Michael Freedman awarded the Veblen Prize by the American Mathematical Society

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FREEDMAN WINS VEBLEN MATHEMATICS PRIZE

Michael Freedman, Charles Lee Powell Professor of Mathematics at the University of California, San Diego has become the second UCSD faculty member to be awarded the Veblen Prize, one of the top prizes in mathematics, by the American Mathematical Society.

The prize, given every five years for notable work in geometry or topology, was presented to Freedman during the recent AMS meeting in New Orleans.

The previous UCSD winner of the Veblen Award, in 1981, was Professor Shing-Tung Yau, who holds a Chancellor's Associates Chair in mathematics at UCSD.

"The Veblen Prize is awarded only to those few mathematicians whose work in geometry sets the direction of research for generations to come," noted UCSD Chancellor Richard C. Atkinson. "This recognition by the American Mathematical Society confirms UCSD's long-standing belief that Michael Freedman is one of this country's finest mathematicians."

Freedman won the prize for his paper "The Topology of Four Dimensional Manifolds" published in the "Journal of Differential Geometry" in 1982. It was in this paper that Freedman published his solution to the four-dimensional Poincare Conjecture, a problem which had occupied mathematicians for nearly a century.

In 1984 Freedman was named winner of a $176,000 prize by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Also in 1984, Freedman was named "California Scientist of the Year" by the California Museum of Science and Industry in Los Angeles, and was elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences. Last year he was elected to membership in the American Association of Arts and Sciences.

Freedman, a resident of La Jolla, earned his Ph.D. in mathematics from Princeton University in 1973 and joined the UCSD Department of Mathematics in 1976.

Oswald Veblen, president of the AMS in 1923 and 1924, was well known for his mathematical work in geometry and topology. Freedman was the eleventh recipient of the award since it was created in 1961. Originally, the awards were presented every two years.

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