

Meritorious Service Awards

Christopher Swanson

Ashland University

This year the Ohio Section is proud to nominate Dr. Christopher Swanson for the MAA Meritorious Service Award. Dr. Swanson has been actively involved in the MAA at the national and section level. He currently serves as the Past President of the Ohio Section after completing a two-year term as President. He worked diligently on the most recent update of the section bylaws to bring them in-line with the updates from the National MAA and also served on the Ohio Section of the MAA's Committee on Curriculum from 2001–2003.

Dr. Christopher Swanson is a devoted supporter and leader of Project NExT serving as the Ohio Section NExT Co-coordinator from 2004 until he took over as Section President in 2016. He was a co-PI with Wiebke Diestelkamp of University of Dayton and John Prather of Ohio University on an MAA grant (\$5000) awarded to Ohio Section of the MAA to support the recruitment of early-career, two-year college faculty to participate in Ohio NExT workshops. He served as a faculty mentor for the graduate student paper session “Great Talks: Coached Presentations by Grad Students” at MathFest in 2012 and 2016. Dr. Swanson has also presented multiple invited national panel discussions and section NExT workshops, including:

- “Engaging Mathematics Majors Outside the Classroom” at Ohio NExT in Cleveland, Ohio (October 2013)
- “Experiencing Spherical Geometry: A Non-Axiomatic Approach to Teaching College Geometry” at National Project NExT in Madison, Wisconsin (August 2012, July 2008 and August 2007)
- “Joining the Mathematical Community” at National Project NExT in Madison, Wisconsin (July 2012)
- “How to Run a Senior Seminar” at National Project NExT in Madison, Wisconsin (July 2008)
- “Active Learning in the Non-Calculus Classroom: My Favorite Activities” at Ohio Project NExT workshop at Shawnee State University in Portsmouth, Ohio (April 2007)
- “Experiencing Spherical Geometry: A Non-Axiomatic Approach to Teaching College Geometry” at Ohio Project NExT in Columbus, Ohio (April 2003)

Dr. Swanson is also passionate about student related activities within the MAA. He served on the Ohio Section of the MAA's Committee on Student Members from 2003 to 2011, helping to develop problems for and judge the student math competition. He led an invited student activity entitled “Games Mathematicians Play” at MathFest in Columbus, Ohio (August 2016). He has also served as a judge and session moderator at the MAA Student Paper Session at MathFest. Dr. Swanson co-organized and facilitated a panel discussion entitled “Promoting the Mathematics Major” during AMS-MAA Joint Mathematics Meetings in Washington, DC in 2000.

Dr. Christopher Swanson's continued service to the Ohio Section and National MAA make him an ideal recipient for this year's Meritorious Service Award.

Response

I am greatly honored to be nominated by the Ohio Section for the MAA Meritorious Service Award, especially when there were so many additional strong candidates for this award. While it can be tough being a Michigan Wolverine fan living in Ohio, I feel blessed to be part of the very active Ohio Section of

the MAA. Being able to interact with colleagues across the Ohio Section at our Fall and Spring Meetings always rejuvenates me as I head back to campus to finish off each semester. I wish to thank my colleagues at Ashland University during the early part of my career—Tom Dence, Cathy Stoffer, Vickie Van Dresar, Gordon Swain and Darren Wick—who never asked if I planned to attend the Ohio Section meeting, but rather how many students I could fit in my car. I wish to thank the MAA for selecting me to be a Project NExT Fellow, teaching me the “Just Say Yes” attitude that resulted in my desire to do service for the Ohio Section. I wish to thank Ohio Section of the MAA for sponsoring Ohio NExT and allowing me to stay involved with this group as a co-coordinator for 12 years after I “aged out,” so that I could continue to develop professionally and feel young. Finally, I would like to thank my wife and children for the support and understanding they have given me throughout my career, not making me feel guilty when I missed yet another trick-or-treat night so that I could attend the Fall meeting of the Ohio Section.

Biographical Sketch

Dr. Christopher Swanson is a native Ohioan who received his BS from Denison University in 1994. In 1999, he received his PhD from the University of Michigan and immediately joined the faculty at Ashland University where he has also been the Director of the university-wide Honors Program for the last 12 years. His research interests are combinatorics and probability. In 2006, Dr. Swanson received the national Alder Award from the MAA in recognition for distinguished teaching by a beginning mathematics faculty member and he received the Ohio Section of the MAA Distinguished Teaching Award in 2014. In his spare time, Dr. Swanson enjoys watching movies, playing disc golf, cycling, annoying Ohio State fans and participating in the applied probability seminar