This Week’s Colloquium

**Title:** Suicide in the United States: An Epidemiologist’s Perspective  
**Speaker:** Rajeev Ramchand  
Behavioral Scientist,  
RAND Corporation  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 23rd  
**Time:** 1:30pm  
**Location:** RNS 310

**About the talk:** Over 30,000 people in the United States die from suicide each year, making it the eleventh leading cause of death in the U.S. Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in Minnesota. Dr. Ramchand will provide an overview of the epidemiology of suicide in the United States. Topics will range from how suicide data is captured, the trends that emerge from this data, and what scientists need to consider when interpreting this data. He will then discuss the epidemiologic strategies researchers currently employ to study suicide, focusing specifically on risk factors for suicide and how such factors are identified. Finally, Dr. Ramchand will discuss strategies for preventing suicide and how prevention programs and initiatives are currently being evaluated.

**About the speaker:** Rajeev Ramchand is a Behavioral Scientist at the RAND Corporation based in RAND’s Washington, DC office. He holds a Ph.D. in Psychiatric Epidemiology from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and a Bachelor’s degree in Economics from the University of Chicago.

His research generally focuses on four areas: (1) psychosocial risk factors for adolescent delinquency (e.g., substance use, criminal offending); (2) consequences of substance use from both criminal justice and treatment perspectives; (3) the epidemiology of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and co-occurring conditions; and (4) the mental health of service members, particularly those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Dr. Ramchand is a member of the College on Problems of Drug Dependence, the American Association of Suicidology, and the American Public Health Association.

MSCS T-Shirt Design Contest

Feeling creative? In need to unleash your inner designer? Then you are in luck, as this year the MAA wants you to help design the MSCS T-shirt(s)!

If you have any creative ideas for this year’s t-shirt, please email them to Kyle Olson atolsonkr@stolaf.edu or Vladimir Sotirov at sotirov@stolaf.edu. If you would rather submit a physical copy (drawings, etc), feel free to put them in Kyle Olson’s P.O. box with “Kyle Olson – MSCS t-shirts” written somewhere on the paper.
Also, if you have any color suggestions, for both the shirt itself as well as the printing, please add that to your email or physical copy. Please note, we will screen the design submissions, so if you want your idea to be considered for voting, keep it clean.

In the past, shirts have had clever sayings and/or drawings having to do with one of the MSMCS departments along with “St. Olaf College Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science ’09 -'10” on the back (or front, depending on your design).

Some examples of past t-shirt ideas include:

- When in doubt, let \( \varepsilon > 0 \)
- There are 10 types of students at St. Olaf, those who understand binary and those who don’t.
- Perfectly Proportioned (with a picture of the Golden Spiral)
- Hell’s Angles (with a picture of a compass, on a fiery red background)

We will be accepting ideas from now until February 28, 2010. We will then create an online form in order for everyone to vote for his or her favorite design and color combination. This voting will occur from March 1 – March 2. We will then notify you about preorders and hope to order the shirts very soon after. Last year, we sold one design of shirts. However, if there is a large enough demand for multiple designs, we may offer more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Olympic Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The first Winter Olympic Games were held in Chamonix, France in 1924.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No country in the Southern Hemisphere has ever hosted a Winter Games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only four athletes have ever won medals at both the Winter and Summer Olympic Games: Eddie Eagan (United States), Jacob Tullin Thams (Norway), Christa Luding-Rothenburger (East Germany), and Clara Hughes (Canada). Eddie Eagan is the only to have won gold medals at both Winter and Summer Olympics - he won gold at the 1920 Games in boxing, and also won gold at the 1932 Lake Placid Games in the team bobsled event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most medals won by any athletes at the Winter Olympic Games is 12 by cross-country skier Bjorn Dählie of Norway. The most medals by an American athlete is six by speed skater Bonnie Blair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The youngest athlete to win a gold medal at the Winter Games was 15-year-old American figure skater Tara Lipinski in Nagano 1998.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway has won the most number of medals at the Winter Games.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

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