



ASSOCIATION FOR  
WOMEN IN MATHEMATICS

PRESS RELEASE

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## Tara Holm named 2019 AWM-MAA Falconer Lecturer

In recognition of her distinguished contributions to mathematics and mathematics education as well as her skill in delivering an expository lecture, the Association for Women in Mathematics and the Mathematical Association of America are pleased to announce that the 2019 Etta Z. Falconer Lecturer will be Professor **Tara Holm** of Cornell University.



Holm earned a BA in mathematics from Dartmouth College and a PhD in mathematics from MIT. After an NSF Postdoc at University of California, Berkeley and a year at the University of Connecticut, Holm has spent her career at Cornell. She has been Simons Fellow and a von Neuman Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study, as well as the Oliver Smithies Fellow at Balliol College, Oxford.

Tara is a well-respected expert in symplectic geometry, the mathematical framework for classical and quantum mechanics. This field has blossomed since the 1980s. Broadly speaking, there are two tools in every symplectic geometer's toolbox: the momentum map and holomorphic curves. Tara uses these tools to build bridges between symplectic geometry and other fields of mathematics and mathematical physics. She works to identify and quantify the essential features of a symplectic structure and of the symmetries that preserve such a structure. Tara has 19 co-authors and 27 peer-reviewed publications. She has done much to share her expertise with the mathematics community at large.

Tara is a mentor to many mathematicians: she has advised five PhD students and two postdocs. She has given lectures and served as a consultant to young

faculty members through MAA's Project NEXt. Tara has also generously contributed her time and energy to the AWM: At Cornell University, she advises an AWM chapter that recently won a University-wide award presented by the President of Cornell; also she served on the AWM committee awarding the Alice T. Schafer Prize for excellence in mathematics by an

undergraduate woman and has served continuously on the AWM Michler Prize Committee as the Cornell Representative.

Tara currently leads the Cornell Math Active Learning Initiative. Students comment that "Professor Holm is one of the most passionate lecturers I have had," that "she always manages to make the course content sound interesting," and that "she is extremely clear in her explanations." In recognition of her skill in communicating mathematical ideas, she won the 2016 Senior Faculty Teaching Award; most recently she won Cornell's 2019 Morgan Chia-Wen Sze and Bobbi Josephine Hernandez Distinguished Teaching Prize, where she is charged to "bring back the world to Cornell."

Holm's leadership in mathematics and mathematics education is prominent on the national stage, as she has chaired the AMS Committee on Education, is a member of the Board of Governors for Transforming Post-Secondary Education in Mathematics, served on the Advisory Board for the MAA Instructional Practices Guide, and is now President of Pro Mathematica Arte, the corporation that oversees the Budapest Semesters in Mathematics and the Budapest Semesters in Mathematics Education.

*Photo credit: Melissa Totman. MathFest 2019 will be held Jul 31 - Aug 3 in Cincinnati, OH. The Falconer lectures were established in memory of Etta Zuber Falconer (1933–2002). Her many years of service in promoting mathematics at Spelman College and efforts to enhance the movement of minorities and women into scientific careers through many forums in the mathematics and science communities were extraordinary. Falconer lecturers are women who have made distinguished contributions to the mathematical sciences or mathematics education. Recent recipients of this honor include Rebecca Goldin, Pat Kenschaft, Karen King, Izabella Laba, Dawn Lott, Kate Okikiolu, Ami Radunskaya, Marie Vitulli, Erica Walker, Talithia Williams, and Pamela Gorkin.*

**Association for Women in Mathematics**

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