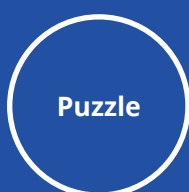# MACS Newsletter

Department of Mathematics and Computer Science

Longwood University • Spring 2015

design by design lab

Dr. Webber Retires

The Longwood University Department of Mathematics and Computer Science announces that Dr. Robert P. Webber, professor of mathematics and computer science, is retiring after 43 years of distinguished service to Longwood University.

Dr. Webber's illustrious career at Longwood University began in 1972, when he arrived after obtaining his Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Dr. Webber has been a major driving force for the university and the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science. In addition to serving on most major committees at Longwood University, Dr. Webber also served as the chair of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science from 1998 until 2001. Dr. Webber was named the recipient of the Maria Bristol Starke Faculty Excellence award in 1993.

Known within the department as a level-headed thinker and a consistent voice of reason, Dr. Webber has been a strong defender of faculty rights, academic freedom and ensuring the faculty role in the governance of the institution.

In addition to inspiring generations of students and serving as a respected colleague who led by example, Dr. Webber has played a central role in establishing and strengthening the computer science and mathematics education programs. In the summers of 1983 and 1984, Dr. Webber worked intensively in a program at Clarkson University sponsored by the Mathematical Association of America and the Association for Computing Machinery to become trained as a computer scientist. Dr. Webber then went on to designing and establishing the computer science program at Longwood University as we know it today. Dr. Webber saw the first Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science granted in 1996.

Dr. Webber laid the groundwork for Longwood University's current collaborative work in math education at both the local and state levels. Dr. Webber served as the prime mover behind Longwood's inclusion in an NSF grant (along with Virginia Commonwealth University) during the 1990s. The aim of the grant was to design and create courses that would improve the teaching of mathematics and science at the elementary school level. The grant led to the creation of MAED 330 and CMSC 121, both of which are part of the liberal studies major today.

In later years, this important partnership fostered collaboration between Longwood, the University of Virginia, VCU and Norfolk State University, and resulted in additional grants (both NSF and VDOE), including the mathematics specialist NSF grants, the highly qualified middle school math teacher grant, and the algebra endorsement grants. Additionally, Longwood's two masters programs in mathematics education developed out of the grants.

When not busy inspiring students or helping to create and strengthen academic programs, Dr. Webber, a theater enthusiast, has been an active participant with the Waterworks Players in Farmville. Since 1990, Dr. Webber has also served as the famed voice of the annual commencement ceremonies, announcing the names of thousands of Longwood University students as they received their diplomas.

Recently, Dr. Webber became a proud grandfather, welcoming granddaughter, Lucy, to his family. We are sure that Lucy will get to see a lot of Dr. Webber in his retirement, but we sincerely hope that Dr. Webber will maintain a presence around the department and be willing to listen and offer sage advice to a younger generation when called upon.

As a department, we wish Bob all the best in retirement and hope to carry on the strong and proud tradition that he helped create. We hope that he knows how much we sincerely value his contributions to the department. When you see Dr. Webber, please extend warm and well-deserved congratulations on his retirement and thanks for his contributions to Longwood University.

Bob Webber Scholarship Announced

In honor of Dr. Robert Webber's illustrious career at Longwood University, Longwood University and the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science are proud to announce the creation of the Robert P. Webber Scholarship. This scholarship is intended for an incoming freshman of high academic standing majoring in mathematics or computer science. The scholarship will be renewable. The scholarship will begin to be awarded during the 2016–17 academic year.

The Robert P. Webber Scholarship joins other department scholarships and awards, including the Hull Mathematics Scholarship, the Albert W. and Mary N. Joynes Scholarship, the James C. Gussett Scholarship, the Merry Lewis Allen Scholarship, the Carol L. Rezba Scholarship, the Badger-Magnifico Award, and the Clark Award. Gifts to any of the above scholarships can be made payable to the Longwood University Foundation (201 High Street, Farmville, VA 23909) or online (https://give.longwood.edu). Donors should notate the name of the scholarship in the memo section of a check or in the Tribute Information section online. Gifts to the Longwood University Foundation are tax deductible.

Catching Up

Matthew Jobrack, Math and Secondary Ed., 2013

1.) The derivative or the integral? "The derivative. It is more fun to do by hand."

2.) Favorite and/or most surprising mathematical theorem? "The Central Limit Theorem and Stokes' Theorem."

3.) Pi or e? Why? "E, because it is easier to spell, and also people don't make as many puns with e."

4.) What are you up to now? "I am finishing up my Master's degree at Appalachian State University and my directed research in Capture-Recapture methodology."

5.) Plans for the future? "Next fall I will begin working toward my doctorate in mathematics at Washington State University. I've gotten my research interests narrowed down to what is still a pretty long list. After that program, my current plan is to work as an academic, but that is a long way off, so who knows!"

Catching Up

Bianca Talbert, Math, 2013

1.) The derivative or the integral? "The integral because I used it more in my favorite classes: STATS!"

2.) Favorite search algorithm? "Tree Search Algorithms."

3.) The mathematical theorem that you found most surprising? "The 4-Color Theorem. It might not be the most powerful but it definitely surprised me."

4.) Java or Python? "Java because all the cool kids are using it."

5.) What are you up to now? "I do testing and evaluation for a government contractor that mostly supports the Marines."

6.) Any words of encouragement or advice for current mathematics and computer science majors? "Get as involved as possible in all the extra stuff like Math Club and PME. Also try and get good internships, they'll be really helpful after graduation."

Have Some Fun

Each row, column, and region in the modified Sudoku problem to the right contains each of the letters in DISCOVER LONGWOOD.

The puzzle was created by Dr. David Shoenthal and many others like it can be found at Dr. Shoenthal's blog, Cine Cura, where Dr. Shoenthal posts a new puzzle every week. To find out more, go to www.cine-cura.blogspot.com.

Remember to update your contact info at www.longwoodlink.com. Find us on Facebook!

V	W	O		L	O		D			R		O	E		D
O			R		O		I		C		D		G	S	O
	E	C		D	G		S		N		W	R	O	V	
O	S	N	G				C		D	L	O		D	W	
	R			N	S		O			O	I			G	E
			O	O			V		D	W	N		O		
N	D		S	O			E		O		O		W	I	C
	O	G	O				R		O	E		O	D		V
W		S	N		V	O		L				I	O	D	
E	O	D		I		W		O			O	D		L	N
		D		R	D	E		N			V	G			
R	O			S	L			G		C	D			E	
	V	O		E	O	D		W				O	R	O	S
	N	I	C		O			O		V	G		L	O	
O	O	R		V		S		O		D		C			G
S		O	E			I		D		O	R		N	D	W