

# p.a.m. Bulletin

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News for the Physics-Astronomy-Math Division of SLA

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## Message from the Chair

**Byline Chris Doty**

As 2021 comes to a close, I want to thank everyone in the PAMily for the work they have done this year!! This year has had its ups and downs, and I am immensely grateful to everyone who contributed. I hope everyone is able to take a nice, relaxing break before jumping into 2022.

We made it through another virtual conference!! Many, many thanks to everyone involved!! Special thanks to all of our wonderful session moderators: Sarah Siddiqui and Mark Chalmers (Physics RT), Nico Carver and Henrik Spoon (Astronomy RT), Emma Moore and Sam Hansen (Math RT), and Jeffra Bussmann and John Kromer (PAM Industry Partner Update). Many thanks also to Danny Dotson and the Hospitality Committee for organizing another terrific slate of virtual conference social events; Jeffra Bussmann and John Kromer for taking on the Publisher/ Vendor Relations Committee and navigating SLA's new policies and procedures; Anya Bartelmann and the Awards Committee for choosing two worthy recipients; and Margaret Lam for producing the PAM Dance Card.

Many, many thanks to all the industry partners who supported PAM this year: AAAS/Science, AIP Publishing, AMS, Annual Reviews, APS, EDP Sciences, IOP Publishing, Optica (OSA), SIAM, and SPIE.

Editor: [Mei Ling Lo](#)

Assistant Editor: [Therese Triumph](#)

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## Message from the Chair, cont.

Special thanks to Kathy Renzetti and Sharice Collins at IOPP for putting together PAMily Feud and PAMily Trivia; Alan Tourtlotte and Daphne Greenwood at Optica (OSA) for organizing the First Night Dinner; and Melissa Gonzalez, Maryann Gross, and Sara Rotjan at AIP for sponsoring the PAM Virtual Tour & Happy Hour.

In SLA news, Executive Director Amy Burke departed on September 17. Kevin Baliozian, MCI USA Senior Vice President and Executive Director of the Medical Library Association, is serving as senior advisor to the SLA Board. In this transition period they will conduct an audit of SLA, explore collaboration models, and develop a strategy for long-term sustainability. As always, SLA's financial situation is precarious. Seema Rampersad was elected President-Elect for 2022, and Anne Barker, JonLuc Christensen, Heather Kotula, and Kendra Levine were elected to the Board of Directors.

In January Rebecca Hutchinson will join the PAM Executive Board as our Member-at-Large. Welcome, Rebecca!!! The search for a Chair-Elect continues. Many thanks to Beth Brown, Khue Duong, and Zary Kamarei for their on-going work on the Nominations and Elections Committee.

Lance Utley, Debal Kar, and I will continue on the Executive Board in 2022. Lance is going to be a fantastic Chair, and I look forward to helping him make 2022 a success. It has been my pleasure to serve as Chair this year. For those of us who don't hold leadership positions at our home institutions, it is a wonderful way

to gain some experience and learn about yourself, PAM, and SLA.

Alison Verbeck finishes her two-year term as Treasurer, and Donna Thompson finishes her three-year journey through the various Chair positions. Many thanks to Alison for her patience and flexibility in negotiating a role that SLA made obsolete almost immediately upon her election. Donna has been amazing!!! She was always generous with her time, and her knowledge of PAM and SLA was extremely helpful. I will miss them both on the Board next year.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Bulletin Editor Mei Ling Lo and Asst. Editor Therese Triumph for their work on the Bulletin this year. There may be changes coming to the Bulletin next year. Stay tuned!!

Library budgets and travel restrictions will present challenges, but I hope to see many of you in Charlotte next year as PAM celebrates its 50th anniversary!!!

## 2021 PAM Awards

At our annual business meeting, the Awards Committee presented the PAM Achievement Award and the PAM Division Award to recognize exceptional contributions to PAM.

The purpose of the PAM Achievement Award is to recognize those Community members who have made outstanding contributions to the Community, and whose professional work is marked by distinction and dedication to librarianship in astronomy, mathematics and/or physics.

