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Lauren M. Childs wins Ruth I. Michler Memorial Prize

The Association for Women in Mathematics and Cornell University are pleased to announce that **Lauren M. Childs** (Virginia Tech) has been awarded the 2023–2024 Ruth I. Michler Memorial Prize.

Citation: Professor Childs was selected to receive the Michler Prize to pursue a research project advancing mathematical theory and methods for trait-based models of infectious disease, including integral projection models. Such models will also be used to study the spread of infectious disease, in particular malaria, and associated population dynamics.

Cornell's Mathematics Department has faculty with a wide range of expertise related to this work, in areas such as dynamical systems, differential equations, and stochastic dynamics. While visiting Cornell, Professor Childs plans to interact with Steven Strogatz, Tim Healey, Alex Townsend, and Alexander Vladimirovsky in that department, as well as Stephen Ellner and Megan Greischar from the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology.

Lauren M. Childs was awarded a Ph.D. from Cornell University in 2010. She went on to do postdoctoral work at the Georgia Institute of Technology and at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and spent a semester at Williams College. Since 2016, she has been on the faculty at Virginia Tech, where she was promoted to Associate Professor in 2022.



Professor Childs has published more than 40 publications, including articles in *Nature*, *Nature Communications*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* and the *Journal of Theoretical Biology*, and she has an impressive record of high profile invited talks. Her achievements have been recognized by awards from Virginia Tech, NIH, NSF, and the Simons Foundation. In 2022, she was awarded an NSF Career Award.

In addition to her research achievements, Professor Childs also has a strong track record of mentoring and outreach at all levels. She has supervised a number of research projects ranging at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels and co-organized an AMS Mathematics Research Community program. She has also guest lectured at the Stanford Mathematics Camp, presented in Math Circles, and mentored a high school science fair project.

Response from Childs: I am honored to receive the 2023-2024 Michler Memorial Prize and am greatly looking forward to returning to my alma mater Cornell to spend a semester focused on research. Many thanks to the Michler family, the AWM, and the Cornell Mathematics Department for the opportunity to interact with the outstanding mathematicians within the department, such as Dr. Strogatz, as well as with those involved with quantitative applications to infectious disease across the university such as Dr. Greischar and Dr. Ellner.

The Ruth I. Michler Memorial Prize was established through a generous donation from Ruth's parents Gerhard and Waltraud Michler of Essen, Germany. The award grants a mid-career mathematician a residential fellowship in the Cornell University Mathematics Department without teaching obligations. The Michlers established the memorial prize with the Association for Women in Mathematics to honor Ruth's commitment to the AWM mission of supporting women mathematicians. Cornell University was chosen as the host institution because of its distinctive research atmosphere and because Ithaca was Ruth's birthplace.

Association for Women in Mathematics

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