

41st Annual NCSM Conference, Washington, D.C.
Reflection by Lisa Lunney Borden, Recipient of the 2009 Iris Carl Grant
Math Lecturer/Consultant, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada

It was a truly wonderful experience to attend my first NCSM conference,
"It's PRIME Time: Learning and Leading Together" in Washington, D.C. in April. This was a great opportunity to engage in conversations with new and old friends alike, to network with others who share similar goals and challenges, and to learn from the work being shared by participants.

As I reflect on my time at this conference, I am reminded of the many excellent
sessions I attended related to equity, an issue very relevant to the work I am doing. I was most impressed by the way the opening speaker, Kati Haycock, challenged the participants to think differently about the possibilities for greater equity in mathematics education. When she questioned why we give less to children who come to school with less, I was truly moved. The models of successful schools she presented demonstrated what can happen when an entire school works together to ensure all children have the supports and resources they need to be successful. This was truly inspiring and gave me renewed hope for the future of mathematics education.

I was also very fortunate to have the opportunity to interact with other participants
who shared my interest in the role that culture and heritage play in the learning of mathematics. I attended several sessions related to ethnomathematics, with a particular focus on mathematics for Native American students. In the first ethnomathematics session I attended, I was pleased to see some familiar faces and excited to hear about what everyone had been working on. It was wonderful to network with others in this way, and this networking continued throughout the conference and even after. I was also excited to have the opportunity to sit with Jerry Lipka, Dora Andrew-Irhke, Eveyln Yanez, and others whose long-time work in Alaska has been such an inspiration to my own work with aboriginal communities in Atlantic Canada. Watching Dora divide fractions using paper-folding techniques was awesome and left me with nothing to say but, "Cool!"

The opportunity to discuss curriculum ideas, assessment, pedagogical strategies,
and more was also incredibly beneficial to me as I embark on my new career as a professor of Mathematics Education. I enjoyed the structure of sessions—the large group addresses were inspiring and the smaller, more intimate sessions, gave me some amazing opportunities to interact with others and seek advice from experts in the field. Overall, my experience at NCSM was one I will remember for a long time to come. I will treasure the moments spent with old friends and look forward to future time spent with new friends. I have already begun recommending this conference to others and look forward to attending again myself. I am grateful to the Iris Carl Grant award committee and the members of NCSM who provided me with this wonderful opportunity. Thank you so much.