

THE SEAWAY CURRENT

Newsletter of the Seaway Section of the Mathematical Association of America

FALL 2021
VOL. 45, No. 1

IN THIS ISSUE...

- [Stephen's Award Announcement](#)
- [Section Notes & Announcements](#)
- [Reports & Minutes](#)
 - [Treasurer's](#)
 - [Exec. & Ext. Exec. Committee, June 2021](#)

THE SEAWAY CURRENT

The Seaway Current is published at least twice per year by the [Seaway Section](#) of the [Mathematical Association of America](#) (MAA) for the benefit of its members. Its pages are open to all members of the MAA and, by invitation to others, for the exchange of information and opinion. Contributed announcements, articles, and editorials are welcome and should be sent to the editor.

Material may be submitted to the editor by e-mail. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the editor or of individual contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the MAA or of the Seaway Section.

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SEAWAY SECTION FALL EVENTS

- October 20 from 4 pm to 5:15 pm:
[A SEAWAY DISCUSSION OF THE COURSE ABSTRACT ALGEBRA](#)
Gary Towsley (SUNY Geneseo) will moderate a discussion of various aspects of the undergraduate course Abstract Algebra. The discussion will begin with three short presentations by experienced teachers of the course — Thomas Sibley from St. John's University in Collegeville, MN, Cheryl Miller from SUNY Potsdam, and Olympia Nicodemi from SUNY Geneseo. Then the floor will be open to conversing about multiple facets of the course. For example, how should one begin such a course? How can I make my course valuable to students who will be high school math teachers in the future? [REGISTER HERE](#)
- [SEAWAY SECTION KLATCH](#): Oct. 12, Oct. 27, Nov. 11, and Nov. 29 from 3 pm until 4 pm
Are you missing your colleagues and friends from the Seaway Section, and don't want to wait until our first in-person meeting in April? Are you new to the Section and want to meet some of your wonderful colleagues at other institutions? Join us for the Seaway Section Klatch! This is a no-agenda meet-and-greet, you can drop in or drop out whenever works with your schedule. Drop in and say hi! Register to get the Zoom link, but the same link will work for all of the Klatch gatherings so you need only register once. [REGISTER HERE](#)
- [BUSINESS MEETING](#):
Yeah, we need to have one. Hopefully in November, to get the membership caught up on events and news from the Seaway Section leadership and also to recognize the Stephens Award for Teaching Excellence winner. Stay tuned to the Current, your liaison, and the all the Seaway Section news outlets for details!

Is there an event that you want to organize?

Let's do it!

Get in touch with your section Program Chair, Brad Emmons (bemmons@utica.edu), to get the ball rolling!

Share your ideas, energy, and skills, and make this *your* section!

St. Bonaventure University will host the SPRING 2022 meeting, April 1-2, 2022.

It is thrilling to think that next spring we will likely be meeting in-person again! It's a big step for everyone, and there are still many unknowns when it comes to planning an in-person conference in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you to St. Bonaventure University, for being willing to plan so far ahead and hope for the best, and thank you to the local organizers, headed up by Maureen Cox. Safety measures will be taken, but the local conditions can change with little notice. Be sure to stay tuned to Section announcement venues, like our Facebook group, the webpage, your liaisons, and the Current.

We hope that you can join us in person in St. Bonaventure, NY in April!

RIT's Darren Narayan

Awarded the Seaway Section's 2021 Stephens Award for Teaching Excellence

Written by Keary Howard, SUNY Fredonia
Stephens Award Committee Representative



The 2021 Clarence Stephens Award for Teaching Excellence has been awarded to Rochester Institute of Technology's Darren Narayan. The honor follows a unanimous vote by the Seaway's nominating committee and his portfolio was subsequently submitted for consideration to the MAA as the section's representative for the national Haimo Distinguished Teaching Award in College/University Mathematics.

Professor Tamas Wiandt documented Darren's over 20 years of commitment to the students at RIT. Citing Darren's work in spearheading multiple student-centric programs including decades of REU and PICMath sponsorship, Wiandt noted that "he has had a tremendous impact on students and faculty, not only at RIT, but at colleges and universities across the nation." Darren's commitment has also included outreach at the K-12 level, hosting regular Summer Mathematics Institute aimed at connecting RIT with area high school mathematics teachers.

