

Report on BIRS Workshop 05w2010: Connecting Women in Mathematics Across Canada (CWIMAC) II

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July 20-23, 2005

1 Conference Activities

The participation in the conference was by invitation: the applicants had to submit a statement of interest, a title and abstract of a talk about their work and/or research interests, and a letter of support from their supervisor. Twenty six women graduate students in mathematics from universities across Canada were selected to attend. They spend two intensive and exciting days, attending talks and presentations, and sharing experiences with ten women faculty members, speakers and mentors at the conference. The graduate students each gave a 20 min presentation or a poster on their work. The mentors coordinating these sessions insured that the women presented their work in a friendly, supportive environment and interacted with their peers and senior women in the frbara Keyfitz, Director of the Fields Institute, and Neeza Thandi, Actuary for Liberty Mutual, gave the two plenary talks. They spoke about their work, research they are involved in, and their careers.

The program included two panel discussions: Launching a Career in Mathematics, and Changing Environments in Mathematics and Academia. Both were followed by small group discussions involving students and mentors. These discussions focused on giving participants the opportunity to discuss the hurdles they have faced or may face in their studies and future careers, and how to overcome them.

For more information and the schedule of the workshop, see
<http://www.cms.math.ca/bulletins/2005/cwimac05.html?nomenu=1>

2 Assessment of Benefits

Connecting Women in Mathematics Across Canada Program has been successful in many ways. The workshop provided a venue for covering important topics relevant to pursuing a mathematical career. It brought

together different viewpoints on options for career paths and different routes to reach career goals.

Young mathematicians received advice on practical issues such as applications, reviewing of files, networking, and interviewing. They also had a chance to voice problems they may be experiencing, get some new perspectives on their successes and concerns, and to make network connections, which they can use now and in the future as their careers develop.

Timely issues such as the changing the culture of science, discussed in an environment with a mix of viewpoints of the experienced and junior researchers, was very enlightening and motivating for all involved. In particular it has been a pleasure to see a growing number of women participating in our workshops that continue to come to CMS meetings and are getting tenure track positions at universities across Canada.

3 Future Plans

This workshop and the previous CWiMAC workshop have been the basis for an upcoming series of workshops to be held at BIRS in the coming years. These workshops will focus on examining recent advances and barriers for increasing diversity in mathematics, seeking ways to get the larger community involved.

In September 2006, BIRS workshop 06w5504 will bring together women and men mathematicians from Canada, US and Mexico to examine what the institutes and professional organizations are doing now to support women, and what other initiatives can be undertaken. They will develop recommendations for future collaboration and for activities in support of women in mathematics. In December 2006, Fields Institute will sponsor the third workshop for women graduate students.

In Summer 2007 we will reconvene for a short workshop to review the progress on the initiatives developed in 2006, and also to increase international connections. We will also collaborate with another BIRS workshop on Women in Engineering.