

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY



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Professor C.F. Stephens, Chair
Department of Mathematics
State University College
Potsdam, New York 13676

Dear Professor Stephens:

I have just learned of your being honored by the Potsdam Chapter of Pi Mu Epsilon. May I offer you a heartfelt "Congratulations" and add my praise to that already bestowed upon you. Of all the teachers I have had as an undergraduate, you stand out as the one who has had the biggest effect upon my directions. This was not so much by way of the material you taught me (although I did make use of Zorn's lemma in my dissertation) but more of your outstanding ability to make your students think on their own. Quite often we confront problems (in all disciplines) upon which we try to force some known solution or principle rather than think of new solutions. As you would sometimes say, "The real problem is that you know too much."

Having been one of the first graduates of the BA-MA program, I am happy to see its success. I agree with your pursuit of excellence as the principle goal of the department. While many departments seem to be satisfied with their achievements, you never are. This is not to say that I cannot discern your pride in the department and its accomplishments for it shows thoroughly and is certainly well justified, but success does not seem to leave you complacent and that, I feel, is the essential operanda.

Here's wishing you continued success in the shaping of the mathematics department and its future graduates. Again I congratulate you on your deserved recognition.

My best to you and your family.

Best regards,

Harris Schlesinger
Assistant Professor of Economics

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