

MSCS Mess

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Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science

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This Week's Colloquium

There is a colloquium Monday, January 13th at 3:30 pm in RNS410. This talk will be given by another tenure track candidate in algebra, and is accessible to any student of math. For more details, please see your professors.

Minnesota Private Colleges Job and Internship Fair

The MPC Job and Internship Fair provides students in a variety of majors the chance to learn about opportunities in many areas including applied health & sciences, social science & nonprofits, government, business, and communications.

Students must regist in the Center for Experiential Learning (CEL) by Wednesday, February 15th. Transportation will be provided on February 21st, the main day for fair events. The CEL will provide preparation sessions including "Direct from the Source" - students connect with recent and more experienced Ole Alums for tips and job fair readiness help. For more information, please visit the CEL website and the MPC Job and Internship Fair website.

Advanced Notice: MSCS Recital on April 4th

The N-th Annual MSCS Recital will be held at 7:00pm on Wednesday, April 4th in the main lounge of Ytterboe Hall. This is one of THE

big social events within MSCS. The word "recital" hardly begins to convey the feel of this amazing experience. Imagine tables of good food (from faculty, not from a food service). Imagine a room full of people of all ages, from young children to, um, more senior faculty, milling about enjoying each other's company in a fun, relaxed setting.

Please set aside a couple of hours on the evening of April 4th for the MSCS Recital. If you'd like to talk about performing, please contact Steve McKelvey (mckelvey@stolaf.edu). All math students, staff and faculty, and friends of these folks, are welcome to perform or attend.

Évariste Galois (1811 - 1832)

Galois was a famous mathematician, born in France, who discovered and proved the longstanding question of whether or not a quintic formula existed. More generally, he proved what was necessary in order for a polynomial to be solvable by radicals, and this discovery created what is now known as Galois Theory, a topic that appears in Abstract Algebra II. Galois' life was short and had many difficulties. When he was 17, his father committed suicide, and he was twice rejected from the prestigious École Polytechnique. The people rejecting him believed that he did not

have any mathematical ability, and so Galois decided to attend École Normale in 1829. While there, his political activism proved to be detrimental. In July of 1830, the July Revolution took place. Galois, wanting to join in on the riots, was very angry when the director decided to lock the students in and not allow them to join the revolution. He wrote a scathing criticism of the director, and was to be expelled in 1831 for the letter. Instead of waiting for the expulsion to take effect, he quit school immediately and joined a Republican unit of the National Guard. Since the government believed this unit to be very dangerous to the countries leadership, 19 of its members were arrested. However, they were soon acquitted and at a dinner celebration, Galois raised a dagger and said "To [the king], if he betrays!" He was arrested for these comments, later acquitted, then arrested again for wearing his army uniform, which resulted in 6 months in prison. All during this time, Galois was proving some very important mathematical ideas, many of which were lost by editors. His life after prison was very short, and he died a month later on May 30th in a duel. The reasons for this duel are rather speculative, but it is most likely that it was either because of a girl or he was killed by a member of the opposing political party. It is remarkable to notice how much Galois accomplished, even though he died at the very young age of 20.

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If you would like to submit an article or math event to be published in the Math Mess, e-mail jacobsoj@stolaf.edu.