EDITORIAL

Terry Goodman

In recent years there has been much discussion concerning gender equity in mathematics. Statistics support the view that there is a need to find ways to encourage more women to study more mathematics and to enter mathematically related career fields. For example:

- Only 19% of the science, engineering and technology workforce is female.
- By the eighth grade, twice as many boys as girls show an interest in science, engineering and mathematics careers.
- The percentage of women graduating with computer science degrees has decreased 25% since 1985.
- In 1997–98, only 25% of those awarded Doctor's degrees in mathematics were women.
- In 1997–98, only 18% of those awarded Bachelor's degrees in engineering were women.
- In 1997–98, only 25% of those awarded Doctor's degrees in the physical sciences were women.

One organization that has consistently sought to address this issue is the Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM). One of this organization's most successful programs is the sponsorship of Sonia Kovalevsky High School Mathematics Days. Using grants from Coppin State University and the National Security Agency, AWM has provided funding to support these days at colleges and universities throughout the country since 1985. Sonia Kovalevsky days are generally organized and sponsored by AWM and a host institution.

The purposes of Sonia Kovalevsky days are to encourage outstanding high school young women to continue to study mathematics, to assist these young women with the transition from high school to college, to assist teachers of women mathematics students, and to help colleges and universities in their efforts to develop cooperative activities with high schools in their area.

Generally, a local college or university will invite women high school students and their teachers to come to campus for a Sonia Kovalevsky day. The day will consist of a program or workshops, talks, panel discussions, and problem–solving competitions for the students and their teachers. This past September, Central Missouri State University sponsored our third Sonia Kovalevsky day for 54 students and 15 teachers. The students attended two workshops lead by women mathematics teachers and women who use mathematics in their career fields. The students

also participated in a team problem–solving competition. Their teachers attended two workshops lead by university faculty. Finally, both students and teachers attended a panel discussion in which five women presented information on the use of mathematics in their career fields.

AWM annually awards approximately ten grants of up to $3000 each to colleges and universitites who wish to sponsor a Sonia Kovalevsky day in their area. For more information on Sonia Kovalevsky day, please see the AWM web site at http://www.awm-math.org.