A recipient of the Louise Leckner Memorial Travel Stipend, this PAM librarian immediately took an active role, beginning as moderator for the Physics Resources webpage, co-moderator for the Astronomy Roundtable, member and Chair of the Professional Development Committee, twice co-moderator for the PAM Vendor Update & Networking Breakfast, co-Chair and Chair of the Publisher Relations Committee, and a member of the Future of PAM Task Force all within her first five years. Her organizational skills and strategic planning were evident as she transformed the role of Treasurer and served as Chair and Co-Chair of the Fundraising Committee. Currently the Chair of the Public Relations Committee, I have not even mentioned her peer-reviewed publications, presentations, awards, and service to the Association for College & Research Libraries, Asian Pacific American Libraries Association, and American Chemical Society.

In addition to her PAM contributions, she is a subject librarian for Chemistry & Biochemistry, Physics & Astronomy, Mathematical Sciences, Computational & Data Sciences, and Forensic Science, and received the Individual

Impact Award from her University. Her supervisor said, “She has always been a talent in project management and organizing events. Her sustained work has led to her being a trusted member of a university wide cohort of faculty and offices supporting graduate education. I am glad to see her expertise being recognized in this award.”

Tenacious in her support of PAM and generous with her time, she is always willing to help answer questions from colleagues. She is known for her sense of humor, loving her family, and enjoying good meals with friends and observing her sincere commitments while traveling for our conference. As a past-Chair of PAM wrote, “She was my savior through so much of the conference planning. She kept me on top of deadlines and reminded me who I needed to contact and when, as well as increasing the value that most of our vendors contributed in sponsorships.”

On behalf of the PAM Awards Committee, it is my great pleasure to present the 23rd PAM Achievement Award to **Margaret N. Lam!**

The **PAM Division Award** is granted to an individual or organization that provides a significant contribution to the literature of physics, astronomy, or mathematics, or to honor work that demonstrably improves the exchange of information in one or more of these areas. The work for this year’s PAM Division Award began more than a decade ago to unify the existing divergent and isolated tools in astronomy and astrophysics into a single high-quality, freely-available,

## 2021 PAM Awards (cont.)

### 2021 Awards, cont.

open-source tool to be of immediate use to researchers, publishers, and librarians, and to provide a mechanism for reviewing, discussing, and evaluating the continuous evolution of terminology in these fields. From observational and galactic astronomy to astrostatistics and laboratory astrophysics, this resource formalizes concepts and their relationships with consistent sets of keywords, and integrates feedback from users. Since 2013, presentations by their Steering Committee members have consistently described it as open, interoperable, and community-supported, and worked extensively to uphold those goals.

To highlight the growth of this resource, as of March 31, 2021, the current version consists of a polyhierarchy with 2,122 concepts, 11 top concepts, a depth of 11 levels, and 656 related concept links. Adopted by all American Astronomical Society journals in 2019, it is being promoted as the standard system for assigning concepts to literature, data, and software in the Astrophysics Data System (ADS), and developing Machine Learning techniques to automatically assign concepts to prior literature based on available metadata.

For their contributions connecting concepts across astronomy and opening new methods of exploring the literature, on behalf of the PAM Awards Committee, I am pleased to present the 32nd PAM Division Award to the **Unified Astronomy Thesaurus (UAT)**!

PAM Awards Committee:

Anya Bartelmann (Chair); Laurie Neuerburg;  
Emily Poworoznek; Kelly Durkin Ruth

## 2021 PAM Board Election Results

PAM members unanimously voted to elect **Rebecca Hutchinson** for **Member-at-Large/Finances** position. She will be serving in this position for 2022-2023.

Rebecca who is currently PAM's Membership Chair, is the Liaison Librarian for Computer Science, Applied Math, Pure Math, Combinatorics & Optimization, Statistics & Actuarial Science, and Physics & Astronomy at the University of Waterloo Library. In this role, Rebecca uses her expert knowledge of information resources and advanced search techniques to provide research support to students, faculty and staff working in these disciplines. Previous liaison subjects and expertise includes Health, Kinesiology, Optometry, Engineering, and Architecture. Rebecca also works on a variety of projects related to her interests in Library spaces, information seeking behaviors, reference training, and open access.

