On November 13, CS majors Michael Schmit, Dan Treiman, and Jared Wangen competed in the ACM North Central North America Regional Programming Contest. The regional contest spans seven US states and one and a half Canadian provinces, and this year included 187 teams.

Results show the Gustavus team as having the second highest score of the 10 at its site, and the 36th highest in the overall region.

Coach Max Hailperin praised the team members for not just turning in a respectable performance, but also having fun while they did it, displaying good teamwork and a positive attitude in the face of a serious hardware malfunction.

Also on November 13, twelve students competed in the MAA North Central Section Team Contest. Overall, 66 teams of three each, from 26 colleges and universities throughout the region took part. The mathematics contest was ten problems, and each problem was scored out of ten points.

The winning team was from Macalester College with a score of 92. Our top team, consisting of Ryan Rud, Justin Delegard, and John Purdham, got 10s on each of the first six problems for 60 points, ranking 10th overall, the highest placement of any team from a Lutheran liberal arts college. Following close behind was another Gustavus team with a score of 54, tying for 15th. Gustavus’s remaining two teams finished with scores of 38 and 31.

Students also participated in the Putnam, but results are unavailable at this time.
New Face in the MCS Department

The big change in MCS Department personnel this year is the addition of David Molnar as a visiting instructor. David is an expert in problem solving, including the preparation of students for the Putnam competition. He did that at Gustavus this fall, in addition to teaching other courses throughout the year.

Molnar received his BA from Wesleyan in 1988 and his MS from the University of Connecticut in 1994. Beyond problem solving, he has interests in discrete mathematics and games. Our other visitor for the year is not a new face: Preston Nichols returned for a second year at Gustavus. Molnar and Nichols will serve to replace department members on leave this year. Jeff Rosoff and Moira McDermott are on leave for the full year, whereas Tom LoFaro was on leave only in the fall and David Wolfe is only absent in the spring.

Meanwhile, Carolyn Dobler, Max Hailperin, and T.J. Morrison are back from their 2003-2004 leaves. (Hailperin also takes over from Rosoff as department chair.)

Geometry Textbook Published

Mike Hvidsten is pleased to announce the publication by McGraw-Hill of the text “Geometry with Geometry Explorer.” This book is the result of many years of trying out new ideas and projects in the department’s geometry class. A sincere thank you goes out to all those students who have enjoyed (suffered through?) these pedagogical experiments while taking Geometry at Gustavus.

The textbook comes with an integrated software environment for exploring and discovering concepts in Geometry. If anyone would like to try the software out, it is freely available. Just send Mike a note (hvidsten@gac.edu).

Olin Hall - New Addition

The end of the 2003-2004 academic year marked the addition of a new classroom for Olin Hall. A blackboard has been added to the north wall of the building. Now, there is no need to fight the desire to head outside in nicer weather. Above, Karl Knight uses this outdoor classroom for one of his spring classes.

Students Ask Alumns

This fall, there were many opportunities for students to receive advice on future careers. Recent graduates returned to St. Peter to talk about their experiences and answer questions about careers in their fields. Talks were held for Math careers, Computer Science careers, and Math Secondary Teaching. Pictured above are the returning graduates from the Computer Science talk.