

## A Word from the Chair

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This volume of the *Undergraduate Mathematics Exchange* documents the rich and varied research experiences of our current undergraduate students. Nathan Pappas won a competitive internship opportunity at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Summer 2006, and reports his work in this volume. Nathan recently learned that he has been accepted for a similar internship opportunity at a NASA laboratory in Summer 2007. Pamela Mouchaham and Amanda Barnhart were among a select group of Ball State University students chosen to participate in the Urban Semester Program during Fall 2006. This unique partnership between Ball State University and Indianapolis area schools, which enters its second decade this year, is chronicled from the students' perspective in their article. Nathan Berggoetz reports the results of his independent study of economic dynamic modeling in this volume's lead article. Together, these three project reports span the many varieties of hands-on immersion experiences that are available on our campus.



The opportunities for students and faculty to work in close collaboration extend to our two departmental student-faculty colloquia. In two separate articles, freshman Neal Coleman provides a taste of the mathematics group during the Fall 2006 term, and my colleague Sheryl Stump reports on the work of the newly-formed mathematics education group. Tamara (Bleke) Johnson and Kari Jennings report their efforts to create a project of heightened awareness of actuarial science among high school students. This work resulted in a joint Senior Thesis for the team. In short reports, Juan Hu tells of her experience attending an international statistics meeting, and Kari Jennings and Nathan Pappas tell of their internship experiences.

I hope that these tales of challenge, persistence, and achievement remind and encourage you toward your own successes. Albert Einstein is quoted as saying, "It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer." Such determination is the mark of a successful mathematician—as revealed through the stories of each author of this volume. May you likewise enjoy your pursuits.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Emert".

**Dr. John Emert**

Chair and Professor of Mathematical Sciences