

## **California Online Mathematics Education Times (COMET)**

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**COMET Archives** (2000-2014): <http://comet.cmpso.org>

**California Mathematics Project:** <http://www.cmpso.org>

*California Online Mathematics Education Times (COMET)* is an electronic news bulletin providing STEM-related news from California and across the nation, as well as information about professional events and opportunities, current educational issues, and online resources.

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### **ARTICLES & ANNOUNCEMENTS (CALIFORNIA FOCUS)**

- (1) Science Teacher Honored as California's Representative to the National Teacher of the Year**

## Competition

**Source:** California Department of Education

**URL:** [www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr14/yr14rel106.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr14/yr14rel106.asp)

Last Wednesday (10.22.2014), five exemplary teachers--including two science teachers--were recognized by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson as the 2015 California Teachers of the Year. Torlakson also named one of these teachers, Maggie Mabery, to represent California at the National Teacher of the Year competition. Mabery teaches 7th and 8th grade science at Manhattan Beach Middle School.

In her application, Mabery wrote, "Making connections to the science world around us is my ultimate passion." She describes her classroom as "Noisy, breaking materials, lighting stuff on fire, out of seats, creating from scratch, active, group work, tech-savvy, hands-on, engaging, intriguing."

She writes that she has always been fascinated with technology and has enthusiastically shared her knowledge with her students and with other teachers. "Currently, education is at the dawn of its largest shift," she wrote, "not only as a result of the Common Core movement, but also due to the timing of the technology revolution. My students are at the front of this revolution and learning more outside the classroom than they ever have."

Also recognized for California Teacher of the Year honors were Christopher O'Connor (Gr. 9-12 science, St. Helena), Amy Laughlin (K-6 intervention, Anaheim), Lovelyn Marquez-Prueher (8th grade English, Rancho Palos Verdes), and Erin Rosselli (kindergarten, Santa Ana).

"It is an honor to recognize these five incredibly dedicated teachers who devote their energy, passion, and creativity to helping all their students achieve inside and outside the classroom," Torlakson said. "These teachers have made a huge difference in their students' lives."

The 2015 California Teachers of the Year, the finalists, and the semi-finalists will be honored by Torlakson at a gala to be held on 16 February 2015. The list of finalists and semi-finalists is available at [www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr14/yr14rel106.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr14/yr14rel106.asp)

For more information about this award program, which is open to teachers in grades PK-12, visit the California Department of Education's California Teachers of the Year Web page: [www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/ct/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/ct/).

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### **Related articles:**

(a) "**Manhattan Beach Science Teacher Maggie Mabery Celebrated as a California Teacher of the Year**" by Ellen Robinson

**Source:** *The Daily Breeze* - 22 October 2014

**URL:** [www.dailybreeze.com/social-affairs/20141022/manhattan-beach-science-teacher-maggie-mabery-celebrated-as-a-california-teacher-of-the-year](http://www.dailybreeze.com/social-affairs/20141022/manhattan-beach-science-teacher-maggie-mabery-celebrated-as-a-california-teacher-of-the-year)

..."Middle school students are awesome," [Maggie Mabery] said. "At this age, they are wanting to find someone to look up to and they are looking for higher levels of learning. It's just such a fun age to get into their brains and to inspire them to learn and to love science. Science is amazing because it changes our world.

"I love the kids," she said. "That is why I am excited to come to work here every day."

...[Mabery] earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education with a minor in science from Iowa State University and her master's degree in education administration from Cal State Dominguez Hills.

**(b) The Henry Ford Sponsors Teacher Innovator Awards and "Innovation Nation" Series**

"The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation with Mo Roca" is a weekly television series airing on Saturday mornings that is designed to inspire innovation in today's youth. Each episode tells "the fascinating stories behind the historic innovators of the past and the forward-looking visionaries of today, and the extraordinary talents and dedication required to bring their inventions to life." Visit <http://cbsdreamteam.com/the-henry-fords-innovation-nation/> to view last week's episode and learn more about the series and accompanying instructional materials.

