

Texas A&M University Math Circle

MAA Session on Outreach
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Co-organizers: Trevor Olsen, Kaitlyn Phillipson,
Alex Sprintson, Phillip Yasskin, and others.

Evolution of TAMU Math Circle

Started Simple. Autumn 2011.

Fortnightly after-school club for a dozen students.

January 2012: Moved to TAMU Campus, weekly meetings.

Now. Meets weekly on Saturday afternoons.

Serves 30–45 students, with around 10 volunteers.

30 minute unstructured activity during arrival.

90 minute structured activity in 2 or 3 groups

Oldest group works on problems.

We provide snacks.

TAMU Math Circle is a success. Students look forward to it, and it is affecting local schools.

Collaborations

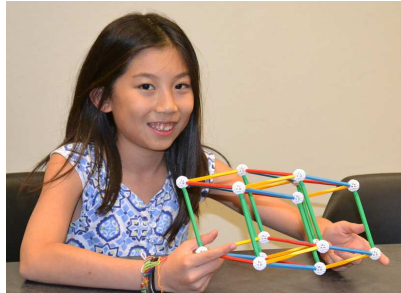
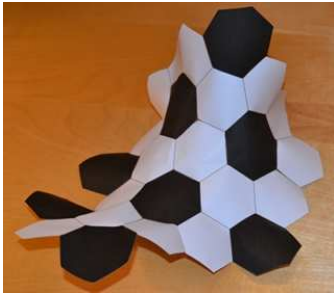
Activities created by students and faculty. Organizers help others develop activities.

Other TAMU STEM faculty have run activities.

Beginning to set up exchanges with other Texas Math Circles.

—This allows people to recycle activities.

Challenge: Find people to create interesting activities.



Organization

Started by Alex Sprintson (Electrical and Computer Engineering), Phillip Yasskin (Math), and Frank Sottile (Math).

In its second year, began using student volunteers, adding Trevor Olsen (Undergraduate) and Kaitlyn Phillipson (Graduate Student) as organizers.

Now have many volunteers: pupils to graduate students to parents, with varying responsibilities, some compensated. Outreach training activity for graduate students.

Challenge: Organizer turnover.

Managing with fewer volunteers.

Find a semi-permanent and stable structure.

Funding

Year 1: Organizers' outreach funds, materials from SEE-Math.

Year 2: Added 1.5 K from the MSRI, and departmental support.

Year 3: No MSRI, but charged students \$50 for year.

Year 4: Dolciani Mathematics Enrichment Grant 3K, raised fees to \$100. (possibly too much).

Challenge: Find stable outside funding of 3-5K a year.

If 10–12K, could hire a graduate student to run the circle.

