced that our own Brian Hopkins will be the next editor of the *College Mathematics Journal*, serving through 2018, and David Richeson will serve as the next editor of *Math Horizons* for the same period. Bjorn Poonen, of MIT, has been selected as the Hedrick lecturer for MathFest 2014, Ann Watkins, of Cal State Northridge the Leitzel lecturer for 2013, and Ruth Charney, of Brandeis, will be a Polya lecturer for 2013 – 2015. Hortensia Soto-Johnson of the University of Northern Colorado was elected the next Associate Treasurer; Jenny McNulty, of the University of Montana, was elected to the Audit Committee; Glen van Brummelen, of Quest University Canada, was elected Governor-at-Large for Canadian Membership; Talithia Williams, of Harvey Mudd College, was elected Governor-at-Large for Minority Interests; Ockle Johnson, of Keene State College, was elected chair of the Council on Members and Communities; Kay Somers was elected chair of the Council on Programs and Students. David Housman has replaced Shawn McMurren as chair of the Contributed Paper Session Committee. The Board approved slightly modified guidelines for the Morgan Prize, and approved a motion to recognize the contributions of Phoebe Leboy, who recently died. Revised charges for the Committee on Management Evaluation and Oversight, the AMS-MAA-SIAM Joint Committee on Employment Opportunities, the Joint Data Committee, and the Committee on the Mathematical Education of Teachers were approved. The MAA auditors recommended that the MAA develop a social media policy, which will be done.

(Attached: Committee on Sections report)