The Henry Ford also sponsors a contest to recognize innovative teachers in America. "Do you know a teacher who has inspired others to challenge the limits of what's possible? Who encourages others to create bold solutions? We're looking for teachers who demonstrate ingenuity and resourcefulness, who approach teaching and learning creatively, and who are using the classroom to inspire innovation, creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking." The deadline for nominations is 6 February 2015 (self-nomination is permitted). Visit [www.thehenryford.org/teacherInnovator/](http://www.thehenryford.org/teacherInnovator/) to learn more about this award.

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**(2) Final NGSS State Rollout Symposium #1 for 2014 Held Last Week--Additional Symposia are Planned for 2015 and 2016**

**Contact:** Kathy DiRanna, K-12 Alliance/WestEd

Last week, the final two of seven Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) State Rollout Symposium #1 (Awareness) two-day events were held in Oakland and Red Bluff, CA. These "statewide professional learning symposia explore the philosophy, design, and initial implementation of the NGSS." A variety of hands-on, intensive sessions (e.g., Connecting NGSS and CCSS, Middle School Progressions, and the NGSS Implementation Tool) provided participants with in-depth, first-hand experience with the NGSS. An overview of the sessions can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/ngss-rollouts>

If additional funding is received, three more NGSS State Rollout Symposium #1 events are planned for 2015, and seven next-level symposia (#2--Transition) will likely be offered in 2015 as well, said Kathy DiRanna, Statewide Director of the K-12 Alliance at WestEd, which is collaborating with the California Science Teachers Association, the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee, and the California Department of Education to present the regional NGSS Rollouts. DiRanna noted that if funding is available, the team will likely present a third level of rollout symposia (#3--Implementation) in 2016.

Visit the California Department of Education's website for current information about the NGSS and California's progress in implementing the NGSS: [www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/sc/ngssintrod.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/sc/ngssintrod.asp)

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**Related information:**

**(a) Webinar: "The Keys to Success in K-6 NGSS Implementation: Well-Prepared Teachers, Excellent Programs"**

State and national experts will present a webinar hosted by WestEd to share information on two

programs designed to help teachers achieve NGSS success. The webinar, which will be held on November 14 from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m., will focus on two excellent NGSS-aligned, engaging programs: Engineering is Elementary (EiE) and NextGenPET. To register for this California State University-sponsored event, visit <http://bit.ly/1zeOOTa>

**(b) "After Election 2014: STEM Education"** by Jeffrey Mervis

**Source:** *Science Insider*, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)

**URL:** <http://news.sciencemag.org/education/2014/10/after-election-2014-stem-education>

This article is the third in a series published by AAAS that examines research and policy issues faced by lawmakers in Washington, DC. An excerpt follows below:

"...The debut of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) in a handful of states and a growing awareness among research universities that they must improve undergraduate instruction are arguably the two biggest recent changes in the U.S. science education landscape. They also embody the political adage of thinking globally and acting locally...

"The last 2 years have provided a vivid reminder that improving U.S. science education will depend at least as much on grassroots efforts as on the federal government. The administration's biggest gambit--a plan to restructure the \$3 billion federal investment in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education--went down in flames after lawmakers from both parties and community leaders denounced it as unwise and poorly designed.

"Nobody expects the next Congress to pass any bold new STEM education initiatives. But a hiatus in Washington, D.C., hasn't hindered state-level progress on NGSS and campus efforts to improve undergraduate science courses..."

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**(3) California State University Systemwide Effort to Improve the Preparation of Secondary Mathematics Teachers**

**URL:** <http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/csumtep/>

Mathematics educators at 22 campuses of the California State University (CSU) system are embarking on a major initiative designed "to transform the preparation of secondary mathematics teachers to ensure they can promote mathematical excellence in their future students, leading to college and career readiness as described in the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and other documents" ([www.aplu.org/mtep\\_GP](http://www.aplu.org/mtep_GP)).

