

Seaway Section Visioning Process and outcomes so far

Jonathan Cox, Chair

Jim Conklin, Governor

Jeff Johannes, Executive Committee at-large member

Visionary leader

Ryan Gantner

Chair of the Seaway Section

2015-2017



Crazy ideas

Announcing Fall 2015 Executive Committee meetings:

I'd like everyone to bring with them to the meeting a handful of "crazy" ideas regarding the future of the Seaway Section and/or its semiannual meetings.

Ryan's examples of crazy ideas

- pi mile charity run,
- having an undergraduate give a plenary talk,
- inviting non-mathematicians to give a talk (such as businessmen or politicians),
- establishing some sort of exchange/connection/collaboration with one or more large companies,
- hosting an undergraduate conference simultaneous with the Seaway meeting,

Ryan's examples of crazy ideas

- teaming up with the Canadian Mathematical Society,
- offering travel money awards to those who have never attended a meeting,
- producing an undergraduate competition aside from the meetings,
- organizing professor exchanges for a day/week between schools or between schools and businesses

Crazy ideas

“Don’t worry if some of the ideas are ridiculous or infeasible – I’m sure some of mine are worse! This will at least get us thinking of ways to keep things interesting moving forward, and perhaps we’ll strike gold with one or more ideas.”

“Crazy ideas for the future” was on the agenda as New Business, and remained on the agenda in various forms (e.g., “Future directions”) at the following meetings.

Other methods to get input

At the Spring 2016 meeting, Ryan devised two other methods to glean ideas and get input on previous suggestions from a broader swath of our constituency.

1. Written survey for meeting attendees.

- distributed before the closing keynote
- asked about features of the invited talks, length and timing of the meetings, and preferences for workshops
- A few copies of the survey are available for anyone interested.

Other methods to get input

2. Ryan hosted a discussion during the contributed talk portion of the meeting.

Title: **The future of the Seaway Section visioning session**

Abstract: Sit down with the Chair of the Seaway Section to discuss initiatives for the future. What should we do at future meetings?

Workshops? Mini-courses? Fun events? Charity fundraisers?

Technology training? Something radically different? What should we do outside of the meetings? Bring your own ideas for the future as we brainstorm things that can be done as well as their benefits, drawbacks, and constraints.

Seaway Section Ideas for the Future

April 2016

Budget Baseline

- ▶ \$15,000 balance
- ▶ \$8,000 in meeting expenses
- ▶ \$10,000 healthy balance in account at all times
- ▶ Balance has been steady to modestly growing in recent years

Micro-Courses at Meetings

- ▶ Ideas: Sage, R, Actuarial Math
- ▶ Revenue: Charge \$20 for target of 20 people
- ▶ Cost: honorarium \$300 for facilitator, plus expenses, plus snacks or lunch

Seaway-Level Distinguished Speaker

- ▶ Polya-Type lecturer from section charged with giving talks within section to raise profile of MAA and section.
- ▶ Cost: Travel expenses for several talks per year could quickly accumulate to \$1500 or more depending on distance
- ▶ Revenue: only indirect

Transform Seaway Meetings into Undergraduate Research Conference

- ▶ Incentivize student participation (Prizes? Competitions? Travel funding? Partner with specific REU sites or internship locations?)
- ▶ Partner with other Undergrad Research Conference (or specifically avoid doing so)
- ▶ Target speaker(s)
- ▶ Cost: Depends on incentives. Funding could get expensive. Costs for host institution could be high if not offset by registration
- ▶ Revenue: some with attendance (perhaps)

