

The BSM Beat

Alumni newsletter for the BSM program

Introducing the new North American Associate Director: Dr. Kendra Killpatrick

Dr. Kendra Killpatrick is in the middle of her 11th year in the math program at Pepperdine University where she is a full professor. She began her role as the Associate Director for BSM in July 2011, working closely with the North American Director Dr. Tina Garrett.



Dr. Killpatrick completed her undergraduate education at Stanford in 1993 with a double major in mathematics and biological sciences. Having grown up with a father who was a math professor for 39 years at the University of Redlands, she knew that she wanted to pursue a Ph.D. in mathematics. She chose to go to graduate school at the University of Minnesota because she wanted to experience life outside of California and she had a few relatives in the Twin Cities area. In graduate school, she found that she loved combinatorics and thoroughly enjoyed writing her thesis in the area of algebraic and enumerative combinatorics. She completed her Ph.D. in December 1993 and then taught for one semester as a visiting faculty member at St. Olaf College.

Dr. Killpatrick always loved math and knew she wanted to major in either math or science in college. During her sophomore year of college, she found that she would save her math homework as "dessert" that she could do once she finished 30 pages of biology reading. That's when she realized she really just loved math and wanted to pursue more math, but she had finished over half of the biology major so she ended up double majoring. During the fall of her junior year

(Fall 1991) she went to the Budapest Semesters in Mathematics program and loved it! She took her first ever class in combinatorics, which she loved, and also took number theory, abstract algebra and probability, along with a culture class and introductory Hungarian. She lived with a Hungarian family and really enjoyed getting to know them, even though her host father spoke no English and her host mother spoke limited English. (Her host brother spoke reasonably good English so she could communicate that way!)

Dr. Killpatrick has many wonderful memories of her time in Budapest, including train trips to the surrounding towns and a bigger trip to Vienna during the Thanksgiving break. This past summer, she and her husband returned to Budapest for the first time since she was a student there and thoroughly enjoyed getting reacquainted with the city. Budapest is a marvelous city with so many friendly people and lots of interesting things to see and do!

Dr. Killpatrick has enjoyed working with the Budapest program and with Dr. Garrett, whom she met and became friends with while in graduate school at the University of Minnesota. She is excited about getting alumni involved in promoting the program and in encouraging students to apply.

In her personal life, Dr. Killpatrick is a mom to two boys (Finnegan, age 5, and Jack, age 2.5) and enjoys doing CrossFit and staying healthy. She hopes to return to Budapest in the very near future!

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Spring Semester 2013

- Students arrive for language intensive course: January 16th
- Orientation and welcome party: February 4th
- Classes begin: February 4th
- Final exams begin: May 20
- Semester ends: May 23

University of Michigan: A Mecca of BSM Alumni!

With at least eight BSM alumni currently attending the University of Michigan as graduate students in mathematics, the school has become something of a haven for BSMers! We gathered them together and asked them about this phenomenon and also about their memories of their time in Budapest and here are some of their responses:

John Wiltshire-Gordon (Fall 2009) took *Conjecture and Proof*, *Group Theory and Commutative Algebra* in Budapest. He says "UM has a friendly atmosphere and hard-working graduate students. Professors are open and engaged with the student population. The mathematics here seems more explicit somehow: we bring deep theorems up to sea level."

Charlotte Chan (Fall 2010) recalls living two blocks away from the Varosliget and distinctly remembers her first time in a grocery store in Budapest when she had no idea what any of the food names were. BSM convinced her that mathematics was really what she wanted to do with her life and

when she visited Michigan, Rob Silversmith (another BSM alum at UM) showed her around and told her about the incredible BSM representation.

Rohini Ramadas (Fall 2009) fondly recalls doing math with other BSMers in Budapest. Rohini had very enjoyable conversations with John Wiltshire-Gordon and the semester in Budapest is what he felt prepared him for graduate school. Rohini liked the conversations he had with UM students during the visiting weekend, including one with Jake Levinson (another BSM alum). In addition, he knew that John, Jake, Gene Kopp and Wendy Shang, all BSM alums, were going to Michigan and he ended up living with Jake and Rob Silversmith, another BSM alum.

Jake Levinson (Fall 2009) couldn't get enough of visiting Ruszwurm, a pastry shop in the castle district, or going to the Szechenyi baths. He spent a lot of time doing math at Café Csiga (near Blaha Lujza Ter), going to operas and traveling to nearby countries. Jake and been feeling a bit

burnt out mathematically when he first arrived in Budapest, but he felt rejuvenated by the end of the semester, in large part due to the math friends he had made. Jake saw four other BSM alumni at the U of Mich recruitment weekend and also knew a fifth alum who was going to attend.

Rob Silversmith (Fall 2010) remembers many dinner gatherings with friends on Marek Jozsef utca, spending hours on *Conjecture and Proof* problem sets, taking the train to Transylvania and Slovakia, and going to many operas, concerts and ballets. He had heard many good things about the Michigan program from professors at Williams and when he heard that fellow BSM alum Jake Levinson was going to Michigan, that definitely influenced his choice.