The new statewide effort is affiliated with the national Mathematics Teacher Education Partnership (MTE-Partnership), an initiative of the Science and Mathematics Teacher Imperative (SMTI) of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU). The initiative is significantly informed by the *Mathematical Education of Teachers II* document ([www.cbmsweb.org/MET2/met2.pdf](http://www.cbmsweb.org/MET2/met2.pdf)) and utilizes a Networked Improvement Community (NIC) design, incorporating improvement science and networked design precepts. The July 4 issue of COMET described the goals of the effort and the initial meeting on June 23 at the CSU Chancellor's Office in Long Beach (<http://comet.cmpso.org/a/cmpso.org/comet/2014-archive/vol-15-no-04---4-july-2014>).

On October 10-11, faculty members from every CSU campus with a teacher preparation program and school district personnel convened at the CSU Chancellor's Office in Long Beach to delve into the details of the MET-Partnership (referred to as "CSU MTEP") and determine what role each of the campus teams wished to play in the faculty-led community through participation in one of five Research Action Clusters (RACs).

Lead presenters included MTE-Partnership Co-Directors W. Gary Martin (Auburn University) and Howard Gobstein (APLU), as well as the national chairs of the RACs, Paul LeMahieu of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, CSU faculty leads Brian Lawler and David Pagni, and CSU MTEP facilitator Joan Bissell, Director for Teacher Preparation and Public School Programs at the CSU Chancellor's Office. (Photographs from each day may be accessed in the following Dropbox folder: <http://tinyurl.com/csu-mtep-convening2014Pictures>)

For more information about this initiative, please visit the CSU MTEP website at <http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/csumtep/>

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### **Related Information:**

#### **CSU K-12 STEM Partnerships Advancing the CCSS and NGSS**

In addition to CSU MTEP, the California State University (CSU) Chancellor's Office (CO) has taken a leadership or significant supportive role in several new initiatives designed to help transform the preparation of mathematics and science teachers across the state. Short overviews of two of these follow below:

##### **\* Preparing a New Generation of Educators for California**

"Preparing a New Generation of Educators for California," funded by the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, is aimed at preparing world-class educators who are equipped to teach and implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSS-M) and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) with excellence. For more on this initiative, visit <http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/CSUNewGen>

##### **\* Federal Teacher Quality Partnership (TOP) Grants of \$53.7 Million to CSU Campuses for STEM Teacher Preparation**

Seven CSU campuses (or a campus's district partner) recently received large grants for STEM teacher preparation. Receiving funding from the U.S. Department of Education to support major teacher preparation initiatives were CSU Bakersfield, Chico, Dominguez Hills, Fresno, Los Angeles, Monterey Bay, and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. To learn more about this program, visit <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/tqpartnership>

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#### **(4) Transitional Kindergarten Project includes Mathematics Modules**

**Source:** Kim Norman, CSU Fullerton and Joan Bissell, CSU Chancellor's Office

**URL:** <http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/tk/>

Another teacher preparation initiative supported by the California State University (CSU) Chancellor's Office and funded by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation is the development by CSU Fullerton faculty of an informative website and modules to support the preparation of Multiple Subject credential candidates to teach in transitional kindergarten (TK) classes (an optional "first year of a two-year modified kindergarten program that is age and developmentally appropriate for children with their fifth birthday between...September 2 and December 2 for the 2014-2015 school year").

"The eight CSU Transitional Kindergarten Modules address the range of content areas and are designed to prepare preservice teachers for TK classrooms, including activities that deepen

understanding of the Integrated Elements: developmentally appropriate practice, the role of environment, curriculum integration and assessment..." For more information, please visit [http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/tk/modules\\_teachers/](http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/tk/modules_teachers/)

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### **(5) "Under Construction: Benchmark Assessments and Common Core Math Implementation in Grades K-8"**

**Source:** WestEd

**URL:** <http://tinyurl.com/wested-benchmark-assessments>

Today WestEd announced the release of a new report, "Under Construction: Benchmark Assessments and Common Core Math Implementation in Grades K-8." See below for the announcement, and visit the website above to download this new report.

