

Math Professor receives Women in Math award

(Continued from page one)

Helping other women in mathematics is a passion for Leonard, because she has heard too many horror stories from women in math, she said-if the women even make it to higher level math courses.

"The phenomenon is known as the 'leaky pipeline' where non-white, non-male people drop out of math at various levels starting around middle school," Leonard said. "And those who stay in math are often sidelined at the higher levels. This is becoming a problem for the U.S. Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (S.T.E.M.) workforce as foreigners who are educated here are more likely to return to their own countries."

U.S.-born men with mathematical interests are more likely to go for higher-paying jobs in business or banking, she said.

Despite the need for women in STEM, there are hurdles for those who do last into the higher education courses with many encountering subtle and not-so-subtle sexism, she said. Women are still an extreme minority in most US mathematics departments.

CI is unusual in that the mathematics department chair is a woman, and more than half of the department's permanent faculty are female. Leonard said this is one of the qualities that attracted Leonard to the department.

Leonard served as a mentor for mathematics grad student Dana Cochran, who earned a spot at "Posters on the Hill" in Washington D.C., which means she will present her research to members of Congress on April 22-23.

Leonard has been tireless in her involvement with AWM, chairing committees, organizing workshops and setting up a system for pairing mentors with workshop participants, among other efforts. The AWM is a non-profit organization founded in 1971 with the goal of encouraging women and girls to study and have active careers in the mathematical sciences, and to promote equal opportunity and the equal treatment of women and girls in the mathematical sciences. AWM currently has more than 3,000 members (women and men) representing a broad spectrum of the mathematical community - from the United States and around the world.