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2019 National Math Festival Heads to D.C. on May 4th to Prove Math is Fun and for Everyone

Top-Notch Speakers and Hands-On Activities Engage Young and Old

WASHINGTON, DC (February 6, 2019)—The [schedule is set](#) for the [2019 National Math Festival](#): a day of hands-on activities, fascinating speakers, and inspiring performances, showcasing how math is everywhere and full of surprises. Descending upon D.C. for the third time on Saturday, May 4, 2019, this event is free and open to the public. The festival will draw more than 20,000 people of all ages to the Walter E. Washington Convention Center from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The 2019 National Math Festival is organized by the [Mathematical Sciences Research Institute](#) in cooperation with the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) and the National Museum of Mathematics (MoMath).

“The festival fun will help young people and old understand how math is everywhere around us: in art, dance and music, in puzzles and games, and in how we understand our world,” explains MSRI Director David Eisenbud, Professor of Mathematics at the University of California, Berkeley.

The daylong event features creative short films, math-inspired dance and musical performances, a magic show, team sports challenges, hands-on art making, puzzles, games, demos, and more than a dozen accessible talks on the playful side of math, and the math behind how the world works.

Experiential programs designed for young people but with escalating levels of challenge for adults, include puzzles, games, and art-making activities. Math organizations will host “make or take” resource pickup stations and take-home hands-on projects for festival attendees and educators.

Major activity presenters include the National Museum of Mathematics (MoMath), the Julia Robinson Mathematics Festival, MIND Research Institute, Natural Math and Math On-A-Stick, the Bridges Organization, and the Young People’s Project.

Schedule highlights include:

- *Dance of the Diagram*—The NYC-based dance company BARKIN/SELISSEN PROJECT performs a piece commissioned by celebrated mathematician Dr. James Simons and inspired by patterns on a hexagonal diagram.
- *Young People’s Project National Flagway™ Tournament*—Middle school players and coaches (high school mentors) from across the country participate in competition that combines speed, athleticism, and precision with the mastery of mathematics.

- *Data Did That!*—A presentation exploring how data is a driving force from robots to Facebook, medicine, and shopping.
- *Cryptography: Secrets and Lies, Knowledge and Trust*—Explore beautiful ideas and concepts underlying cryptography, and the amazing impact they have had on computer science.
- *Math, Ice Cores, and Planet Earth*—Touch an ancient ice core, and learn cool ways to use math to understand climate and earth.
- *The Physics of Football*—Through pro football video, former Baltimore Ravens offensive lineman John Urschel will discuss how physics shows up on the football field.

“Mathematics is a universal language used to illuminate the world and all of its mysteries. When one realizes the connection between math and our lives, it never ceases to amaze and teach us something new,” says Robbert Dijkgraaf, IAS Director and Leon Levy Professor. “You don’t need any math background to enjoy these talks. Just come ready to have your curiosity sparked.”

“MoMath is pleased to bring engaging, hands-on exhibits from the nation’s only museum of math to Washington, D.C.,” says Cindy Lawrence, Executive Director and CEO of the National Museum of Mathematics, which joins MSRI in presenting the festival. “You can explore giant mazes, slice shapes with lasers, build intricate tiling patterns with life-size blocks, and much, much more,” she adds.

Sponsors of the 2019 National Math Festival include the Simons Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Eric and Wendy Schmidt, the National Science Foundation, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Irwin and Joan Jacobs, and the Kavli Foundation.

Corresponding events celebrating the beauty and fundamental importance of mathematics in everyday life will take place at more than 60 science centers in more than 30 states. For updates on the National Math Festival, visit www.nationalmathfestival.org, or follow on Twitter @NatMathFestival or Facebook at www.facebook.com/nationalmathfestival.

Note: The Festival will hold a [School Preview Day](#) for media and schools on May 3rd. Reporters interested in covering should register by contacting Shawn Flaherty at 703-554-3609.

About the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI)

The Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI) is one of the world’s preeminent centers for collaborative research in mathematics. Located in Berkeley, California, MSRI’s mission is to advance mathematical research, foster talent, and further the appreciation of mathematics. MSRI strives to make mathematics accessible and exciting to those outside the field through the National Math Festival, sponsorship of Numberphile (YouTube’s most popular informal mathematics channel, with over 2.7 million subscribers), film production for public television including the much-recognized Navajo Math Circles, and the Mathical Book Prize. MSRI has created a national Math Circles movement of small organizations teaching and engaging children in math as a hobby. www.msri.org