

Math π ath 2012

PRE-CAMP BRIEFING (last updated 5/5/2012)

Dear students enrolled in MathPath 2012 and parents of the students:

This pre-camp briefing describes what you need to know to prepare for MathPath 2012 at Mount Holyoke College (MHC). If you still have questions, email camp@mathpath.org. If you prefer a telephone call, please provide the number and the preferred time; we will call you back within two days.

The telephone number of the camp, as always, is 415-830-3838. This connects directly to our camp Skype account, wherever we are.

The times given in this briefing are in Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) in the USA.

The MathPath 2012 opening session will take place on Monday June 25 at 8:30am in Lecture Hall 2 in Cleveland Hall. It is building #5 on the MHC campus map at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/campusmap/> it is building #5.

All visiting parents and relatives are invited to attend the opening session.

Minor revisions of this briefing may be made from time to time; check the “last updated” date on the top of this page. You will be informed promptly of significant changes.

We look forward to meeting you soon!

Sincerely,

The MathPath Staff

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I. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Please see <http://www.mathpath.org/gettingthere.htm>. It provides specific date and time windows during which students are to arrive and depart, and specific information you must email us so that we are prepared to receive them and send them off. There is also important information there about Unaccompanied Minor Status. Below, we provide a little extra information about how we welcome people at the airport and about immigration for foreign students.

MathPath Welcome Party for Air Arrivals

The Welcome Party uses a two-stage catching procedure. The Party is stationed in two groups – one at the exit point from the security area and the other at the baggage claim area for your flight. They will have your name, airline, and flight number details. They will also know if the flight is late. Members of the Welcome Party will be wearing MathPath T-shirts and MathPath hats. To make yourself extra-visible to them, *please wear a headband or neckband – a **red** bandana would help make you stand out.*

Unaccompanied Minors will be handed over by the airline directly to the leaders of the Welcome Party. Others will be met as described above.

In the very unlikely event that you miss seeing the Welcome Party, do not leave the airport terminal. First phone the Welcome Party number, **720-626-9864**, and if that is busy or doesn't answer, phone the MathPath general number **415-830-3838**. Please carry these numbers in your wallet. Use your cell phone or make the call from a public telephone inside the terminal nearest the baggage claim area of your flight. Also, listen carefully to all announcements made in the terminal; we will be trying to page you. Since we know your name, airline, and flight number, we won't miss you. We will be waiting for you even if your flight is late or arrives late at night.

The airport procedure to greet students is part of our protocols for safety and security of students.

All students arriving by air will be asked to call home from the airport immediately after they are met by the Welcome Party -- know how to use your calling card to place a call if you do not have a cell phone. Parents of international students will be informed by email or telephone immediately after we receive the student.

Train Arrivals

The Springfield train station is relatively small. We expect our Welcome Party to be on the platform when your train arrives. In the unlikely event that you do not see the Welcome Party, do not leave the station. First phone the Welcome Party number, **720-626-9864**, and if that is busy or doesn't answer, phone the MathPath general number **415-830-3838**.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Don't forget to carry your boarding pass or ticket safely in the zippered side of your carry-on bag! Book *electronic tickets* when available so that you do not have to worry about the ticket while traveling, or at the camp.

US Immigration

Students from outside the US who are not US citizens will be sent, upon admission, a document titled "**Information for International Students 2012.**" The document explains what sort of visa you need and what steps you must take to obtain it. As that document explains, there are several items you should bring with you to the border, because Immigration officers will ask for them or may ask for them. Foremost, bring the originals – not photocopies – of:

- Canadian citizens: Your Canadian passport.
- Citizens of other countries, even if residing in Canada: Passport and, in many cases, a US entry visa that you must apply for in person at a US consulate well in advance.

Next most important, bring the MathPath Notice of Admission. Have all these things readily available, for instance, in the zippered side of your carry-on bag.

The waiting time for US visa applications varies by consulate; 30 to 50 days are not uncommon. Please check http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/wait_4638.html. If you need a visa, you should begin the process immediately. Having ample time for the process eliminates worry!

