

Some Experiences from ATCM 2017

ATCM 2017 in Taoyuan, Taiwan was full of wonderful surprises! As a first-time participant at ATCM, I was not sure of what to expect. I was not fully prepared to be amazed, all day long, at the innovative ways mathematicians are using technology, sometimes creating their own software and hardware to solve problems and answer questions. The conference was wonderfully organized with tea breaks, lunch, field trips, local culture, and time for important conversations. I was also pleasantly surprised by how approachable and friendly all the well-published mathematicians are, from all over the world! My advice for anyone thinking of attending is to come with an inquisitive mind, and leave with many new friends and ideas

Angela Thompson, USA

As a teacher of Mathematics it is all too easy to be comfortable with the local syllabus and to be satisfied with using technology in a way that seems satisfactory. The great pleasure of attending an international conference is to see beyond one's own environment and ATCM is unique in that each year it provides fresh perspectives in a different country. The interest of the conveners in examining the use and benefit of technology in the teaching and learning of Mathematics drives the conference most successfully. While the conference draws speakers from all over the world the fact it has an Asian focus allows it to deliver a message to an interested regional group.

Every delegate will go home with ideas that will fundamentally change their approach.

On a personal note, I have benefited greatly from establishing contact with both like-minded educators and leaders in the field of the use of technology in the teaching of Mathematics.

It is pleasing that there is also the discussion of the subject itself with interesting papers about the history and application of Mathematics. Aesthetics and beauty are not outside the area of the conference.

And of course the social side cannot be ignored. Cultural presentations, social gatherings and food play a most useful part in enhancing the experience of all participants.

I am already planning for November 2018 and taking to heart the encouragement to present a paper.

Tim Harrison, Australia

This is the sixth conference I have had the opportunity to speak, with four located internationally. I found ATCM's program to be exceptionally well organized, including the culturally relevant planned social welcome reception and conference dinner. Excellent cultural food was provided during the social dinners along with meals for lunch and "tea time" breaks. The conference organizers, supported by Chuan Yuan Christian University students, were well informed and helpful. The invited speakers hosted at ATCM were interesting, current, and relevant to a broad spectrum of topics related to technology creativity, innovation, and mathematics applications. I have never attended a conference where guided sign escorts are provided to assist participants in locating their parallel sessions. The scheduling of the parallel session presentations in a single time block was appreciated to readily make PowerPoint transitions quickly. Based on my overall experience I will definitely plan to attend and present at another ATCM conferences in the future.

Thomas Walsh Jr., USA

Being that I had never went to ATCM, and given that it was by far the farthest I have traveled anywhere before (ATCM 2017 in Taiwan), I did not know what to expect when I was leaving to go to this conference. However, upon returning, I can truly say it was the best conference experience I believe I have ever been a part of. I got to meet mathematics faculty that I had never met from places such as China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Great Britain, France, Australia, India, and Kuwait. There were overall 400 participants from 20 countries at the conference. Never have I ever been to a conference where I felt totally at ease with discussing ideas concerning mathematics and technology. Everyone was extremely friendly and non-intimidating. Believe it or not, several even expressed interest in what I was presenting (which is usually rare) on the Turing bombe (one additional benefit at a foreign conference is that not as many people know you have a southern accent!). Also, the faculty and staff at the school hosting the conference, Chung Yuan Christian University, were very accommodating and friendly.

In addition to having an outstanding on-site conference, the organizers also make an extreme conscientious effort to expose you to the culture of the host site. We were treated each day to lunch and dinner consisting of local Taiwanese food (my only regret is that I may have gained 5 pounds!). At our dinners, we were treated to entertainment provided by some of local children and college students from Chung Yuan Christian University. In addition, we had the opportunity to tour a local high school who gave us a presentation where we had the opportunity to meet several of their administrators, faculty members, and students. We were treated with great respect at this school and it did not take long at all to see how Asian schools really value and emphasize education in mathematics and the sciences . The conference has been just a wonderful and outstanding experience.

Neil Sigmon, USA