Some of the highest accolades of Darren's work were received from his students. He couples talented pedagogy with deep content knowledge. "Professor Narayan has this ability to perfectly set up reveals that blow your mind in class." Former student Chelsea Bennet writes, "Dr. Narayan not only guided me towards furthering my education, he has continuously been interested, involved, and cheered me on in my educational and professional journey." Transformational impact is a theme that became apparent in students' testimonials. Meridangela Gutierrez Jhong was perhaps the most eloquent. "It took one person to make a difference in my life. Dr. Narayan provided me opportunities inside and outside of the class. These opportunities have remained with me in the most challenging times: I had to take a year off college to take care of my health; I have been exposed to racism, underestimated because of my accent, and thought incapable of achieving a goal. In those difficult times, I cherished my REU experience. I remembered being taught that I was valuable, that I had a different perspective, and that I can always achieve my goals if I put the work, humility, and dedication into them."

Faculty outside of Rochester echoed these sentiments, noting that Darren has made an indelible mark beyond the classroom. Michael Dorff of Brigham Young University commented, "His impact as an educator goes far beyond the RIT campus. Dr. Narayan has a passion for working with undergraduate students on research projects and has established a national reputation for promoting undergraduate research in mathematics." Within the department, Darren's colleagues are appreciative of his relentless and positive spirit. RIT's David Barth-Hart put it best: Darren Narayan loves teaching students, and it shows in everything he does . . . the value of Darren's inspiration and effort are without measure. His "can-do" spirit infuses not only his teaching, but everything he does, and his students would not be where they are without him.

The evidence is clear and the committee is proud to present Dr. Narayan with the section's prestigious teaching award in 2021.



Congratulations, Darren!

Image Credits: The photo on the left was sourced from [Darren's RIT directory website](#). The photo on the right was sourced from the "[Meet A Member](#)" article in the [June/July 2021 MAA Focus](#). Permission was not requested to use either photo.

SECTION NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

FALL 2021

Niagara University

News from Niagara University: Dr. Joel Louwsma was recently promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor and tenured. Dr. Marlo Brown was recently promoted from Associate Professor to Professor. Dr. Wen Feng was recently hired as assistant professor in 2020. And Dr. Peder Thompson was recently hired as assistant professor in 2021. *(Submitted by Marlo Brown)*

St. John Fisher College

Dr. Ryan Gantner has been elected Chairman of the Department, succeeding Dr. Kris Green. *(Submitted by Donald L. Muench)*

SUNY Geneseo

Ahmad Rasheed Almomani, Assistant Professor of Mathematics was awarded a 2021 Dr. Carol and Michael Harter Endowment for Faculty Mentoring Award. The award is given yearly to a faculty member whose commitment to teaching goes beyond the classroom to the student's intellectual or creative development. Congratulations Professor Almomani! *(Submitted by Ahmad Almomani)*

Utica College

We do have a new faculty member in the Math Department at Utica college. She goes by "Shandeepa Wickramasinghe" and can be found [here](#). The only other small piece of news that we have is that I am now chair of the department (which is why you're getting this message from me!). *(Submitted by John Peter)*

A Word From Stephen Kennedy

Dear Seaway Colleagues,

Last spring in [this newsletter](#) I proposed constructing communities of practice about MAA Textbooks as a way to help us all improve our teaching by exchanging ideas. Several Seaway Section folks responded enthusiastically and I'm pleased to announce that I've launched a pilot program. The idea has shifted slightly, instead of having a community associated with a particular textbook we've decided to construct a community around a particular course. Tom Sibley and I recently launched Teaching Geometry, a new MAA Connect community to promote discussion of the college Geometry course. I write today with two purposes. First, I wanted to say thank you to everyone who responded last spring with ideas and encouragement. Second, I'd like to invite everybody, especially those of you who teach geometry, to join us. Just go to [MAA Connect](#) and find the Teaching Geometry community. I look forward to seeing you there.

Thank you,

Steve Kennedy

Association Mathématique du Québec

The Association Mathématique du Québec will be holding its annual conference in a hybrid format. It will start on Friday the 15th of October, with additional activities on Saturday the 16th, Tuesday the 19th and Thursday the 21st. It's very much like a Seaway sectional meeting, but in French, so if you're able to follow along in the "Langue de Molière," join in! The link to register is: <https://congres2021.amq.math.ca/>.

Ontario Colleges Mathematics Association

The Ontario Colleges Mathematics Association (OCMA) is pleased to announce that registration for our AUGMENTED in-person/virtual conference on October 25 - 27, 2021 is now open! Join college faculty from across the province to discuss how the multiple realities of in-person, virtual, emergency remote, and hybrid teaching intersect to make the math classroom greater than the physical space it inhabits. Further details and registration links available at <https://www.theocma.org>.

