

The BSM Beat

Alumni newsletter for the BSM program

Facts and Figures about the Budapest Semesters in Mathematics Program

Have you ever wondered about how many people have attended the BSM program? What schools send the most students to BSM? How much the BSM program has grown since its first Fall semester in 1985? We have that information for you!

The Budapest Semesters in Mathematics program sent its first group of students to Hungary in the Spring of 1985 when 13 students attended the program. In the Fall of 1985, 8 more students attended, then 15 in the Spring of 1986, 12 in the Fall of 1986 and 14 in the Spring of 1987. The program has grown tremendously in almost 35 years! In contrast to those first semesters, the Fall 2011 class had 77 students, the Spring 2012 class had 54 students, the Fall 2012 class had 68 students, the Spring 2013 class had 64 students and the Fall 2013 class had 72 students. In addition, the new summer program had 18 students in its first summer 2013. An astonishing 2675 students have attended the BSM program since it first began!

As to what schools have sent the most students to the BSM program, here are the top 20 schools:

1. Carleton College	138
2. St. Olaf College	130
3. Grinnell College	85

4. Pomona College	77
5. Harvey Mudd College	72
6. Reed College	64
7. Kalamazoo College	58
8. Oberlin College	50
9. Dartmouth College	48
10. Smith College	44
11. North Carolina State Univ.	42
12. University of Chicago	42
13. Harvard University	39
14. Univ. of CA at Berkeley	35
15. Swarthmore College	34
16. Yale University	34
17. Stanford University	33
18. Bates College	32
19. Cornell University	32
20. Macalester College	31

Altogether, students from **447** different colleges and universities have attended the BSM program!

As for the gender breakdown of BSM participants, our data indicates 35% of participants have been female, 59% have been male and 6% remain unidentified in our database.

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Spring Semester 2014

- Students arrive for language intensive course: January 15th
- Orientation and welcome party: January 31st
- Classes begin: February 3
- Classes end: May 16th
- Final exams: May 19-21
- Program ends: May 22

Alumni Spotlight: Kiran Kedlaya - attended BSM in Spring 1994, current Board member

Dr. Kiran Kedlaya is a distinguished BSM alum from the Spring 1994 class. As compared with today's classes of 65-70, Kiran was in a very small class of only 17 students. (The program has really grown!) Kiran recently joined the Board that oversees all BSM activities and he is enjoying being a part of BSM once again. The classes Kiran remembers the most from his time in Budapest are Combinatorics II, Functional Analysis, and Group Theory.

Kiran earned a BA in math and physics from Harvard University in 1996. He earned a Masters degree in math from Princeton in 1997 and a Ph.D. in math from MIT in 2000. He actually started in the Ph.D. program at Princeton, but when his advisor moved to MIT Kiran decided to transfer to MIT to continue working with him.

Kiran says he has enjoyed mathematics for about as long as he can remember, but that is was only in high school that he learned that research mathematics was a profession in and of itself. Once he found that

out, he was hooked! Kiran has always liked to travel and was intrigued by the idea of dropping himself into an unfamiliar culture in Hungary without having to interrupt his study of mathematics, so he decided to apply to the BSM program.

While he has many fond memories from his time in Budapest, his favorite story to tell is the time he was taking the train from Romania back into Hungary, meeting two Hungarian-speaking Romanian women and speaking enough Hungarian to have them briefly convinced that he was also Romanian (after all, he does look the part!). He is happy to be involved in the BSM program once again as BSM is in a period of transition to a new generation of leadership and the possibility to help set the course for the future of a program that he found so beneficial as an undergraduate was too exciting of an opportunity to pass up.

Currently, Kiran is a professor at the University of California at San Diego. He is about to teach undergraduate number theory for the

first time and he is looking forward to that experience!



As for the picture with Alex Trebek, there are open tryouts for Jeopardy, starting with an online test that runs every 18 months or so. Kiran started with that and then got called to an in-person interview in Los Angeles and it went on from there.

Spoiler alert! The episodes are available on YouTube for those interested. Kiran won his first game netting just over \$30,000 and came in 2nd on his second game!

