



PRESS RELEASE

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March 18, 2010

Patricia Hersh wins Ruth I. Michler Memorial Prize

The Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM) and Cornell University are pleased to announce that Patricia Hersh, North Carolina State University, will receive the fourth annual Ruth I. Michler Memorial Prize.

The Michler Prize grants a mid-career woman in academia a residential fellowship in the Cornell University mathematics department without teaching obligations. This pioneering venture was established through a very generous donation from the Michler family and the efforts of many people at AWM and Cornell.

Patricia Hersh was selected to receive the Michler Prize because of her wide range of mathematical talents. In 1994, she was named by AWM as a runner-up for the Alice T. Shafer Prize. Hersh received her diploma in Mathematics and Computer Science at Harvard University in 1995, completing a senior thesis under the direction of Persi Diaconis. She carried out her doctoral degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where she studied enumerative properties as well as decomposition in partially ordered sets with Richard Stanley.



In 2000, Hersh was awarded an AWM Mentoring Travel Grant to work with Phil Hanlon. She was an NSF postdoctoral fellow at the University of Michigan and held postdoctoral positions at the University of Washington and MSRI. In 2004, Hersh began a tenure track appointment in the department of mathematics at Indiana University-Bloomington. She is currently at North Carolina State University where she

holds a position as an Associate Professor in the department of mathematics.

Hersh's primary interests are in algebraic and topological combinatorics, particularly the interactions between combinatorics and such fields as topology, commutative algebra, representation theory and theoretical computer science. Her work is funded by the National Science Foundation

At Cornell, Hersh plans to study topology and combinatorics of stratified spaces from Schubert calculus, combinatorial representation theory and total positivity theory with Allen Knutson. She will also collaborate with Irena Peeza on combinatorial commutative algebra and cellular resolutions, and Ed Swartz on rings of graph colorings.

Ruth Michler's parents Gerhard and Waltraud Michler of Essen, Germany established the memorial prize with the Association for Women in Mathematics because Ruth was deeply committed to its mission of supporting women mathematicians. Cornell University was chosen as the host institution because of its distinctive research atmosphere and because Ithaca was Ruth's birthplace. At the time of her death, Ruth was in Boston as an NSF visiting scholar at Northeastern University. A recently promoted associate professor of mathematics at the University of North Texas, she was killed on November 1, 2000 at the age of 33 in a tragic accident, cutting short the career of an excellent mathematician.