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## Editorial Introduction to the Journal of Math Circles

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# Editorial Introduction to the Journal of Math Circles

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*JMC Editors in Chief*

On behalf of the entire Editorial Board, we are overjoyed to announce the publication of the inaugural special volume of the Journal of Math Circles (JMC).

Since their inception, Math Circles have proven themselves up to the challenge of responding to the diverse needs of the communities where they are adopted. From competition preparation, to recreational mathematics clubs, summer programs, or teacher professional development, the Math Circle movement has united mathematicians at all levels: K-16 students, K-16 mathematics teachers, and research mathematicians.

This open-access journal disseminates the work of outreach programs that provide learning opportunities aligning with Math Circle core values:

1. **Explore Worthwhile Mathematical Tasks.** True mathematical problems are just that, problematic. Math Circle tasks provide low-floor access to essential disciplinary questions, with high ceilings that connect to important, deep mathematical ideas. The problems are often open-ended, and sometimes open questions in the field, as well as open-middle, providing participants choice in solution strategies, representations, and other components of the problem-solving process.
2. **Foster Problem-Solving Habits of Mind.** Math Circle problems are facilitated in ways that promote authentic mathematical experiences, where participants maintain agency in driving exploration of disciplinary mathematics. Participants engage in mathematical discourse and develop the habits of mind of mathematical thinkers and problem solvers (e.g., pattern-finding, conjecturing, experimenting).

- 3. Build a Community of Mathematical Thinkers and Problem Solvers.** Math Circles connect participants to the broader community of mathematical practice. They provide a space for participants to develop mathematical passion, identity, and a sense of belonging in the discipline.

There are more than 250 Math Circles organized in the United States alone, and even more outreach programs around the world that propagate the Math Circle movement as they build and support communities engaged in mathematical problem solving. The *Journal of Math Circles* provides recognition for the professional endeavors Math Circle leaders engage in while creating, organizing, and leading Math Circles across the world.

We are excited that the first special volume of JMC highlights the shared joy of mathematical problem solving as a global endeavor. The volume, *The Intersection of Math Circles and the Global Math Project*, highlights the power of a worthwhile task, *Exploding Dots*, as it spreads throughout the Math Circle community and is adapted and extended for use in K-12 student Math Circles, Teacher Math Circles, and outreach programs. In addition to field-tested, ready-to-implement tasks, we hope readers learn from the authors' reflections on implementation so that, together as a community, we continue to provide (in the words of the Global Math Project) *Uplifting Mathematics for All*.

In addition to thanking the Editorial Board for their tireless efforts organizing this special volume, we would like to thank the Mathematical Association of America SIGMAA on Math Circles for Students and Teachers, and the American Institute for Mathematics Math Teachers Circle Network for their support.