Math in Common (MiC) is a five-year initiative that supports a formal network of 10 California school districts as they implement the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics (CCSS-M) across grades K-8.

As the MiC initiative moves into its second year, one of the central activities that each of the districts is undergoing to support CCSS implementation involves putting in place new or revised student assessment processes or systems to better align with the new standards.

This report examines the MiC districts' strategies and initial implementation efforts related to benchmark assessments used throughout the school year to assess student mastery of the CCSS-M and signal districts' progress.

The report also highlights the range of approaches to developing and implementing benchmark assessments used across the MiC district community in order to illuminate the challenges and headway that many districts in California are facing as they work to implement CCSS-M, specifically in grades K-8.

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### **(6) Plan Described to Augment the 2012 California English Language Development Standards for Correspondence with the Academic Content Standards for Mathematics and Science**

**Source:** California State Board of Education

**URL (Memorandum):** [www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-ilsb-elsd-oct14item01.doc](http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-ilsb-elsd-oct14item01.doc)

Last Wednesday (10.22.2014), an informational memorandum concerning AB 899 was posted on the California State Board of Education website at [www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/infomemoct2014.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/infomemoct2014.asp) A brief excerpt follows:

State law (AB 899) requires augmentation of the 2012 California English Language Development (CA ELD) Standards in order to correspond with the academic content standards for mathematics and science by August 1, 2015.

Between October 2014 and March 2015, WestEd will conduct a correspondence study between the CA ELD Standards and the California Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and California Next Generation Science Standards. WestEd will prepare a report with findings of the correspondence study and make recommendations for augmentation of the CA ELD Standards. CDE will convene the first public meeting to gather feedback on the findings and recommendations of the correspondence study by Expert Panels and public input.

In May 2015, WestEd will draft an augmentation document, based on recommendations from the correspondence study report and the feedback from the Expert Panels and public input from the first meeting. The draft augmentation document will be reviewed by Expert Panels and the public at a second meeting on June 2015. WestEd will draft an augmentation document to present to the SBE based on the feedback from the second meeting.

In July 2015, the SSPI will make recommendations to the SBE to augment the CA ELD Standards. Between July and December 2015, WestEd will draft the final version of the augmentation document, incorporating all feedback from the July 2015 SBE meeting.

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**Related Item:**

**ELA/ELD Framework and Related Resources**

Draft chapters of the English Language Arts/English Language Development (ELA/ELD) Framework (adopted by the California State Board of Education at its July 2014 meeting) are available on the California Department of Education's website at [www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/cf/elaeldfrmwrksbeadopted.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/cf/elaeldfrmwrksbeadopted.asp) In addition to the Framework chapters, two resources supporting the implementation of the ELA/ELD Framework have also been posted:

- "Foundational Skills of the California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects"
- "Secondary Literacy Partnership Webinar Series: A Close Encounter, Through the Writers' Eyes, of the New ELA/ELD Framework" (a presentation given on 9/17/2014)

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**(7) Mathematics Educators are Needed to Review CCSSM Alignment Matrices for Subject Matter Preparation Programs**

**Source:** California Commission on Teacher Credentialing: PSD E-News – 24 October 2014

Institutions have submitted matrices for program alignment (Single Subject Mathematics) with the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. Each matrix needs to be reviewed by two volunteers from Commission-approved Subject Matter Preparation programs. Those interested in serving as reviewers can register at the following website:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/about\\_ccss\\_reviewers](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/about_ccss_reviewers). For more information, contact [accreditation@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:accreditation@ctc.ca.gov)

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**ARTICLES & ANNOUNCEMENTS (NATIONAL FOCUS)**

**(1) Students are Invited to Capture Images of the Earth from the International Space Station Next Week**

**Source:** Sally Ride Science

**URL:** <https://earthkam.ucsd.edu/>

Sally Ride Science (<https://sallyridescience.com/>) provides professional development and classroom tools to help teachers in grades 3-8 build connections between students' academic work and STEM fields in order to spark and sustain student interest in STEM topics and careers.