II. Required Submissions Before Arrival at Camp

There are several forms, including health and insurance forms, which you must send to us by May 31, 2012. See <http://www.mathpath.org/FormsCoverPage.htm>.

III. Room and Board

Lodging. MathPath typically has one or two adjoining dorms, with girls and boys housed on different wings or floors. For many years we have housed all students one to a room, but this year we are trying a bit of an experiment.

Our experience at MathPath suggests strongly that the calm of a private room is actually an advantage after a packed day of intense mathematical activity, and often equally intense social and recreational time. Growing children need their sleep, and roommates can easily succumb to the temptation to talk with each other deep into the night, thereby losing some sharpness of mind the next morning. Having said that, we also know that some kids of MathPath age would prefer having a roommate, and we know that sharing a room can strengthen a friendship. So the experiment is this: This year we are open to requests from parents that their sons or daughters share a room at MathPath, either based on an existing friendship or otherwise. Any such requests should be made to Kip Sumner, the Camp Director, at sumnerkip@gmail.com, no later than May 31

Meals. For religious, medical, or philosophical reasons, MathPathers adhere to a great many different diets. College dining halls are used to this. So long as we know your child's restrictions in advance, we can almost always accommodate them. The medical form has an entry for special dietary needs. Please list all restrictions there, whether medical or not.

IV. CHECK-IN

Check-in will be in our dormitory, Ham Hall (#29 on the campus map). There is a check-in desk right in the lobby of the residence hall. Parents can conveniently park their cars across the street from Ham Hall in the student parking lot. No parking permit is required for overnight parking on this lot.

At check-in, students/families will provide cash or a check for spending money during camp. See later for the amount. In turn students will be given their lanyard, including a carrying case, in which they are to carry essential items like their dorm and room key and their health insurance information.

V. WHAT TO BRING

Laundry detergent will be provided by the camp. If you do not know how to use a washer and dryer, learn before you come! Machines will be operated by coins or cards – a wash and dry each costs \$1.50 at MHC. Bed, sheets, light blanket, pillows, pillow covers are provided. Fresh bed linens and towels are provided once a week. You will need to make your bed each week.

We recommend that you bring the following, although many of the toiletries and school supplies can be bought at MHC or nearby stores.

___ A photo ID, preferably a recent school or government-issued ID (required by airlines anyway)

CLOTHES /APPAREL

- ___ 8 pairs of sport socks
- ___ 9 underwear
- ___ 8 shirts or T-shirts
- ___ 2-4 pairs of shorts
- ___ 2-3 pairs of long pants
- ___ 1 lightweight parka or rain jacket, with hood if available
- ___ 1 warm sweater/sweatshirt – for occasional cool summer nights
- ___ 1 hat or sun visor
- ___ 1 pair of comfortable shoes/sneakers for daily use around campus
- ___ 1 pair of cheap, light sandals, for bathroom and/or for use around campus

Mount Holyoke is in South Hadley MA, near Springfield. For Springfield area climate data, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Springfield,_Massachusetts#Climate

and

http://www.wunderground.com/NORMS/DisplayNORMS.asp?AirportCode=KCEF&StateCode=MA&SafeCityName=South_Hadley&Units=none&IATA=CEF&lastyear=on&normals=on&records=on

In general, July is hot and humid there, with rain 1 day out of 3, occasionally all day. Sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat are important for outings. Our classrooms are air-conditioned but our dorm is not. We will provide box fans for the dorm rooms.

