



Press Release

November 30, 2021

The Notable Women in Math Playing Cards Project Management Committee to Receive the 2022 AWM Service Award

The Association for Women in Mathematics is pleased to announce that the 2022 AWM Service Award will be presented to the **Notable Women in Math Playing Cards Project Management Committee (EvenQuads PMC)**. The committee members are sarah-marie belcastro (Chair), Sherli Koshy-Chenthittayil, Linda McGuire, Monica Morales Hernandez, Denise A. Rangel Tracy, and Oscar Vega.



biographers, artists, a fact checker, and a statistician. A Kickstarter campaign to print the decks was launched in October of 2020 with a goal of \$3000. The campaign, in just six weeks, earned 414 backers pledging over \$17,000! Some pledges were for deck donations to secondary educators mainly from underserved schools. There was enough post-Kickstarter demand that the first shipment of EvenQuads Limited Edition

decks that arrived at the AWM online store sold in a matter of hours.

Citation

The Notable Women in Math Playing Cards, also known as *EvenQuads*, is a project inspired by the Notable Women in Computing Playing Cards. The EvenQuads PMC is being honored for their role, via this novel and elegant project, in promoting women's accomplishments in mathematics for the purpose of inspiring and encouraging future generations of mathematicians. With a little guidance from the initial proposers and a criteria committee, the Evenquads PMC took a seed of inspiration and turned it into amazing success in just under two years. The project, which currently enlists around 200 volunteers, began by compiling a list of 1400 mathematicians and seeking nominations from the community. Biographic and professional information was collected on these nominees, and at least 2 volunteers reviewed each nominee using a rubric, the results of which determined inclusion in the first deck of 64. Several new games were created, including the popular EvenQuads, and artists were called upon to illustrate the women whose biographies are featured on the playing cards. The volunteer list includes game creators, data collectors, reviewers,

These decks are the first of their kind, combining multifaceted text about women who have contributed to mathematics in many different ways with beautiful graphic design that evokes multiple professional mathematics organizations. The cards are dual educational resources, spreading mathematical concepts and exercising abstract thinking through the EvenQuads game and variants while also informing players about women mathematicians. Beyond this, the physical decks are supported by a website with full biographies augmented by stories told by the honorees.

Every member of the EvenQuads PMC is passionate, dedicated, and committed to this very complex project. Individual members were responsible for executing certain aspects such as logistics and planning, a Kickstarter campaign, webpage coding, editing text, translation of text into Spanish, and management of collections of volunteers. The members are described as being supportive of each other through the personal and professional challenges that arose with the

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COVID-19 pandemic, and through challenges to the project itself. The success of the project is attributed to the remarkable and true collaboration -- built on consensus, flexibility and respect -- that became the EvenQuads Project Management Committee. The entire mathematical sciences community benefits from this project, especially the AWM.

Response from the Committee

We are thrilled to receive an AWM Service award for our work on the ongoing EvenQuads project. Even with only the first phase complete, we are pleased to have created a lasting contribution to the AWM and the larger mathematical community. It has also been a pleasure for us to work together, forging friendships as we reach consensus. We have extensively debriefed our work on the first deck, discussed all feedback received, and made adjustments to streamline and improve the processes for the next three decks. Together, the set of four decks can be used for a 256-card EvenQuads game (and any two of the decks can be

used for a 128-card game! Just you wait!). Finally, while we collectively direct the project, a great deal of work has been and will be done by many many additional volunteers. In addition to the aspects listed in the citation, some volunteers have assisted by doing statistics on the reviewing data, drawing multiple portraits of selected women, fact checking biographical information, consulting on marketing, creating photos and videos, liaising with other professional organizations, and dealing with production companies. We are grateful to all the volunteers for responding to our requests for assistance; the EvenQuads decks would not exist without them. Want to be one of these volunteers? Contact the committee at playingcards@awm-math.org.

Read more about the playing cards project here [PlayingCards – Association for Women in Mathematics \(AWM\)](#). Link to this press release [here](#).

The AWM Service Award, established by the AWM Executive Committee in November 2012, recognizes individuals for helping to promote and support women in mathematics through exceptional voluntary service to the Association for Women in Mathematics. The award is given annually to a select AWM Volunteer or group of AWM volunteers in recognition of their extensive time and effort devoted to AWM activities.

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