

Andrews Scores in Preeminent Math Competition

Students participate in 80th annual William Lowell Putnam Competition

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Senior math major Yaser Monterrey participates in the 80th annual William Lowell Putnam Competition. (Photo by Anthony Bosman)

By: Anthony Bosman, assistant professor, Department of Mathematics

Determine all possible values of $A^3 + B^3 + C^3 - 3ABC$ where A , B , and C are non-negative integers.

That was the first of a dozen questions on the 80th annual William Lowell Putnam Competition, the preeminent mathematics competition for undergraduate students in North America. Eight students from Andrews University joined over 4,000 students from 570 of the top universities in the United States and Canada for the six-hour exam in early December 2019.

The exam questions are notoriously difficult; although the test is out of a possible 120 points, 0 is the most common score awarded. “The Putnam is not a typical math test. It is more akin to detective work, requiring you to approach the problems from different angles and chase down

promising leads,” says senior math major Yaser Monterrey. Other Andrews participants included Devin Garcia, Jonathan Homan, Lisa Johnston, Mykhaylo Malakhov, Yosia Nurhan, Melody Puchett and Jonathan Watson. Team members Monterrey and Malakhov scored in the top 30 percent of North American participants

This is the third year Andrews students have participated in the Putnam competition, joining Walla Walla University as the only Adventist universities to participate. The Andrews University team placed 188th of the ranked teams, improving on their previous year’s ranking of 232.5. Anthony Bosman, assistant professor of mathematics, has been coaching the Putnam team and celebrates their success. “We are proud of our students. They are able to go toe-to-toe with some of the best students of the nation’s top universities, affirming the strength of our mathematics program to produce world changers capable of solving the most intractable problems,” Bosman explains.

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