TOILETRIES

- ___ One large towel (for swimming and outdoor trips; MHC provides bath and hand towels)
- ___ One or two washcloths
- ___ Four bars of your favorite soap
- ___ One plastic soap dish
- ___ Shampoo/conditioner – pack in zip-lock plastic bag
- ___ Toothbrush and toothpaste
- ___ Nail clipper and comb

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- ___ Two notebooks
- ___ One pocket folder
- ___ One 1.5” three-ring binder – there will be handouts
- ___ 100 sheets of wide-ruled paper with three holes to fit the binder
- ___ Three pens, two pencils, one eraser, and an inexpensive manual pencil sharpener

RECREATION (optional depending on your interests)

- ___ 1 pair of running shoes or cross trainers (if you want to participate in frequent runs)
- ___ Hiking boots or shoes (there will probably be a hike on the nearby Holyoke Range)
- ___ Swimsuit

_____ Soccer shoes and shin guards if you play soccer – there will be a lot of soccer scrimmages/games

_____ Tennis racket, baseball mitt, or other sports equipment you use (Want to learn Pickleball? Mr L will bring the equipment. See http://www.usapa.org/whatis_pball/index.php)

_____ Board games, chess sets, puzzles, Rubik's cubes (many MathPathers love mental puzzles and games, want to share them, or arrange competitions during camp)

_____ Musical instruments (we expect some pianos will be available for those who wish to practice.)

OTHER ITEMS

_____ Small alarm clock or alarm watch

_____ Telephone calling card or cell phone and charger (see below)

_____ Inexpensive sunglasses

_____ Sunscreen lotion – pack the bottle in zip-lock bag

_____ Insect repellent – pack the bottle in zip-lock bag

_____ Laundry Bag (the kind with pull string and made of nylon net) for soiled clothes

Note: MHC, like most colleges, no longer provides land lines to dorm rooms. If you want to call in to your child, s/he must have a cell phone. Reception is said to be good for most carriers despite the rural location, but check with your carrier. For those who do not have cell phones, we will arrange for one or two special rooms with phones that have access to 800 numbers. Telephone calling cards can be used from these phones and we will establish a schedule of times for students to use the rooms to make calls. Either that, or we will have a few camp cell phones that students without their own may use, again on a schedule.

OTHER ITEMS (optional)

_____ Camera (camp will not be responsible if you lose it.)

_____ Calculator – no games on the calculator; see below. (One or two breakout courses use calculators, notably those on ancient trigonometry and spherical trigonometry, but you can manage without one – camp will not be responsible if you lose it, so better to bring an inexpensive scientific calculator if you bring one at all. Graphing calculators are definitely not needed.)

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Basically, do not bring any expensive items you do not absolutely need; the chance of losing them is too great, especially if they are small, and your family is responsible for the loss.

Electronic games hardware and software.

Electronic games, on computers, calculators, cell phones, or game machines, are *not allowed* anywhere at MathPath. Please instruct the student to adhere to the policy.

Laptop computers.

Many professional mathematicians make serious use of computers for doing mathematics, but the occasional good uses that could be made at MathPath are far outweighed by the temptation for time wasters, mostly action games. Students will have access to campus computers for email and for one or two courses that may use the program *Mathematica* and *Sketchpad*. (Laptop computers are allowed in cases where parents specify a need other than email and are willing to

sign a waiver absolving MathPath and MHC of responsibility for damage, loss or theft. Contact [Prof Maurer](#).)

We used to say, don't bring cell phones because they are easy to lose, but now that colleges do not provide landlines, and many youngsters have cell phones already, we have changed our tune. However, do not provide your child with his or her first cell phone just before camp. He or she should already know how to keep track of it. Please put some indelible identifying information on the cell phone exterior, and make sure that identifying information can also be found on the screen.

PACKING

Most airlines charge for your bags. We advise that you check one bag and board your flight with a small carry-on. The best way to accomplish this is to pack nothing except things in the list above. Like they say, Travel Light! Remember, many items cannot be carried onto the airplane cabin in a carry-on; for instance, liquids in containers over 3 ounces, or anything like nail-clippers or scissors. See

http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/screening_experience.shtm

RECOMMENDED SPENDING MONEY: \$322 USD FOR 4 WEEKS

This is for the following expenses:

1. \$3 per week for laundry
2. \$10 for Camp Picture CD – about 500 photos of the camp
3. \$10 Camp Yearbook
4. \$100 for optional weekend activities, such as bike rides
5. \$40 for incidental expenses on the round-trip from home to camp
6. \$50 as a cash reserve for items such as purchase of an occasional souvenir during a trip, occasional extra drinks, and the like
7. \$100 as a deposit against possible losses or damages caused by the student and charged to the camp by the college (e.g., lost room keys, broken doors).

