

# Kayla Hamann '22

MAA Mathfest in Cincinnati, OH

Summer 2019

Thanks to the Byrne Scholarship, I was able to attend my first ever math conference: the MAA Mathfest in Cincinnati, Ohio. Getting to attend a conference was such an eye opening experience as I was exposed to higher level math I had never seen or heard of before. I was able to listen to talks on subjects like recreational mathematics, where speakers demonstrated presented papers about math and magic, and math in social justice, where I participated in a workshop on gerrymandering. Furthermore, I listened to a panel on math careers in business, industry, and government (BIG) which demonstrated how a math degree can be put to use outside of academia.

In addition to beneficial exposure, I came away from MAA Mathfest with a wealth of resources. The conference had numerous exhibitors where I learned of math based internships and opportunities (many of which I have started applying to) open to undergrads that existed at places I had never considered, such as government labs. I was also able to listen to a talk on graduate school: what it is like, is it for me?, how to pursue it, etc. I found this highly beneficial as I am consistently going back and forth about the idea of graduate school. Lastly, I was able to register for a women supporting women workshop, where I mingled with and learned from other undergraduate students, graduate students, professors, and professionals.

Overall, attending MAA Mathfest was a highly beneficial experience. It peaked my interest in a newfound path through applied mathematics, and has reignited my excitement about math. I am so thankful I was able to have this experience thanks to my Byrne Scholarship, and I look forward to future opportunities.