Sally Ride Science announced yesterday that a fall mission is scheduled for Sally Ride EarthKAM ("Knowledge Acquired by Middle school students") next week (November 4-7). During the mission, students will be able to take snapshots of Earth from space by operating a camera aboard the International Space Station.

"When Sally Ride became the first American woman to soar into space, one of her favorite things to do was to float over to a window on the space shuttle and look down on Earth. She was amazed by the view of our beautiful blue planet wrapped in its thin blanket of air. Sally wanted to share that view with young people all over the world," said Dr. Tam O'Shaughnessy, CEO and cofounder of Sally Ride Science. "In 1995, she came up with the idea of putting a camera on the space shuttle so that students could snap images of different places on Earth, a program that eventually became the Sally Ride EarthKAM."

During a Sally Ride EarthKAM mission, students at participating schools log in to the EarthKAM website and request images based on their classroom investigations. Their requests are processed at the Sally Ride EarthKAM Mission Operations Center (MOC), located at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) and modeled after NASA's Mission Control Center at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, TX. A staff consisting of UCSD undergraduate students and Sally Ride EarthKAM advisors supports and maintains the MOC. Following a mission, students and teachers return to the EarthKAM website to view and download images.

More than 500,000 students, representing thousands of schools in 78 countries, have participated in EarthKAM since the program began taking more than 69,000 images of Earth. The image collection and accompanying learning guides and activities--all available for public access on the Sally Ride EarthKAM website--have supported class projects in Earth science, space science, geography, social studies, mathematics, communications, and art.

To take part in the mission, to learn more about the program, or to view images from previous missions, visit <https://earthkam.ucsd.edu/>

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## **(2) High School Students Receiving Instruction Focused on "Deeper Learning" Perform Better in Math and English and have Higher Graduation Rates than their Peers**

**Source:** American Institutes for Research (AIR)

**URL:** [www.air.org/news/press-release/high-school-students-receiving-instruction-focused-deeper-learning-do-better-math](http://www.air.org/news/press-release/high-school-students-receiving-instruction-focused-deeper-learning-do-better-math)

Students at high schools focusing on deeper learning had higher scores on standardized tests in mathematics and English, as well as higher graduation rates than their peers, according to a study by the American Institutes for Research (AIR).

In conducting the Study of Deeper Learning: Opportunities and Outcomes ([www.air.org/project/study-deeper-learning-opportunities-and-outcomes](http://www.air.org/project/study-deeper-learning-opportunities-and-outcomes)), funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, AIR researchers found positive effects on students from a wide range of deeper learning approaches.

Deeper learning involves using strategies and resources aimed at helping students master core academic content – like reading, mathematics and science – while developing the ability to think critically and to work effectively with others. AIR's research team examined a set of selected high schools associated with 10 established deeper learning networks. The schools were identified as being moderate or high implementers of deeper learning practices.

The study included a survey of 1,762 students in 22 schools in California and New York. The schools serve a diverse and traditionally underserved group of students, including substantial populations of students living in poverty and, in some cases, large populations of English language learners.

In high schools focusing on deeper learning:

- \* Students – regardless of their prior levels of academic achievement – attained higher scores than their peers on standardized tests in such subjects as English Language Arts, reading, mathematics and science and were more likely to graduate from high school on time.
- \* Students reported higher levels of collaborative skills, academic engagement, motivation to learn and self-efficacy compared with their counterparts in comparison schools.
- \* Graduates were more likely to enroll in four-year colleges or universities.
- \* There were positive effects on students at each deeper learning school, and no statistically significant evidence that the students trailed behind their peers in any areas.

For more information about the study, visit <http://www.air.org>.

