

Latinxs and Hispanics in Mathematical Sciences



Jessica Deshler

Jessica Deshler grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico surrounded by family members, and knew she would stay close to her roots while pursuing an education. She knew she would study mathematics from an early age, having some amazing opportunities in middle and high school to pursue creative mathematics. She earned her undergraduate degree from New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, and her graduate degrees from the University of New Mexico, all in Mathematics. She is now Professor of Mathematics, and Graduate Program Director at West Virginia University, where she is only the third woman, and is the first Hispanic faculty member to be fully promoted. She spent 2015-2016 as a US Fulbright Scholar in Hungary, where she provided professional development to international doctoral students.

Dr. Deshler's passions for mathematics and teaching led her to change her research path from applied mathematics and fluid dynamics to the field of undergraduate mathematics education during her doctoral program. Since that time, she has established herself as a leader in the field, especially in the area of graduate student professional growth. She has worked to study how graduate students progress in their teaching philosophies and teaching practices as they participate in various teaching experiences and professional development opportunities. Dr. Deshler also has a passion for supporting students from all backgrounds in mathematics, and has studied the ways in which our undergraduate classrooms support, or not, women and underrepresented students. Her work has been supported by grants from the Mathematical Association of America, the National Science Foundation, and the US Fulbright Commission.

She considers herself a role model, advocate, and resource for women in mathematics, especially students who don't believe they can be mathematicians and have a family and life outside of that work. Besides serving on department committees, additional service and mentoring work she has done include serving as a faculty associate for the WVU Center for Women's & Gender Studies, as a Provost's Fellow in the Office of Graduate Education and on the WVU Council for Women's Concerns. Her commitment to the state of West Virginia is seen in her work with in-service elementary and secondary teachers through funded projects and in her leadership as the Dean of Students for the West Virginia Governor's STEM Institute, a summer residential program for rising 8th graders from all parts of the state.

"Hispanic Heritage month, to me, is a time to reflect on where we came from and what we can accomplish. Particularly for mathematics, it is also a time to reflect on who is supported to be a part of the mathematical community, and where we might need to continue to develop support structures and remove barriers for others."

Lathisms was founded in 2016 in order to showcase the contributions of Latinx and Hispanic mathematicians during Hispanic Heritage Month, which is celebrated in the United States from September 15 and October 15 every year. During this time, we feature/reveal a prominent Latinx/Hispanic mathematician daily. See all the featured mathematical scientists at LATHISMS.ORG.

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