

San Diego Jewish Academy to host new Festival of Mathematics competition



The first Festival of Mathematics, a new math competition organized by San Diego Jewish Academy, will be offered on Sunday, March 21, 2010 and provides an alternative for students unable to participate on Saturdays, when academic competitions normally happen.

The SDJA Festival of Mathematics will take place at San Diego Jewish Academy in Carmel Valley and is supported by the Greater San Diego Math Council, sponsors of the traditional Saturday Math Field Day competitions that have attracted hundreds of schools and student participants over the years.

Because these contests are traditionally held on Saturdays, which is the Jewish Shabbat, "we have unintentionally precluded the participation of many Jewish students from these events," said Greater San Diego Math Council president Bruce Arnold. "To redress this inequity, we will be developing and hosting a new event next year for middle and high school students to attend."

"The GSDMC is very excited about the SDJA Math Festival program and has been a tremendous support in its development," said Kristine Schneid, SDJA math teacher and Festival of Mathematics program chair. "In particular, the GSDMC has contributed to the financing and advertising of the program as well as the creation of competition events and materials.

"Bruce Arnold, Christi Cole, Reed More, Tammi Marshall and Erick Preibisius are GSDMC members who have made this program possible and have supported each step of the planning process with tremendous enthusiasm and guidance. Without them, this program would not be possible."

Open to any student who prefers a Sunday rather than a Saturday competition, the festival will provide a number of events for middle school and high school students from schools throughout the western region of the country. Dual Digs I and II, Tri-team Attack and Fermi Quiz are team events involving problems sets based on specific mathematics curriculum topics. Chess and Sudoku are math games involving strategy and logic. Math Art and the Vectik Video are artistic expressions or interpretations of mathematics.

The idea for the festival originated last year from a 7th-grade student who presented compelling reasons why participation in math competitions advances math skills, encourages teamwork and promotes a love of mathematics, said SDJA Upper School principal Dr. Jeff Davis.

"It was a fantastic idea," Davis said. "We want it to grow into a big national program. This starts the ball rolling."

The Greater San Diego Math Council is a volunteer group of San Diego educators committed to the advancement of mathematics appreciation and competency for students. In recent years, GSDMC has led or participated in a number of successful math-related events, including competitions, conferences, student activities and recognition of excellence in educators.

For more information, a brochure or to register students and schools for the SDJA Festival of Mathematics in San Diego on March 21, 2010, visit http://www.sdja.com/upper_school_flex.php?categoryId=10 or contact Kristine Schneid at: kschneid@sdja.com or call 858-704-3767.

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