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### (3) NumberPlay Celebrates the 100th Anniversary of Martin Gardner's Birth

Source: *The New York Times*

URL: <http://wordplay.blogs.nytimes.com/category/Numberplay/>

*The New York Times* is well known for its crossword puzzles, and many crossword aficionados enjoy the *Times's* blog, Wordplay. Mathematical puzzle lovers enjoy "Numberplay," which is "a puzzle suite that [is] presented in Wordplay every Monday. The puzzles, which are inspired by many sources and are reported by Gary Antonick, are generally mathematical or logical problems, with occasional forays into physics and other branches of science. While written for adults, many of the concepts here are suitable for and can be enjoyed by math students of all ages."

For the past three Mondays, Numberplay had focused on Martin Gardner, the prolific puzzle and game master who was born on October 21, 1914, and who is perhaps best known for his "Mathematical Games" column in *Scientific American*. Antonick notes that to celebrate the centenary of Gardner's birth, many "Celebration of Mind" events have been held worldwide (see [www.celebrationofmind.org](http://www.celebrationofmind.org)).

Yesterday's column, "Ignited by Martin Gardner, Ian Stewart Continues to Illuminate," includes interviews of Stewart, a mathematician whose many works include the Mathematical Recreations column in *Scientific American* that he produced from 1991 to 2001. See <http://wordplay.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/10/27/stewart/>.

In last week's column, Antonick profiled Scott Kim, a mathematician and software designer who is known by a number of California mathematics educators for his skillful production of ambigrams at regional conferences and his collaborations with Karl Schaffer and Erik Stern on works exploring the connection between math and dance. Antonick includes interesting correspondence from Kim regarding his connection to Martin Gardner, including the following:

"...Gardner's files included folders for numbers, where he diligently recorded their curious properties. I showed him my newly invented hobby of writing words [the image at the top of this post was one of the pieces shared] so they read upside down or in a mirror, and he pulled from his files a gem: write the first three digits of pi, being sure to close the top of the 4. Then hold 3.14 up to a mirror. What do you see? The word "PIE"! Delightful..."

To read this article, visit <http://wordplay.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/10/20/mg100-2/>

Antonick's initial column celebrating Gardner, "**Martin Gardner: The Three-Card Swindle**," **includes an interview with** Persi Diaconis. "...Dr. Diaconis was instrumental in bringing the bulk of [Gardner's] letters and math-related research to Stanford, where it can be accessed by anyone..."

"Did you ever send a letter to Martin Gardner during the time he wrote his *Mathematical Games* column (from 1957 to 1986)? If so, you'll probably find your original document in the **Gardner archives**, a collection of his correspondence and math materials now stored at Stanford. The archives are open to anyone and are a terrific resource for research on Mr. Gardner's many interests. [Visit <http://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/4822392>]"

To peruse all of the NumberPlay articles, visit <http://wordplay.blogs.nytimes.com/category/Numberplay/>

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#### **(4) Call for Papers and Workshops for an International Mathematics Education Conference to be Held Next September in Catania, Italy**

**Contact:** Alan Rogerson - [alan@cdnalma.poznan.pl](mailto:alan@cdnalma.poznan.pl)

Last month, the 12th International Conference of the Mathematics Education for the Future Project was held in Montenegro and was attended by 174 educators from 29 countries. The 2015 conference will be held near Catania, Sicily, Italy from September 16-21 at a beautiful hotel next to the sea. The conference title, "Mathematics Education in a Connected World," continues the organizers' search for innovative ways in which mathematics, science, computing and statistics education can succeed in an increasingly connected world. In his invitation for papers and workshops (which can be peer reviewed and may be published later in a book or journal), Conference Chair Alan Rogerson notes adds that "our twelve previous conferences since 1999 were renowned for their friendly and productive atmosphere, and attracted many movers and shakers from around the world." Please email Alan Rogerson at [alan@cdnalma.poznan.pl](mailto:alan@cdnalma.poznan.pl) for proposal submission information and for details about the conference.

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