Having experienced graduate school before, during, and after a global pandemic, I am confident that I would not have been able to thrive in graduate school without a strong community of mathematicians to provide support. I believe our collective responsibility is to ensure future generations of mathematics students have a community that does the same for them; I have worked on several projects with this mission. In this statement, I will discuss my current and past work towards developing our mathematical community.

Association for Women in Mathematics

The University of Utah's chapter of the Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM) is highly active; the organization holds social events highlighting the contribution of underrepresented groups in mathematics, organizes a mentorship program for undergraduate students, and volunteers in STEM-based outreach programs in the Salt Lake City area. For three years, I served as a committee chair for the University of Utah's student chapter of the Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM). My primary responsibility was to organize and run a speaker series funded by the department's RTG and student organization funds. Each semester, we invited two prominent mathematics researchers from underrepresented backgrounds. Speakers are invited to give a research talk during the department colloquium and a "career path" talk during the graduate student seminar, a generally candid conversation between the speaker and grad students about challenges the speaker faced and advice for future researchers. In preparation for these events, I worked with the department and the university to ensure funding for these events and worked with department faculty to select potential researchers to invite.

As chair, I organized ten sessions of the speaker series — two virtual and eight in-person. Our speakers varied across all research disciplines represented within our department and came from a spectrum of gender, racial, and sexual identities. The combination of talks, as well as informal coffees with these speakers, highlighted for us the human element of mathematics and the roadblocks that precede results.

Graduate Student Advisory Committees

Each department within the University of Utah contains an advisory committee organized entirely by graduate students to support students socially and academically. In almost every year of graduate school, I have served on a committee, such as the chair of the recruitment committee, tasked with organizing and conducting the department's yearly graduate student recruitment weekend. Furthermore, I also participated on several panels and committees aimed at providing students with information about finding a mentor, the NSF GRFP, and teaching During my third year, I was a lead liaison between graduate students and the institution. Along with liaisons from other departments, we worked to poll students about their healthcare benefits and discussed our findings with the graduate school. In particular, students overwhelmingly voiced concerns that the cost of prescription drugs under the old plan was hampering their ability to succeed in the program. The school was quite receptive to our requests, and in the next cycle, we received a significant increase in our prescription drug coverage.

Outlook

I am committed to ensuring that young, aspiring mathematicians have the resources to focus on their mathematical development. I believe that my experiences in graduate school will be able to translate to endeavors that will promote the success of future mathematics students. I plan to continue working with student-led organizations that promote diversity in mathematics. I hope to be a member and contribute to current endeavors, mentor new members, and work towards developing a similar speaker series. Moreover, I hope to continue my work in advocating for spaces in which mathematicians can thrive.