Spending money is safeguarded as follows. The Camp Director runs a little bank. At check-in students deposit any money (cash or check) they don't need immediately. Students have access a few times a week to this money through the Camp Director. Money remaining in the account at the end of camp will be returned to the student, in cash or check depending on the amount.

Access to this account gives many students more independence in spending money than they have had before. Before camp, please discuss with your child your expectations for their fiscal responsibility. Point out that they have to leave \$100 for the damage and loss deposit and that if they spend the rest on snacks they won't be able go on any of the nifty optional trips.

Every student will receive a beautiful camp shirt and hat by the end of camp at no charge. Additional shirts are \$15 and additional hats \$10.

The MathPath hat is well liked for its good look and quality. The hat will have the ingenious MathPath logo (Pi as the shadow of M) embroidered.

VI. COMMUNICATION

CONTACTING MATHPATH

The MathPath phone number, **415-830-3838**, connects to the Executive Director's computer all year, and during camp other senior staff will also have access. Emails to camp@mathpath.org will also be received by the Executive Director on all days of the year.

Except for the arrival/departure weekends, please refrain from calling the camp number to leave messages for individual students, unless in an absolute emergency or you are unable to reach the student after several tries for at least two days.

CONTACTING INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

Students should be reachable at the same email address they use at home, as they can connect to their home email provider through campus computers.

As for reaching students on their cell phone, the best time to reach you child is 10 PM EDT – they are supposed to be in their rooms in preparation for lights out at 10:15. In any event, you should pick a regular time and there are many times you must avoid. Do not phone while classes are in session. For class times, see <http://www.mathpath.org/day.htm>, which will be finalized when MathPath 2012 starts. Do not call students between 10:15 pm and 7:30 AM EDT; students are supposed to be asleep, and even if your child gets up early the ring may disturb students in nearby rooms. If you must call in the morning, call between 7:30 AM and 8 AM EDT.

CALLING HOME: Counselors will remind students to call home every day in the first week, less frequently thereafter. Please impress upon your son or daughter the importance of keeping you up to date. Be sure to talk to them about it before they leave and to agree in advance on the best times for contacting you. Only international students are exempted from the call frequency – they will call home immediately upon arrival, then occasionally.

Homesickness: We keep an eye out for it and counsel kids where we see a need. Experience has shown that the busy days and evenings at MathPath usually cure homesickness within a few days when it does occur. Note: Extended parent communication often leads to homesickness. Please keep your telephone calls brief. You need to let go!

SENDING MAIL TO STUDENTS AT CAMP

Address all letters and packages to:

Camper's Name
MathPath
50 College St
South Hadley MA 01075

Last postmark dates of student mail:

Regular domestic mail – July 16

Domestic Priority – July 19

Domestic Express Mail – July 20

Regular mail from Canada – July 11

Regular mail from other countries – July 9
Courier (FedEx, etc):
 Overnight domestic or Canada courier – July 20
 Courier from other countries – July 15

VII. TRAVEL, VISITS & ACCOMMODATION OF PARENTS /RELATIVES

Parents, relatives and teachers are invited to come and remain for the start of the camp on Monday June 25 at 8:30 am. They may also wish to attend the closing ceremonies on the night of Saturday July 21 (begins at 7:30 pm and ends around 10 pm).

We can accommodate parents for a night or two, at both the start and the end of camp. You can stay either in the dorm (shared bathrooms, no AC) or at the Willets-Hallowell Conference Center on campus (hotel-like facility with AC). The cost to stay at Willits-Hallowell Sunday-Thursday is \$99+tax/night and the Friday-Saturday rate is \$135+tax/night, for up to two people per room. Reservations for Willits-Hallowell must be made directly with Willits, like with any hotel, and can be made by calling 413-538-2217.

