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Communications

July 31, 2018

Fourteen High Schoolers Learn to Apply Math in Business and Financial Settings

Participants in the Math Academy

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—In the annual Math Academy hosted by Gardner-Webb University, high school students applied mathematical functions in business and financial settings. The camp is sponsored each summer by the Stonecutter Foundation in Spindale, N.C. This year, 14 students attended the five-day event.

Dr. Jim Johnson, GWU assistant professor of mathematics, is the co-creator of the Math Academy, which is in its sixth year. “I very much enjoy working with the students,” he praised. “They are interested and engaging, communicate well and are very intent on their studies.”

Instructional time is scheduled in the morning, and field trips or other activities are planned in the afternoon. On Monday, participants designed surveys and collected responses from patrons in the restaurants in Boiling Springs. They analyzed the data and presented their results. By Friday, they were creating business plans and sharing them with the group. Both projects were judged and the winners received prizes.

Thomas Andrews, chair of the math and physics department at Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy in Mooresboro, N.C., has served as co-director from the beginning. He said the activities expose the students to mathematical problems they don’t typically see in the standard high school classroom. He looks forward to working with the students, because they are genuinely interested in expanding their knowledge about math. “This means the typical angst math causes is not as prevalent, and students are more willing to think about challenging concepts and take chances on being wrong,” Andrews affirmed.

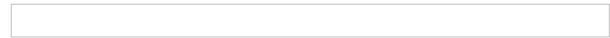
Macayla Jackson, a 10th-grade student from Pinnacle Classical Academy in Shelby, N.C., said the academy gave her a new appreciation for mathematics. “My favorite part of the week was touring the Disney data facility,” she acknowledged. “It was interesting to see how everything worked and learning about the different types of jobs that involve math.”

Touring the T5 Disney Data Processing Center in Kings Mountain, N.C., was also the most fascinating activity for Asunti Montgomery, an 11th-grade student from Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy. “I liked the technology and operations that are carried out by the data center,” he said.

The students also heard from representatives of BB&T and Hamrick Insurance and talked with Barbara Mull, an investment advisor. They spoke with the manager at Classic Ford Car Dealership and Italian Garden owner Abdul Elkout. They played a computer game to learn about stock market operations. “The activities we did helped me realize that every time I enter a password or watch something on Netflix, there’s some serious math going on,” Jackson shared. “I had a great week and they managed to make my least favorite subject interesting.”

The students who attended were Isabella Avant, Emilee Lund, Asunti Montgomery, Sean Moss, Jonathan Shauf, Nathan Spangler, Landon Standish, Robert Stockham, and Alley Summitt, all of Shelby, Macayla Jackson and Benesh Holland, both of Kings Mountain, Logan McMurry of Lawndale, Brianne Crawford of Gastonia, and Allie Pitcher of Cherryville.

Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants in the global community. Emphasizing a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb is a place where Christian conviction meets intellectual freedom. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.



Attending the 2018 Math Academy at Gardner-Webb were students from Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy in Mooresboro, N.C., Pinnacle Classical Academy in Shelby, N.C., and Highland School of Technology in Gastonia, N.C. Front row, from left, are Sean Moss and Jon Shauf of Shelby, Logan McMurry of Lawndale, N.C., Benesh Holland of Kings Mountain, N.C., Bella Avant and Landon Standish of Shelby; and back row, Brianne Crawford of Gastonia, Thomas Andrews (TJCA chair of math and physics department), Alley Summitt and Emilee Lund of Shelby, Macayla Jackson of Kings Mountain, and Nathan Spangler, Robert Stockham and Asunti Montgomery of Shelby and Jim Johnson, (GWU Assistant professor of mathematics). Not pictured is Allie Pitcher of Cherryville, N.C.