![MSRI Mathematical Sciences Research Institute]

Team of eight girls represents the United States
at the China Girls Math Olympiad
Top math students compete in girls-only international math competition

BERKELEY, California – The Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI) and the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) announced today that they will send a U.S. team of eight high school and middle school girls to participate in the 2012 China Girls Mathematical Olympiad (CGMO). The international competition will be held from Thursday, August 9 through Monday, August 13 in Guangzhou, which is the third largest city in China and 75 miles from Hong Kong in southern China's Guangdong Province. This is the sixth year that the Berkeley-based MSRI has sponsored the United States' team of girls to compete at the international contest.

Representing the United States on the girls math team are: **Cynthia Day,** 17, from San Jose, California, who recently graduated from Lynbrook High School and will be a freshman at Stanford University this fall, she was a medalist at the 2009 and 2010 CGMO**; Courtney Guo,** 16, a U.S. citizen who is a junior at the International School of Beijing in China; **Laura Pierson**, 12, from Oakland, California, who is the youngest student to ever compete on the U.S. team, she will be a seventh grader this fall at Hillcrest Middle School; **Gabriella Studt,** 16, from Silver Spring, Maryland, who begins her junior year at Montgomery Blair High School; **Danielle Wang,** 15, from Campbell, California, a sophomore at Westmont High School, who won a gold medal at last year's CGMO; **Alicia Weng,** 16, from West Hills, California, she will be a junior at North Hollywood High School; **Victoria Xia**, 16, from Vienna, Virginia, who won a gold medal last year and will be a junior at the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology; and **Jingyi Zhao,** 16, from Culver, Indiana, who will be a junior this fall at Culver Academies.

The team's eight high school students were chosen from the top ranks of the female finalists in the 2012 USA Mathematical Olympiad (USAMO). The team coach is Zuming Feng, a math teacher on the faculty of Phillips Exeter Academy, the leader of the USA International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) team, and the director of the Mathematical Olympiad Summer Program (MOSP) since 2003. Returning as the team's assistant coaches are Jennifer Iglesias, a recent Harvey Mudd College graduate who will enter Carnegie Mellon University's PhD program in mathematics this fall—she won a gold medal in 2008; and Sherry Gong, a Harvard graduate who begins a PhD program in mathematics at MIT in the fall—she was a gold medalist on the 2007 CGMO team and tied for first place in the overall standings.

"MSRI and the MAA are proud to support the outstanding young women who made the United States team and will compete in China at the Math Olympiad for girls," said Robert Bryant, Director of MSRI. "Such rigorous competitions, at an international level, provide an invaluable experience for each young woman to test her mathematical skills, enjoy the camaraderie of participating on a team, and inspire future achievements and scientific aspirations."

The team members will share photos and highlights from their trip to the Olympiad in China. In June, the girls started writing a travelogue online (see http://www.msri.org/cgmo/2012) while they prepared for the competition by training at the MAA Mathematical Olympiad Summer Program (MOSP) at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. "The team received excellent preparation at the Mathematical Olympiad Summer Program. We are pleased to be able to train such an exceptional group of young women for this challenging international competition" said Michael Pearson, Executive Director of the MAA.

The U.S. girls team has consistently earned medals since its debut at the CGMO in the summer of 2007. Last year, all eight girls on the 2011 U.S. team won medals (two gold medals, one silver medal, and five bronze medals). In 2010, the team placed second in the overall standings—among 48 teams from ten countries—and in 2008 and 2009, every member of the U.S. team medaled at the Olympiad.

-- more --

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 others.

Funding for this program is provided by the Akamai Foundation, Delta Air Lines, Inc., the Mathematical Association of America, the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute, the National Science Foundation, the S. S. Chern Foundation, and the Sunlin and Priscilla Chou Foundation.

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 90 academic institutions. MSRI is involved in K–12 math education through its annual "Critical Issues in Mathematics Education" conferences for educators, math circles, Julia Robinson Math Festivals, the National Association 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.

About the MAA: The **Mathematical Association of America** (**MAA,** www.maa.org) is the largest professional society that focuses on mathematics accessible at the undergraduate level. The association members include university, college, and high school teachers; graduate and undergraduate students; pure and applied mathematicians; computer scientists; statisticians; and many others in academia, government, business, and industry. The MAA welcomes all who are interested in the mathematical sciences. It was formed in 1915. There are now more than 20,000 members in this organization.

$$-- 3+3^3 --$$