

1086-H1-2860

Sheila K Miller* (smiller@citytech.cuny.edu). *Inspiring Mathematical Interest through Interdisciplinary Projects.*

The ability to pose questions and to approach those questions mathematically is one of the core skills of a mathematician, thus fostering this skill is one of the primary roles of a teacher of mathematics. We take the position that it is often easier to teach students the competencies and joys of asking and exploring questions using an interdisciplinary approach rather than an exclusively mathematical one; attempting to inspire wonder and awe at any aspect of mathematics can be difficult in before-calculus level classes, but in our experience the ubiquitousness of mathematics as the subtle language of the universe is a good place to start — and one with many questions that are genuine and uncontrived. Some degree of mathematical curiosity is required to find mathematics interesting, and seeing that mathematics can be interesting is for many students a prerequisite for wanting to do more of it. We describe a multidisciplinary before-calculus level semester project that strives to generate curiosity about mathematics through investigation of pulsars, and report student reactions to that project. This project includes: chemistry, biology, astrophysics, supernovae, Little Green Men, Tycho Brahe, and Shakespeare's Hamlet. (Received September 25, 2012)