Processing the ideas and input

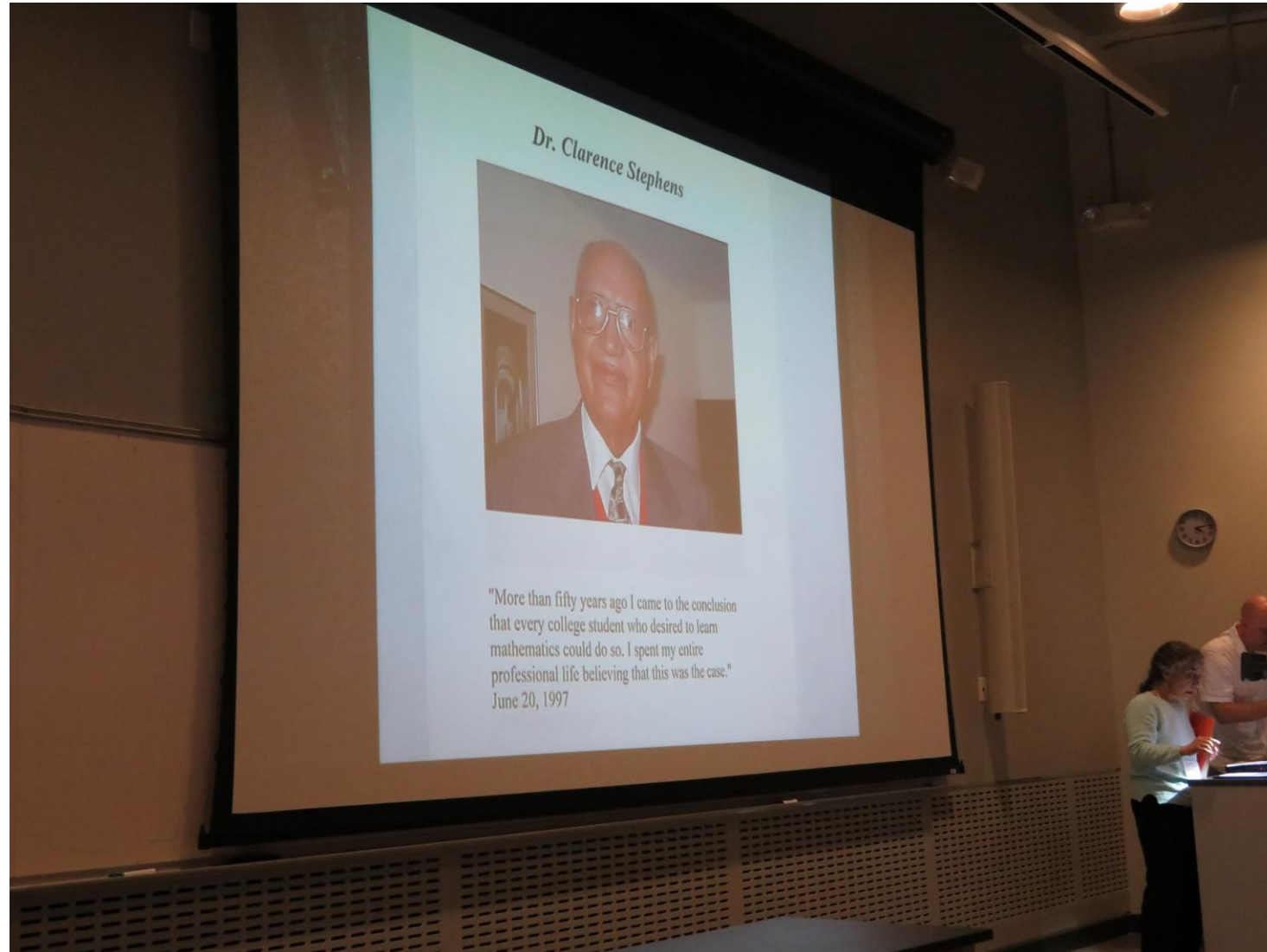
Ryan

- Compiled a spreadsheet of results (with help from a student worker)
- Wrote a summary of written responses
- Prepared a report highlighting the five main ideas to come out of the process and proposing a plan of action for each.

Outcome actions

- Microcourses (one so far, another planned)
- Seaway distinguished lecturer (committee, proposed structure, 2018 implementation planned)
- Exploring possible joint meeting with Hudson River Undergraduate Mathematics Conference
- Panel on careers in business and industry for undergraduate students at Fall 2016 meeting
- 100th birthday celebration for Clarence Stephens at Spring 2017 meeting in Geneseo

Clarence Stephens birthday celebration



Clarence Stephens birthday celebration

CAKE! →



Undergraduate panel

Panel on Careers Using Mathematics

Organized by Keiko Dow, D'Youville College

Description: Representatives from business or industry will come together on a panel so that participants can ask them questions about their career path. Panelists include representatives from Xerox, Paychex, Apple, MedAmerica, and Nielsen. This session is designed for students! If your students struggle to see what their future beyond college might look like, listening to these panelists (and asking questions) may prove enlightening.