MATH MAJORS PARTICIPATE IN THE PUTMAN COMPETITION

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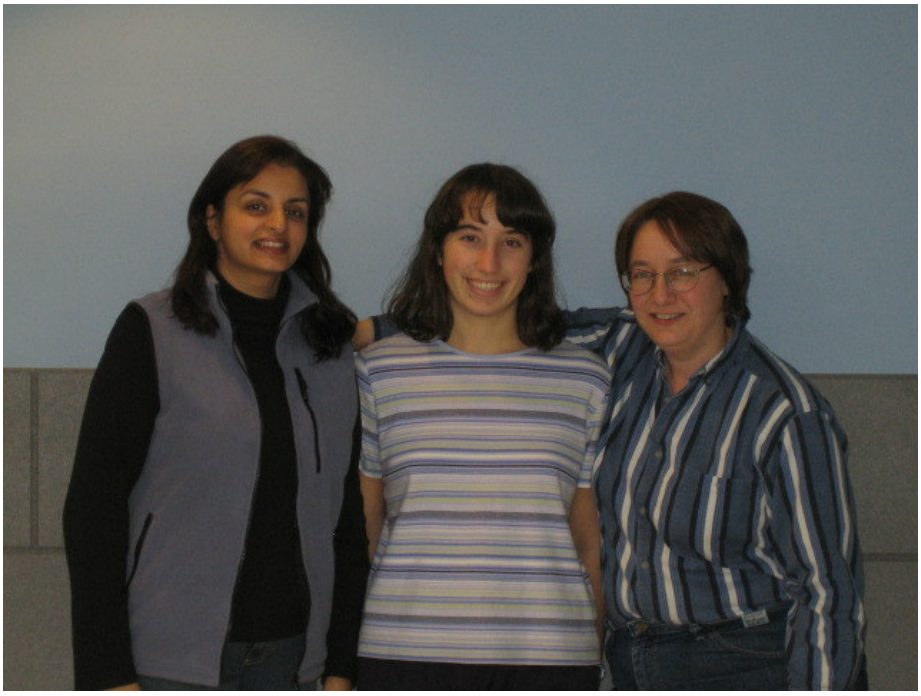

In December 2006, mathematics major Stacie Derderian (*center*) and mathematics education majors Clara Burroughs (*right*) and Tasneem Mohammed (*left*) participated in the national William Lowell Putnam problem solving competition. This challenging, six-hour mathematics exam is taken by nearly 4,000 undergraduates from over 500 colleges in the United States and Canada each year.

Contestants participate individually by attempting to solve and write up solutions to 12 questions drawn from all areas of undergraduate mathematics. Three students at each college form a team whose scores are combined to determine the schools ranking. Contestants who get just one problem correct usually rank in the top 20%-50% while those who solve two problems often rank in the top 10%-20%. Typically the median score for all contestants is approximately one (out of 120). Results will be announced in Spring 2007.

The Putnam Competition began in 1938 to stimulate healthy rivalry among the colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. It is sponsored by the Mathematical Association of America and administered on each participating campus in two three-hour sessions. This is the first year that Rivier College has fielded a Putnam team.

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* **Dr. TERESA MAGNUS** is an Associate Professor of Mathematics and a Director of the MAT Mathematics Program at Rivier College. She earned both Ph.D. and M.S. from the University of Virginia, and B.A. from the University of Dallas. Dr. Magnus has been a college teacher of mathematics since 1992, teaching courses in abstract and linear algebra, discrete mathematics, problem-solving and modeling, geometry, calculus and precalculus, liberal arts, and developmental mathematics. She is an advisor of undergraduate research projects in algebraic coding theory, hyperbolic geometry, population modeling, and transformation groups. She has presented at national mathematics meetings on the effective use of technology in undergraduate mathematics teaching, the discovery method of teaching mathematics, ways to develop proof-writing and general writing skills in students, and designing mathematics courses for liberal arts majors. Dr. Magnus has also coordinated and presented at mathematics workshops for middle-school and high-school girls.

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