

2004 UAB MATH TALENT SEARCH REPORT

The second annual UAB MTS (Math Talent Search) Contest took place on campus on Saturday, February 7, 2004.

Students began arriving at the 15th Classroom Building at 8 a.m. There were 258 students from grades 10 and 11 from 31 high schools participating. With coaches and chaperones, we had a crowd of more than 300 people.

At 9:00 a.m. students began the two hour and a half test, and their teachers and chaperones enjoyed the hospitality room.

At 11:30, when the test was over, students and teachers were treated to pizza, juice and cookies. The UAB math faculty and students began the challenging task of grading and judging the answers of the 258 students. The graders did an excellent job of determining winners. By 1:15pm the outcome of the contest was decided.

During the grading of the tests, students gathered in the Volker Hall, Auditorium A, for a motivating presentation, "Chaos Games and Fractal Images", by Professor Robert L. Devaney from Boston University. In his lecture Professor Devaney described some of the beautiful images that arise from the "Chaos Game." He showed how the simple steps of this game produce, when iterated millions of times, the intricate images known as fractals. He also described some of the applications of this technique used in data compression as well as in Hollywood. In the end he challenged students present to "Beat the Professor" at the chaos game and maybe win his computer. Well, Professor Devaney won, so his computer will stay with him while the pleasure of attending his lecture will certainly stay with those who came to listen to him.

The Awards Ceremony began at 1:45 with prizes presented by Dr. Blokh as Dr. Mayer read the list of winners. Schools who won the contest received trophies while the student winners received certificates and will receive their prizes - books about mathematics - later on by mail.

The following individual prizes for top scores were awarded:

10th grade Individual Winners

1st place: Albert Lee (Auburn)

2nd place: Sarah Katherine Clay (Vestavia)

3rd place: David Harris (Vestavia)

4th place: Pratik Talati (ASFA)

School Winners in the 10th grade

1st place - Vestavia

2nd place - Auburn

3rd place - Briarwood Christian

11th grade Individual Winners

1st place: Chad Strickland (Grissom)

2nd place: Chris Louis (Vestavia)

3rd place: Fang Young (ASFA)

4th place: Heather Veasey (Calera)

School Winners in the 11th grade

1st place - Vestavia

2nd place - Grissom

3rd place - Hoover

Schools trophies were awarded based on the composite score of 3 highest individuals.

All in all, it was a full day of activities for student visitors and the UAB Math Department.

Our thanks to the sponsors of this event: Dean Wenger (who supported our efforts in all respects from the very beginning) and our chairman Dr Weikard (who encouraged us and helped us all along in our efforts to run the contest).

Our thanks also to all the students, members of our Department, and members of their families, who helped this year's MTS Contest succeed.

Until UAB MTS 2005,

Best wishes,

Carolyn Wailes, Coordinator

Alexander Blokh, Outreach Director