Outside of math, Kiran enjoys music in various capacities, games and puzzles, including crossword puzzles (in 2006 he came in 2nd place at the American Crossword Puzzle Tournament, the 2005 edition of which is depicted in the documentary "Wordplay"), travel and photography, especially at the same time. At last count Kiran has been to over 50 countries!

What's happening in Budapest in the Spring 2014 Semester?

- 76 students will attend the program
 - 5 seniors
 - 60 juniors
 - 1 sophomore
 - 1 post-graduate
- Students from 51 different schools
- Students from 28 states and 5 countries
 - 30 female students, 37 male students
 - There are 32 math majors, 15 undeclared majors, 6 math and computer science majors, 6 math and physics majors, 5 math and economics majors, 1 math and German major, 1 math and linguistics major, 1 math, philosophy and English major and 1 math, media/film and theater major.
- Interesting tidbits about the class: One student said "The last time I left the country (the US) was when I was three years old to visit my grandmother in Bohonye, Hungary." Another student has a sister who attended the program in the Spring of 2012.

Update on the new Summer Program

We are excited that the second year of the BSM summer program will run this year from the third week in June until the first week in August. There will be an orientation for all students prior to the start of the program in mid-June.

Student Spotlight: Zofia Stanley, BSM Spring 2014

Zofia Stanley was born in Berkeley, CA but grew up in Oberlin, OH. She is currently a junior at Brown University. She first heard about the BSM program at a study abroad fair, but started seriously considering attending when a few of her friends told her of their plans to attend the BSM program this past fall. Ultimately she decided to attend because she loves traveling, living abroad, and math. The BSM program combines all three into one program!

Zofia has always loved math. For reasons which she chalks up to having two X chromosomes, she initially convinced herself that she couldn't be a math major - that is would be too hard for her. She took classes in the physics and the applied mathematics departments at Brown, but ultimately ended up deciding that math was what she really loved. She then unconvinced herself not to be a math major and started taking the math classes she had always wanted to take.

As far as her favorite math classes up to this point, she really enjoyed her real analysis class because it has been the most rigorous math course she has taken and everything in that course was developed from the ground up.

At Brown she has been involved in a mentoring program called BRYTE, Brown Refugee Youth Tutoring and En-

richment. She has been tutoring a now ten-year-old girl from Ethiopia for the past two and a half years. She meets with her two or three times a week and they learn together how much fun education can be! In addition, Brown allows students, with the support of a faculty advisor, to create their own classes called GISPs (Group Independent Study Project). She is currently working with two other Brown students to create a course titled "Race and Gender in the Scientific Community". For a very long time Zofia avoided talking to others about the subtle biases against women that she felt very strongly upon entering college and that pervade American science education. When she did start talking about these issues, she realized that every one of her friends who belonged to a minority group in the sciences has felt similar biases and pressures. These issues are very real and quite present for many science and math students and yet very few people are willing to start conversations about how these issues can be resolved and how change can be made. Opening up the conversation and learning how to effect change, however small, is the main goal of their course. She is very excited to continue learning about this topic and to do whatever she can to create a stronger and more diverse mathematical community. Zofia is particularly excited to explore the Hungarian educational system and see how treatment of non-majority

groups differs in Hungary and in the US. The tuition for the program will be \$3950. Other expenses can be found on the BSM website under the Summer Program tab. All summer students will be housed in apartments throughout the city of Budapest. The deadline to apply is **March 1st**.



Zofia's parents gave her the travel bug when she was very young and she hasn't been able to shake it since. She lived in the Netherlands for a year when she was 13 and it was the most formative year of her life. She is very excited to live in Europe again and this time explore Eastern Europe!

As far as BSM goes, Zofia is very much looking forward to the rigor that BSM is so famous for in its math classes. She is also excited to learn Hungarian, both the language and the culture, and tour Eastern Europe. She very much hopes to be able to immerse herself in the Hungarian culture while at the same time taking many weekend trips and learning cool math! She is taking the intensive language class and will be staying in an apartment.

After graduating from college, she is considering graduate school, possibly in mathematical biology. In her spare time, Zofia loves hiking, biking, skiing (cross country) and most other non-fatal outdoor activities.

Budapest Semesters in Mathematics

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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. If you are currently a math professor, and 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, contact Dr. 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 BSM Alumni Directory will be emailed once a year 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!