The **Chair-elect** position has not been filled, yet. Stay tuned!

## Call for Volunteers!

PAM needs you! Please consider volunteering for the Membership Committee whose new term begins in January. We are looking for two more committee members.

The Astronomy Round Table needs moderators. Please consider moderator this session for the SLA 2022 conference in Charlotte.

## 2022 Committee Chairs

The new 2022 committee chairs are as follows:

### **Awards Committee**

Chair: Laurie Neuerburg

### **Hospitality Committee**

Chair: TBD but committee is filled

### **Professional Development Committee**

Chair: Jeffra Bussmann

### **Vendor Relations Committee**

Chair: John Kromer

### **Mentoring Committee**

Co-Chair: Khue Duong

Co-Chair: Jennifer Hart

### **Networking Committee**

Chair and Co-Webmaster: Chris Doty

### **Membership Committee**

~ open~

### **PAM Bulletin**

Editor: Therese Triumph

Assistant Editor: Emma Moore

## 2022 Conference Session Moderators

The 2022 conference session moderators are as follows:

### **Mathematics Roundtable**

Samuel Hansen

Anya Bartelmann

### **Physics Roundtable**

Sarah Siddiqui

JonLuc Christensen

### **Vendor Relations**

Donna Thompson

Jennifer Hart

### **Astronomy Roundtable**

~open~



# PAM Conference Roundup

## Physics Roundtable:

By: Sarah Siddiqui & Mark Chalmers

The 2021 PAM Physics Roundtable, *“From Library Workshops to Physics Homework: How Jupyter Notebooks Support Students and Educators,”* focused on Jupyter notebooks as tools for enhancing teaching and learning. Sarah Siddiqui (STEM Librarian, University of Rochester) and Mark Chalmers (Science & Engineering Librarian, University of Cincinnati), planned and co-moderated the session. The session was sponsored by PAM’s wonderful industry partners AMS, AAAS Science, SIAM, SPIE, Annual Reviews, EDP Sciences, and APS.

Our speakers discussed ways Jupyter notebooks help support students by simplifying coding education in different classroom settings. Mark Chalmers discussed Jupyter notebooks and related tools such as GitHub and Binder, and shared how the notebooks have improved his library’s popular python workshop series. Colin Bischoff, Assistant Professor of Astrophysics at the University of Cincinnati, explained how Jupyter notebooks simplify the computational nature of modern astrophysics teaching and learning. He showed participants how he uses the blend of code and narrative text in the notebooks to break his homework problems down into physics concepts, programming concepts, and mathematics concepts. James (Jim) Mertens, Assistant Professor of Physics at Washington University St. Louis, talked about various platforms for using python notebooks such as Anaconda, Google Colab, and CoCalc. He also gave participants a demo of some Jupyter/Colab notebooks used in Physics classes, labs, and homework assignments. In addition, he shared an example of using python notebooks on an undergraduate research project (BlackHoles@Home) wherein students

extended existing codes to generate simulations of black holes colliding.

The participants were very engaged and asked several questions, some of which were answered within the chat. Some also expressed interest in workshops for librarians to learn more about using python and Jupyter notebooks.


## Mathematics Roundtable:

By: Emma C. Moore

This year's Mathematics Roundtable explored the challenges of accessibility within academic departments for blind and deaf mathematicians; and featured some notable accessibility challenges of its own, because of the inflexible technical requirements of the SLA Annual Conference platform. Being able to test platforms beforehand, and having alternate access points, were important tools that were requested by the roundtable moderators but not provided. However, with some last minute work-arounds, attendees were able to learn from UConn's Christopher Hayes and Google's T.V. Raman.

Christopher and T.V. each spoke about their unique stories as a deaf and blind mathematician, respectively; and were able to speak to some insights that they shared in common, as well as important principles that librarians should remember in serving the blind and deaf communities.

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