The cost for a room in the dorm per night is \$50/per person for single-occupancy and \$35/per person for double-occupancy. Reservations for the dorm must be made to Kip Sumner via email at sumnerkip@gmail.com with a copy to thomas@mathpath.org. Use the subject line “room request”. Here is the required info in the email:

 Name(s) of the visitors
 Name of the student being visited
 Dates needed

Meals are available in the college cafeteria at the following rates.

 Breakfast \$6.50
 Lunch \$9
 Dinner \$12

Our understanding is that you will not be able to pay at the door – we have a private dining hall without a cash register. You will need to pay us directly. We will inform you of the details at a later time.

As it says on the Getting There webpage, under “Safe and Easy Travel”, any parent wishing to accompany his or her child from Bradley airport or Springfield train station to the camp on the MathPath bus may do so, *room permitting, with prior notification, at a cost of \$30 each way from the airport and \$15 each way from the station.* However, if you wish to do sightseeing, we recommend renting a car.

If you arrive by car and park overnight on campus, you must park your car across the street from Ham Hall in the student parking lot.

Visits in the middle of camp. These are possible too, but we are less set up for it. We welcome parents to visit for a day or two, to attend plenaries (all-camp lectures), and with permission of the instructor to attend breakouts (small classes). On weekends you may even take your

youngster off-campus overnight. But a) keep in mind our weekend is Sunday-Monday, and b) make sure your youngster is agreeable to being taken off campus; s/he may be planning to go on one of the trips we arrange then.

Among our forms is an optional one where you can designate friends and relatives who may also take your youngster off campus.

We are strongly aware that for many kids at MathPath it is their first experience spending such a long time away from home on their own, and although sometimes the first few days can be difficult we find that the mathematical environment, and most importantly the chance to mingle with other kids who are also mathematically gifted, sweeps them up. We see them forming relationships with their intellectual peers, which in some cases become everlasting.

The frequent or lengthy proximity of parents would tend to pull a youngster away from the valuable social interactions that we consider intrinsic to the MathPath experience. Thus we have referred to visits of a day or two.

VIII. OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

The location of MathPath 2012 gives us a unique opportunity to explore western Massachusetts, and we plan to take full advantage of this in our weekend activities. We may also make trips to Boston and New Haven to visit leading universities.

There will be charge for optional activities like cycling, white water rafting or rock climbing, to cover equipment or ticket costs. Students pay for this out of their spending accounts.

IX. SAFETY PROTOCOL

The safety of all participants is the highest priority at MathPath. The following protocol will be in effect throughout the camp:

1. Access to the dormitory building occupied by MathPath students will be by magnetic card issued only to students and staff. Student rooms will be accessed by keys issued to students on lanyards that the students hang around their necks. Students will keep their rooms locked at all times. Students will wear the lanyards at all times when they are outside their own rooms, except when swimming, playing field games and the like where wearing a lanyard might interfere with physical safety.
2. Each student will be assigned to a counselor, who will be specifically responsible for the student's well being. In particular, it will be the counselor's responsibility to check that the student is present in the dormitory building every evening. Each counselor group will meet with their counselor each evening. Students should remain in their own rooms after the nightly meeting. Lights should be turned off in the student's room at the scheduled lights-out time.
3. Students will not be allowed to leave the campus unless accompanied by camp personnel or an authorized adult. The only authorized adults are the parents or guardians, unless they authorize

others on the form we provide. During off-campus camp excursions, students will be grouped under leaders who in turn will answer to the Camp Director.

4. In case of a serious medical problem or other emergency affecting the student, we will attempt to notify parents or guardians immediately, while at the same time prompt medical attention will be obtained as required. On the health form you authorize us to do this. Similarly, on this form you inform us of medications the student must take, and we will see to it that the medications are taken.

5. A student diagnosed later than June 1 by their physician as having a serious or highly communicable disease (e.g., mononucleosis, meningitis, a serious flu) will not be allowed to attend camp. If a student develops any such disease at camp, he or she will be immediately admitted to a nearby hospital or placed in cared-for-isolation, as merited by the case.

– end –