

## The DEAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the first Alumni eNewsletter of 2015! We just finished a very busy year in 2014, full of advancements in research and technology at CPMS. Other highlights include a visit from Nobel Laureate Mario Capecchi; Student Academy Awards and a ninth-place finish in the Putnam Mathematical Competition; and faculty and staff receiving several awards at BYU's Annual University Conference.

To say that 2014 was a success would be an understatement. We are proud of the accomplishments of the members of our college, and we are grateful for the continual support and successes of you, our alumni. We know that 2015 holds even more progress, both for CPMS and in the lives of our outstanding students.

Our calendar for the next few months is teeming with events, beginning with the college's Three Minute Thesis competition. Three Minute Thesis, or 3MT, is an annual competition for graduate students where the students present their thesis research in three minutes or less. The college competition will be held on Friday, February 20 at the Third Floor Commons of the Hinckley Center at 11:30 a.m.

The top two students from the CPMS event will compete in the university-wide 3MT competition on Thursday, March 5 at the Varsity Theatre in the Wilkinson Center. For more information, visit [here](#).

Next is the Rex Lee Run Against Cancer, a yearly race that raises funds for cancer research at BYU, on Saturday, March 7.

We hope you will come participate in the 5k, 10k, or even the cancer awareness festival that will happen that morning along with the races. You can visit the Rex Lee Run website for more information [here](#).

March 14, 2015 (3-14-15), is a special Pi Day, and BYU will celebrate in style with a weeklong Pi Spectacular. We would love to have you bring your family to join in the festivities.

On Thursday, March 19, Alexis T. Bell, professor of chemical engineering at the University of California at Berkeley and faculty senior scientist at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, will visit BYU to give the annual Izatt-Christenson lecture. Bell will deliver two lectures, one for a broad audience and one for those with a more technical understanding.

You can round out March with us by attending the Student Research Conference on Saturday, March 21 in the Jesse Knight Building. This conference gives both undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to present research in a professional conference-like setting.

As you can see, we have a busy start for 2015! The year begins with several opportunities for you to visit campus and associate with students, faculty, and other alumni. We hope that you will be able to take part in as many of these activities as interest you, and we hope that 2015 is a year filled with happiness and health.

.....→ **Scott Sommerfeldt, Dean**

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Dr. Blake Peterson

## Top Teacher: Math Education Chair Earns AMTE Award

*The Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AMTE) named Dr. Blake Peterson as the recipient of the 2015 Excellence in Teaching in Mathematics Teacher Education Award.*

The award is a national honor given every three years, and Peterson said he didn't see it coming.

"I had no idea I'd been nominated for it, so it kind of came out of nowhere," he said. "A couple of faculty in the department had done some behind-the-scenes work, and they didn't tell me, so I was really surprised. It felt pretty cool."

AMTE has given the award only three times previously, to Randy Philipp, Margaret (Peg) Smith, and Deborah Ball; all three are highly respected in their field. Peterson said it is somewhat overwhelming to be categorized with these colleagues.

"It's almost a little intimidating...They're very well-known in math education, so it's kind of amazing that my name would be on the same list with them," he said.

Peterson attributed his success as a teacher to a simple and profound love for teaching itself, which seems to motivate him to go the extra mile. For example, he builds new detailed plans for every single lesson he teaches, regardless of the number of times he has taught the lesson previously.

[Read more of this story here.](#)

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