

Meritorious Service Awards

John Travis

Mississippi College

The Louisiana/Mississippi Section of the MAA has selected Professor John Travis for the Meritorious Service Award. Dr. Travis is a Professor of Mathematics and Chair of the Department of Mathematics at Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi. He has served the section with distinction for over 30 years. In 1995 Dr. Travis became the first ever webmaster for the section, a position he still holds. He also serves as the Technical Editor and Publisher of the Section's Annual Meeting Proceedings, a position he has held since 1999. He held the position of Newsletter Editor from 1998-2001, Section Chair from 2002 to 2003 and served as the Section Governor from 2006 to 2009. Throughout his time on the Section's Executive Committee Dr. Travis has provided support to both the Section and to members of the Section. He was instrumental in the development of the Section NExT program as well as the Anderson Lecture Series. Both of these initiatives provide ongoing support to the Section's members and institutional partners through meeting activities and professional development opportunities.

Dr. Travis also has a strong track record of service to the MAA beyond the Louisiana/Mississippi Section. He has been a consultant for Project NExT as well as for the PREP program on multiple occasions and has led several very successful MAA minicourses and PREP workshops. John has served on a number of MAA strategic planning groups and several committees. He has also promoted WeBWorK extensively and has supported the associated MAA initiative at national meetings for many years. He currently serves as President of The WebWork Project. One of John's main areas of interest is the use of open source resources for teaching mathematics, such as WeBWorK, Sage and PreTeXt. He has done extensive work creating and sharing innovative WeBWorK exercises and Sage modules, both locally and nationally, and has presented on using WeBWorK for teaching the Introduction to Proofs Course at national meetings and on using Sage and WeBWorK for teaching multivariable calculus at Sage Education Days. These and many of his other contributions to the teaching and learning of mathematics were recognized in 2013 when he was awarded the Sections' Distinguished Teaching Award.

Dr. Travis has provided unprecedented service to the Section and is a leader in pedagogy through his contributions to various open source resources. His dedication to and leadership in the Section is outstanding and he is very deserving of this award.

Response

It would not be a stretch to say that the Louisiana/Mississippi Section of the MAA is filled with interesting people. They are often boisterous and opinionated as well as generous and thoughtful. To be honored by such a group of deserving people is a special privilege. I have never felt like my service to the LA/MS Section was so much work but more like an opportunity to be able to support and serve such a great group. Indeed, the MAA is a great organization that has provided me with ways to serve the profession hopefully in ways that ultimately matter. The friends that I have been able to cultivate through my work with the LA/MS Section in particular and the MAA in general have made my life all the richer.

Biographical Sketch

John Travis is Professor of Mathematics at Mississippi College where he has served as Chair of Mathematics since 2004. He earned a BA in mathematics from Mississippi College, a MS in mathematics from

the University of Tennessee and a PhD in mathematical sciences from Mississippi State University. He has been teaching at his alma mater for the past 31 years. During that time he concurrently served one year as Senior Research Mathematician for the Army Corps of Engineers at the Engineering Research and Development Center in Vicksburg Mississippi.

John's primary professional interests include Numerical Linear Algebra and Scientific Computing and he is also very involved in the use of technology in the teaching of Mathematics. He is the author of two open source textbooks: *Essentials of Mathematical Probability and Statistics* and *Mathematics of Finance*, each of which incorporates interactive elements utilizing WeBWorK, Sage, and R.

You can find him often playing guitar and racquetball but not necessarily at the same time but mostly enjoying having students drop by to sit in his recliner. He and his wife Ruth have three double-named daughters: Anna Kate, Sarah Grace, and Laura Joy.