Wendy Shang (Fall 2009) loved going to the thermal baths and traveling around. She also found out that many fellow alums were going to UM during the recruitment weekend and wasn't surprised because BSMers all seem pretty smart!

What's happening in Budapest in the Spring 2013 Semester?

- 72 students will attend the program
 - 11 seniors
 - 55 juniors
 - 1 sophomore
 - 5 post-graduate
- Students from 65 different schools
- Students from 28 states and 9 countries
- 31 female students, 41 male students
- There are 47 math majors, 4 undeclared majors, 6 math and computer science majors, 1 math and statistics majors, 8 math and physics majors, 1 math and economics major, 1 math and philosophy major, 1 math and French major, 1 math and Asian studies major.
- BSM offers opportunities for "family ties" as 4 students have family from Hungary
- 1 spring student has visited 21 different countries with a close runner up of another student having visited 17 different countries.

New Summer Program Launching Summer 2013!

We are pleased to announce that BSM is launching a new six-week summer program for Summer 2013! This summer program will allow students to study mathematics in Budapest who may not have the opportunity to spend an entire semester abroad.

The dates of the program for Summer 2013 are from June 21 through Au-

gust 3. A two-day orientation program will be followed by six weeks of instruction. Classes will meet two hours per day, four days per week and students are expected to take two courses.

Four courses will be offered: Introductory Abstract Algebra, Combinatorics, Real Functions and Measures, and Advanced Mathematical Problem Solv-

ing. As with the academic year program, students will be housed in furnished apartments throughout the city of Budapest.

The application deadline for Summer 2013 is March 1. Please encourage students you know to apply! Students may find more information on our website at www.budapestsemesters.com.

Student Spotlight: Eliza Kosoy, BSM Spring 2013

Eliza Kosoy is a junior at Emmanuel College majoring in Mathematics. She was born in New York and has a family of four - her mom is part librarian/part musician, her dad is part engineer/part coupon clipper and her sibling is a bio-physicist.

Eliza first found out about the Budapest program at the Joint Mathematics Meetings in Boston last January. She thought that Math in Europe sounded like a dream, and then she realized she was reading the BSM pamphlet. While she hasn't decided yet if she is

going to take the intensive language program, she is thinking about taking Combinatorics, Number Theory, Topology, Logic, Quantum Info, Graph Theory, Combinatorial Optimization and Complex Functions. She will be happy to know there is a course shopping period during which time she can figure out which of those classes she wants to take! Eliza is planning to live with a family during her time in Budapest.

When asked why she chose to become a math major, she said that "Math is

radical, irrational and imaginary, just like me!" When she graduates from college she is currently planning to work towards a Ph.D. in mathematics.

Outside of math, Eliza enjoys reading, coloring, model railroading, consuming cookies, pondering the demise of all human interaction, listening to the radio and flying kites! She wants people to know that "she wears glasses when she does math because it helps with da-vision".



Budapest Semesters in Mathematics

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**Have you updated
your alumni contact
information lately?
Do so today!**

The BSM organization would like to keep in touch with all of our alumni. If you move or your contact information changes, please contact us to update your information so we may continue to send you the BSM Beat and keep you informed about upcoming alumni reunion events. You will find an information update form on our website, www.budapestsemesters.com, under the Alumni heading or you may contact us in any of the following ways:

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New Opportunities for BSM Alumni

BSM Alumni, we would like to encourage you to share your experiences with the Budapest program with others, particularly those of you who continue to work in higher education. For those who are currently math professors, if you are interested in giving a talk to the math majors at your institution about the Budapest Semesters in Mathematics program, we have a complete PowerPoint presentation already put together that we would be happy to share with you.

In addition, if you are a graduate student or a math professor who will be attending a Regional Undergraduate Mathematics Conference and would be interested in being on a panel about academic or summer opportunities for math majors or would be willing to sit at a table and hand out brochures and talk to undergraduates about your experience with BSM, please let us know. We would

be happy to help you make contact with the RUMC organizers, provide you with brochures and handouts and we can also provide you with a small stipend to reimburse you for travel expenses.

To request the BSM PowerPoint or to inquire about representing the BSM program at an undergraduate math conference, please call or email Kendra Killpatrick at

Kendra.Killpatrick@pepperdine.edu.

If you have further ideas about ways in which you can share information about the Budapest program with undergraduates, feel free to contact us and we will help you in whatever ways we can! You, the alumni, are our most valuable resource for recruiting the next group of talented BSM students.

BSM Alumni Directory

The new BSM Alumni Directory was sent out in late December to all alumni who have given us a current email address. If you haven't updated your contact information, you can do so now by going to the webpage and clicking on Update Your Contact Info. Please encourage other BSM alumni you may know to fill out the form so we can make the directory as up to date as possible!

