

George Bluman



*University of British
Columbia*

*Le 7^{ième} prix Adrien-Pouliot
The 7th Adrien Pouliot Award*

Citation

For more than three decades, George Bluman has exercised extraordinary leadership and invested a great deal of energy in promoting sound mathematics education and student interest in mathematics in the province of British Columbia. On a national scale, he chaired the Education Committee of the Canadian Mathematical Society from 1978 to 1981, and has been a member of problems committees for the University of Waterloo contests.

Dr. Bluman has been presenting seminars for high school students since 1969, having given more than 140 talks and workshops to students and teachers over this time. He has developed a very successful workshop format and has mobilized a team of faculty, graduate and undergraduate students to give presentations to the schools. Eight grants from the Ministry of Education in BC have supported these programs.

In 1979, he introduced the Gauss and Euclid contests to British Columbia; the Euclid is now written in 175 schools and marked within the province. In the early 1990s, he introduced the challenge examination at the University of British Columbia, whereby talented mathematics students can qualify for advanced credit and gain access to advanced courses. He is a coauthor of a problem book for Grade 12 students.

At the University level, Dr. Bluman's influence has been felt, recently through his role as chair of the mathematics department at UBC. He was a founding member of the Institute of Applied Mathematics which provides an interdisciplinary graduate program and continues to attract excellent students. Between 1989 and 1991, he established and helped develop an off-campus four-year degree program at Cariboo and at Okanagan colleges. Under his guidance, his mathematics department has developed a new course under the title of "Mathematics Demonstrations". Its goal is to show students how to communicate mathematics to school pupils through designing and presenting stimulating problems. He has published, with Springer, a Problems Book for first year calculus.

In the public domain, he has provided encouragement and support for teachers through his collaboration with the British Columbia Association of Mathematics Teachers, and has been frequently consulted by and given commentary in the print and broadcast media. The Society is proud to recognize the passion, insight and energy of one of its most distinguished members.

Depuis plus de trente ans, George Bluman joue un rôle de leader extraordinaire en s'attachant à promouvoir un enseignement des mathématiques de qualité et à susciter l'intérêt des étudiants pour les mathématiques en Colombie-Britannique, tâche à laquelle il consacre d'ailleurs beaucoup d'énergie. À l'échelle nationale, il a été président du Comité d'éducation de la SMC de 1978 à 1981, et il est membre du comité responsable de choisir les problèmes pour les concours mathématiques de l'Université de Waterloo depuis de nombreuses années.

Depuis 1969, le professeur Bluman a donné plus de 140 conférences et ateliers à des étudiants et à des enseignants dans les écoles secondaires. Il a conçu un format d'atelier qui fonctionne à merveille, où il fait appel à une équipe de professeurs et d'étudiants de tous les cycles, qui font des présentations dans les écoles. Le ministère de l'Éducation de la Colombie-Britannique lui a déjà accordé huit subventions pour mener à bien ces programmes.

En 1979, il a lancé les concours Gauss et Euclid en Colombie-Britannique. Chaque année, 175 écoles participent au concours Euclid, qui est corrigé en entier dans la province. Au début des années 1990, il a lancé un concours-examen de calcul à l'Université de la Colombie-Britannique, dont les résultats permettent à des étudiants doués d'obtenir des crédits et de s'inscrire à des cours de niveau avancé. Il est en outre coauteur d'un recueil de problèmes pour élèves de 12^e année.

À l'Université de la Colombie-Britannique, le professeur Bluman fait sa marque depuis quelque temps à titre de directeur du département de mathématiques. Il est également un des membres fondateurs de l'Institut de mathématiques appliquées

de cet établissement, qui offre un programme interdisciplinaire de deuxième cycle et attire toujours des étudiants exceptionnels. De 1989 à 1991, il a contribué à la fondation d'un programme hors campus de quatre ans au University College of the Cariboo et à l'Okanagan University College. Sous sa direction, le département de mathématiques a créé un nouveau cours intitulé «Mathematics Demonstrations», dont l'objectif consiste à montrer aux étudiants comment enseigner les mathématiques à des élèves par la conception et l'utilisation de problèmes stimulants. Il a aussi publié, chez Springer, un recueil de problèmes pour un cours de calcul de première année.

Du côté public, il a toujours épaulé les enseignants par son travail auprès de l'Association des enseignants de mathématiques de Colombie-Britannique. Il est en outre souvent consulté et commenté par la presse écrite et électronique. La Société est fière de souligner la passion, la perspicacité et l'énergie de l'un de ses membres les plus éminents.

Biographical Information

George W. Bluman, a native of Vancouver, is professor and chairman of Mathematics at the University of British Columbia. After graduation with a science baccalaureate at UBC in 1964, he took his PhD at the California Institute of Technology in 1967. He remained there for an additional year as instructor and post-doctoral fellow before returning to a post at UBC in 1968, where he has remained except for yearlong leaves at the University of TelAviv and the University of Nottingham. Dr. Bluman is a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Engineering Mathematics. He was the recipient of a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, was an Academic Exchange Scholar to the City University of Hong Kong in the winter of 2001, and received the PIMS Education Prize in December, 2000.

His research is in the area of partial differential equations. In addition to over thirty papers, he translated and amended *Group properties of differential equations*, written in Russian by L.V. Ovsianikov, and coauthored two books, *Similarity methods for differential equations* (with J.D. Cole) and *Symmetries and differential equations* (with S. Kumei). A new book that he wrote in collaboration with S. Anco is due to appear this year under the Springer imprint. He has been invited to speak at many conferences. In particular, he was invited to speak by the Canadian Mathematical Society annual seminar on Lie Theory, Differential equations and Representation Theory in 1989, and has on three occasions been invited to address the Society at its regular semi-annual meetings.

He has taken an active interest in both the affairs of his department and educational issues in British Columbia. Within the University, he has served on numerous committees to revise course and programs in the faculties of engineering and science. He has for many years provided an annual report on a school-by-school performance of matriculating students in UBC calculus courses. Currently, he is the Vice-President for the West of the Canadian Mathematical Society.

The Adrien Pouliot Award was inaugurated to recognize individuals or teams of individuals who have made significant and sustained contributions to mathematics education in Canada. Such contributions may be interpreted in the broadest possible sense and might include community outreach programmes, the development of new programmes in either an academic or an industrial setting, publicising mathematics so as to make mathematics accessible to the general public, developing mathematics display materials, and supporting mathematics conferences and competitions for students, etc. The first award was presented in 1995.

Le prix Adrien-Pouliot rend hommage aux personnes ou aux groupes qui ont fait une contribution importante et soutenue à l'enseignement des mathématiques au Canada. Le terme "contributions" s'emploie ici au sens large: activités locales de sensibilisation, élaboration de programmes adaptés au milieu scolaire ou à l'industrie, activités promotionnelles de vulgarisation des mathématiques, conception d'outils pour présentations mathématiques, organisation de conférences ou de concours à l'intention des étudiants, etc. Le prix a été décerné pour la première fois en 1995.

Recipients / Récipiendaires

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2000	Bernard Courteau		Donald C. Attridge	1995	Edward J. Barbeau
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1998	Bernard R. Hodgson		Ronald G. Scoins		