



CELEBRATING WOMEN IN MATHEMATICS

LENORE BLUM

1943- , USA - In 1959, Blum enrolled in the Department of Architecture at Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh. It was during her first year of study that the mathematics courses in which she was enrolled made her realize that she should change her program to specialize in mathematics.



After two years at the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh, Blum transferred in 1961 to Simmons College in Boston to study mathematics. It was not an entirely satisfactory move for her from the academic point of view, however, since the mathematics course at Simmons did not challenge her as she would have wished. As a consequence, while completing her BS in 1963 at Simmons, she studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and subsequently continued working towards her doctorate there.

In 1968 she was awarded a Ph.D. for her thesis, *Generalized Algebraic Structures: A Model Theoretical Approach*.

She was offered an appointment as a postdoctoral student, Lecturer in Mathematics, and research associate at the University of California at Berkeley where she remained for two years. In 1973 she taught an algebra course at Mills College but, finding the course unsatisfactory, she began to develop new educational ideas. In 1974 she founded the Mathematics and Computer Science Department at Mills College in Oakland, California, and served as its Head or co-Head until 1987. During this time, in 1979, she became the first holder of the Letts-Villard Chair at the College.

In 1975 she was appointed President of the Association for Women in Mathematics, an organization she which had helped to found.

Elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1979, she served as Chair of the Mathematics Section in 1998 - 1999.

Blum is now in the Computer Science department at Carnegie Mellon University where she has started a program to increase the ratio of women in the Computer Science program at CMU.

Biography courtesy of The MacTutor History of Mathematics archive