REPORTS & MINUTES SINCE SPRING 2021

1. TREASURER'S REPORT – FALL 2021

Gordon Craig, Seaway Section Treasurer

It is a great pleasure to be writing my first of what I hope will be many treasurers' reports. Unfortunately, my election coincided with the start of the pandemic, so there has been very little financial activity, in particular because we haven't organized a meeting since the fall of 2019. The balance in our account has remained steadily between \$13,500 and \$14,300 since February of 2020. Our expenses have essentially fallen into two categories: honoraria for online workshops, and administrative expenses (website hosting and our subscription to Square). In terms of income, we received our annual subventions from the MAA, and registration fees from the online workshop. Our 2021 subvention was more than \$500 lower than our 2020 one (\$895 versus \$1435), reflecting lower membership numbers, so please make sure to renew your own membership and to recruit colleagues!

Most of my work as Treasurer so far has involved getting to a branch of our bank at the same time as my predecessor Gary Towsley, which involved crossing the US-Canadian border. I was finally able to do so in August of this year, so for eighteen months the section had a two-headed Treasurer. I'd like to thank the other head (Gary Towsley) for all of his advice and support both during and after the transition.

For the future, I will present full financial statements for 2020 and 2021 at the spring meeting at St. Bonaventure, as well as a budget for 2022. I'd also like to come up with some way to prevent the next transition, whenever it might be, from being so complicated, and to ensure some oversight of the section's bank account by someone other than the Treasurer. (Both of these issues have already been discussed by the Executive Committee, but any input would be welcome.)

Respectfully submitted,
Gordon Craig, Seaway Section Treasurer

2. THE EXECUTIVE & EXTENDED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING – June 9, 2021

The Executive Committee and Extended Executive Committee met together via Zoom at 1:00 PM.

Participants: Cheryl Miller, Leah Bridgers, Gordon Craig, Gary Raduns, Charlie Ragozzine, Marlo Brown, Gary Towsley, Jane Cushman, Brad Emmons, Christine Uhl, Keiko Dow, Cesar Aguilar, Jeff Johannes.

Chair's Report (Cheryl Miller):

- Cheryl provided an update on nominations for Executive Committee Positions. Steve Kilner's term has ended and a nominee secured for the Two-Year College Representative. Gary Raduns' term as Secretary is ending in Spring 2022 and he does not plan to run continue for another term. Also, we will need to nominate chair-elect.
- The Section expresses its thanks to Charlie Ragozzine for serving as our Section Representative to the MAA Congress and congratulates Jeff Johannes on his election to that role.
- Plans are unfolding for these upcoming meetings:
 - Fall 2021: We will arrange for virtual events throughout the semester.
 - Spring 2022: We are hoping to have an in-person meeting at Saint Bonaventure University.
 - Fall 2022: We are hoping to return to Sienna College.
 - Spring 2023: We are planning to meet at the University of Waterloo.

Program Chair's Report (Brad Emmons):

- In addition to the venues for future in-person meetings, for this fall we are open to hosts/organizers for events in the Section. Two events are already in planning stages. Gary Towsley is planning a discussion of abstract algebra courses. There is also planning for a PreTeXt workshop.
- The Executive Committee approved a \$100 honorarium for the presenter of the PreTeXt workshop.
- Current plans for Spring 2022 include an IBL workshop/presentation, discussion of the history of mathematics course and an employer event for student participants. We are also eligible for a Polya lecturer.

Treasurer's Report (Gordon Craig):

- Since Gordon Craig has not been able to enter the U.S., Gary Towsley is still signing and sending out checks. Gordon has filed the yearly financial reports for the Section.

Gehman Lecture Committee:

- No report, but they are looking for a speaker for the Spring Meeting.

Seaway NExT:

- No recent Section NExT activities, but note there are three Project NExT Fellows from the Seaway Section.

Distinguished Lecturer Series:

- The program is still on hold; however, Bob Rogers and Dave Brown are willing to fill in to finish commitments if the schools are prepared.

Seaway Current:

- Thanks to Elizabeth for publishing the Newsletter.

Educational Policies Committee (Jane Cushman):

- Nothing to report.

Webmaster (Cesar Aguilar):

- Cesar has set up auto-renewal for domain name registry, SSL certificate and hosting services.

Public Information Officer (Christine Uhl):

- Send her items for posting to the Facebook Group.

Venues and Speakers:

- Jeff Johannes reiterated that we are hoping for an in-person meeting at St. Bonaventure in Spring 2022. He needs dates as soon as possible to secure keynote speakers.

For further discussion:

- Since his retirement in June, Gary Towsley has been able to keep his campus office, but has lots of book samples from book sales he would like to distribute and a four-drawer file cabinet containing historical archives of the Seaway Section. He seeks ideas for maintaining this archive elsewhere.

Brad Emmons and Leah Bridgers are to coordinate scheduling fall activities and an early fall (virtual) Business Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary L. Raduns, Jr. (Roberts Wesleyan College), Seaway Section Secretary