

# Dr Arthur Jorgenson Chair Award

## Recipient: Rebecca Steel

The Dr Arthur Jorgenson Chair Award is presented by MCATA to encourage students enrolled in education programs in postsecondary institutions throughout Alberta to pursue and commit to mathematics education. The award consists of an invitation to attend two MCATA conferences with all expenses paid (includes a teacher substitute, hotel accommodation and travel), a three-year membership in MCATA, a one-year membership in the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and a one-year term on the MCATA executive, with all expenses paid to attend executive meetings (meals, travel and accommodation when necessary).

The recipient is selected on the basis of demonstrated academic excellence and a clear commitment to mathematics education. The first recipient of the award was Lisa Hauk-Mecker, who accepted the chair for the 2004/05 school year. Lisa continues to demonstrate her commitment to mathematics education and joins the current MCATA executive as a director at large.

The winner of this year's Dr Arthur Jorgenson Chair Award is Rebecca Steel. Her thoughtful responses to the questions on the application form demonstrate her keen interest in teaching and learning mathematics. By way of introduction, her description of mathematics and her reasons for teaching this subject are presented below:

I chose to pursue mathematics as a major area of study because I enjoy the beauty of it. I enjoy playing with numbers, observing patterns that form through working with different ideas, theories and concepts that occur in mathematics—those that have been discovered and ideas that are still being

investigated. I've always enjoyed mathematics from a young age. As I became more involved with mathematics, the more familiar it became and I soon realized how mathematical concepts connected together. These concepts and how to work with them seemed to come very naturally to me, and still do. Therefore, throughout my grade-school time I was often asked to help several of my friends with the math that we were studying. Through doing this I was better able to understand the concept being presented and I also needed to develop different ways to explain the concepts to my peers. This challenged me quite a bit and I enjoyed taking on this challenge and decided to pursue this further and study mathematics at the university level so I could one day teach it at the secondary level. I also wanted to further my own understanding and go deeper into the concepts that I learned through grade school. To do this, I took several pure, applied and statistic mathematics courses at the university level. I enjoy the problem-solving aspect and the way that one needs to think to solve mathematical problems. Along with this, I enjoy learning and talking about the history of mathematics, the concepts that have been developed, and how they are applied and what they can be used for in the world around us. This enjoyment is something I want to share, especially with students that are going through this stage of learning about the beauty of mathematics and the excitement that there is in it when solving problems and developing conclusions.

We welcome Rebecca to the teaching profession and to the MCATA executive.