

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MSRI sends team to represent U.S. at China's Girls Math Olympiad

High school students compete in girls-only international math contest

BERKELEY, California – The Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI) announced today that it will send a team of high school girls from throughout the United States to participate in the 2010 China Girls Mathematical Olympiad (CGMO). The international competition will be held from Monday, August 9 through Friday, August 13 in Shijiazhuang, China, the capital of Hebei Province, about 100 miles southwest of Beijing. This is the fourth year that the Berkeley-based MSRI has sponsored a U.S. team to compete at the international contest. Among the eight girls on this year's team, five girls have been medal winners on the U.S. team at recent China Girls Mathematical Olympiads.

Representing the United States on the girls math team are: **Cynthia Day** from San Jose, California, a junior at Lynbrook High School, who won a bronze medal at last year's Olympiad; **Adisa Kruayatidee** from Stevenson Ranch, California, who is a senior at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire; **Shiyu (Jing Jing) Li** from Sunnyvale, CA, a 2009 gold medalist who recently graduated from Cupertino High School and enters the University of California, Berkeley this fall; **Jaе Eui Shin**, a senior at Phillips Andover Academy in Massachusetts; **Elizabeth Synge** from Lexington, Massachusetts, who was a 2009 silver medalist and will be a senior at Boston University Academy; **Andi Wang** from Stoneham, Massachusetts, a recent graduate of Choate Rosemary Hall in Wallingford, Connecticut, who will be a freshman at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology this fall; 2008 gold medal winner **Lynnelle Ye**, who recently graduated from Palo Alto High School and will attend Stanford University; and **Shijie Joy Zheng** from Bellevue, Washington—she will be competing at the Olympiad for a third time, having won a gold medal last year—is currently a senior at Phillips Exeter Academy.

The team's eight high school students were chosen from the top ranks of the female finalists in the 2010 USA Mathematical Olympiad (USAMO). The team coach is Zuming Feng, a math teacher on the faculty of Phillips Exeter Academy, leader of the USA International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) team, and director of the Mathematical Olympiad Summer Program (MOSP) since 2003. Assistant coaches are Inna Zakharevich, who scored in the top 12 at the 2002 USAMO and is currently a graduate student at MIT, and Sherry Gong, a member of the 2005 and 2007 USA IMO teams and the 2007 CGMO team—where she was a gold medalist and tied for first place in the overall standings—she currently attends Harvard.

"MSRI is proud to support the U.S. team of exceptional young women who will compete at the 2010 CGMO," said Robert Bryant, Director of MSRI. "It is important for our country to develop their mathematical talent, and participation at such rigorous competitions on an international level enhances their problem-solving skills while providing a springboard for each young woman to further achievements and scientific aspirations."

The girls will write an online travelogue with photos to capture and share highlights from their trip to the CGMO (go to <http://www.msri.org/specials/gmo/2010>).

Founded in 2002, the CGMO began as a regional competition for teams of female students from China and other eastern Asian countries (including Russia). It was later expanded to invite teams from more countries, including the United States, Canada, South Africa, United Kingdom, and Australia among the invitees.

The U.S. girls team has been award-winning since it first competed in the CGMO in 2007. In fact, every member of the team has won a medal since the summer of 2008 when the team scored two gold medals, one silver medal, and five bronze medals. Again, in 2009, all seven team members earned top honors: two gold medals, three silver medals, and two bronze medals.

Funding for this project is provided by IBM Research – Almaden, Akamai Foundation, Mathematical Association of America, the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute, Sunlin and Priscilla Chou Foundation, and Science Workshop.

"The Akamai Foundation is pleased to co-sponsor the U.S. girls team invited to compete in the 2010 China Girls Mathematical Olympiad," said Tom Leighton, chief scientist and co-founder, Akamai. "By supporting high-scoring students from the USAMO, the Foundation hopes to encourage these and other students to continue their pursuit of mathematics education."

"We are thrilled to help prepare these young women for the Olympiad—the experience of a lifetime," said Dr. Laura Haas, IBM Fellow, and Director of Computer Science, IBM Research – Almaden. "Programs like the Olympiad are among the best ways to spark interest and create passion about math and science for young women, which is crucial to creating the next generation of female scientists and engineers."

About MSRI: The Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI, <http://www.msri.org>), in Berkeley, California, is one of the world's preeminent centers for research in the mathematical sciences and has been advancing mathematical research through workshops and conferences since its founding as an independent institute in 1982. Approximately 2,000 mathematicians visit the MSRI each year, and the Institute hosts about 85 leading researchers at any given time for stays of up to one academic year. The Institute has been funded primarily by the National Science Foundation with additional support from other government agencies, private foundations, corporations, individual donors, and more than 85 academic institutions. MSRI is involved in K-12 math education through its annual "Critical Issues in Mathematics Education" conferences for educators, math circles, math festivals, the National Associate for Math Circles (NAMC) and its website, and Olympiad math competitions, in undergraduate education through its MSRI-UP program, and in public education through its "Conversations" series of public events.