



Mathematical Sciences Research Institute

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Team of high school girls who score tops in math to represent the United States at the China Girls Math Olympiad

Students from across the USA compete in girls-only international math competition

BERKELEY, California – The Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI) and the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) announced today that they will send a team of eight high school girls from throughout the United States to participate in the 2011 China Girls Mathematical Olympiad (CGMO). The international competition will be held from Sunday, July 31 through Wednesday, August 3 in Shenzhen, which is a major port city near Hong Kong in Southern China's Guangdong Province. This is the fifth year that the Berkeley-based MSRI has sponsored a U.S. team to compete at the international contest.

Representing the United States on the girls math team are: **Rebecca Burks** from Los Altos, California, a junior at Danaidae Learning Studio; **Christina Chen** from Newton, Massachusetts, who is a junior at Newton North High School; **Sarah Herrmann** from La Jolla, CA, a junior at La Jolla High School; **Elaine Hou** from Seffner, Florida, a sophomore at C. Leon King High School; **Julia Huang** from Saratoga, CA, a sophomore at Lynbrook High School; **Danielle Wang** from Campbell, CA, a freshman attending the California Virtual Academy; **Haotian (Tiffany) Wu** from Sugar Land, Texas, a junior at Clements High School; and **Victoria Xia** from Vienna, Virginia, a sophomore at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology.

The team's eight high school students were chosen from the top ranks of the female finalists in the 2011 USA Mathematical Olympiad (USAMO). The team coach is Zuming Feng, a math teacher on the faculty of Phillips Exeter Academy, the leader of the USA International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) team, and the director of the Mathematical Olympiad Summer Program (MOSP) since 2003. Returning as the team's assistant coaches are Inna Zakharevich, who scored in the top 12 at the 2002 USAMO and is currently a graduate student at MIT, and Maria Monks, who begins PhD studies this fall at the University of California at Berkeley and was awarded the Morgan Prize for outstanding research in mathematics by an undergraduate in 2011 by the American Mathematical Society.

"MSRI and the MAA are proud to support the exceptional young women who made the United States team and will compete at the 2011 CGMO," said Robert Bryant, Director of MSRI. "The team's participation at such rigorous competitions on an international level enhances the mathematical problem-solving skills of these students and the experience will give each young woman a springboard for further achievements and scientific aspirations."

The team members arrive in China on Thursday, July 28 and will share photos and highlights from their trip to the Olympiad. The girls started writing a travelogue online (see <http://www.msri.org/cgmo/2011>) that began in June while they prepared for the competition by training at the MAA Mathematical Olympiad Summer Program at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. "The team received excellent preparation at the Mathematical Olympiad Summer Program, we are pleased to be able to select and train such an able group of young women for this challenging international competition" said Steven Dunbar, MAA Director of American Mathematics Competitions.

Founded in 2002, the CGMO began as a regional competition for teams of female students from China and other eastern Asian countries (including Russia). It was later expanded to invite teams from more countries, including the United States, Canada, South Africa, United Kingdom, and Australia.

The U.S. girls team has been consistently award-winning since its debut at the CGMO in the summer of 2007. Last year, the 2010 U.S. team placed second in the overall standings—among 48 teams from ten countries—as seven of the girls won medals (five gold medals, a silver medal, and one bronze medal) and one member earned an honorable mention. In both 2008 and 2009, every member of the U.S. team medaled at the Olympiad.

Funding for this program is provided by the Akamai Foundation, IBM Research – Almaden, the Mathematical Association of America, the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute, and the Sunlin and Priscilla Chou Foundation.

About MSRI: The Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI, <http://www.msri.org>), in Berkeley, California, is one of the world's preeminent centers for research in the mathematical sciences and has been advancing mathematical research through workshops and conferences since its founding as an independent institute in 1982. Approximately 2,000 mathematicians visit the MSRI each year, and the Institute hosts about 85 leading researchers at any given time for stays of up to one academic year. The Institute has been funded primarily by the National Science Foundation with additional support from other government agencies, private foundations, corporations, individual donors, and more than 85 academic institutions. MSRI is involved in K-12 math education through its annual "Critical Issues in Mathematics Education" conferences for educators, math circles, Julia Robinson Math Festivals, the National Association for Math Circles (NAMC) and its website, and Olympiad math competitions; in undergraduate education through its MSRI-UP program; and in public education through its "Conversations" series of public events.

About the MAA: The Mathematical Association of America (MAA, www.maa.org) is the largest professional society that focuses on mathematics accessible at the undergraduate level. The association members include university, college, and high school teachers; graduate and undergraduate students; pure and applied mathematicians; computer scientists; statisticians; and many others in academia, government, business, and industry. The MAA welcomes all who are interested in the mathematical sciences. It was formed in 1915. There are now more than 20,000 members in this organization.

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