

Meritorious Service Awards

Richard Alan (Rick) Gillman

Valparaiso University

The Mathematical Association of America, especially the Indiana section, wishes to recognize the extensive and praiseworthy contributions of Richard Alan (Rick) Gillman by awarding him the Certificate of Meritorious Service.

Rick's service to Valparaiso University, located in northwest Indiana, goes back to the 1980s when he was first hired as an assistant professor. His positive influence on the mathematics community quickly extended beyond the university to the region, state, and national levels. In the 1990s, Rick worked on projects aimed at high school students, high school teachers, underrepresented minorities in the mathematical sciences, and women in mathematics (to name a few). These projects ranged from external workshops and minicamps to new internal general education courses on conceptual calculus and game theory.

By the new millennium, Rick had also made a name for himself as an expert in Quantitative Literacy. He shared his knowledge of this subject through presentations, organizing numerous contributed paper sessions, and running mini-courses on "A Game Theory Path to Quantitative Literacy." Rick edited an MAA Notes volume on the topic in 2006 describing then current best practices in the field.

Rick also edited the MAA publication *A Friendly Competition: 35 Years of Teamwork in Indiana*, which is about the undergraduate problem-solving competition held at the spring Indiana section meeting. Rick also initiated the annual Mathcounts competition at Valparaiso University, which serves middle school students in the area. His involvement in mathematics problem solving extended beyond the state as he became a member and chair of the MAA *Problem Book Series* editorial board.

Rick has held many positions in the MAA committee and governance structure. At the section level, he was the Secretary-Treasurer from 1995–2000, Chair from 2002–2003, and Governor from 2005–2008. At the Association level, he has served as a member of the MAA Membership Committee (1999–2005), a member of the CUPM Subcommittee on Quantitative Literacy Requirements (1993–2004), chair of the MAA Committee on Sections (2009–2015), and since 2015 as chair of the MAA Committee on Program Review. This list is not exhaustive, but demonstrates the commitment Rick has had to serving the MAA throughout his career. Anecdotally, if you mention Rick's name at Mathfest or the JMM, it is likely that the person you are talking to knows him.

Finally, it would be a disservice to Rick to discuss his accomplishments without mentioning undergraduate research. Not only has he personally supervised many projects, but he continues to do so even after leaving a teaching position and becoming Associate Provost at Valparaiso University. Often, those projects led to joint publications with undergraduate students in prestigious journals like *Involve*. At Valparaiso University, Rick established the Celebration of Undergraduate Scholarship, an annual conference for students to showcase their research. He led the Valpo Department of Mathematics and Computer Science effort to develop and run an NSF-supported summer research experiences for undergraduates. While the REU recruits students not from Valpo, Rick has also worked to increase the faculty and student participation in collaborative research at Valpo. He has shared his knowledge of engaging students in research through several publications and presentations as well as through serving as a Councilor for the Mathematics Division of the Council on Undergraduate Research (1998–2001).

This description of Rick Gillman highlights some of his work in the mathematics community. As can be seen here, he is well deserving of the Certificate of Meritorious Service, and it is the pleasure of the Indiana Section of the MAA to nominate him for that award.

Response

When I reviewed the names of the previous Indiana recipients of the Certificate of Meritorious Service, I was humbled that my friends and colleagues felt that I deserved to be in their company. The Mathematical Association of America has been my professional home for 35 years—the same age as this award, as it turns out—and I have found the Association to be a wonderfully supportive community. Over the years, I have had many mentors in the organization including Duane Deal, Steve Carlson, and Martha Siegel. Along with others, these mentors have taught me how to serve and lead in our community. I hope that in return I have been able to mentor others to do the same in turn. The citation attributes many achievements to me, but very few would have been possible without collaborators and I would like to extend a thank you to all of them. Finally, my nominators exaggerate the number of people that I know at the Joint Mathematics Meetings and Mathfest, but I am impressed that they believe that it is so.

Biographical Sketch

I am a Hoosier; I grew up in southern Indiana, I went to college at Ball State University, and I have spent my entire professional career at Valparaiso University. My only time away was the four years that I spent in Idaho earning my Doctorate of Arts and meeting my wife, Michele. She was not happy to be taken away from the mountains, but has come to love Indiana nearly as much as I. She will also tell you that I see the world through a very mathematical lens; all the way down to the ‘dishwasher packing problem’ that I discovered while our sons were young.