Tamara Broderick '07

In her four years at Princeton, Tamara Broderick '07 won almost every academic prize the University has to offer. In the fall of her senior year she capped her remarkable record by winning a two-year Marshall Scholarship to pursue graduate work in mathematics, probability theory and machine learning at Cambridge University. She also was chosen as runner-up for the Alice T. Shafer Prize for Excellence in Mathematics by an Undergraduate Woman from the Association for Women in Mathematics.

With all of her success, one might expect Broderick to retreat into her own research interests — especially as a senior. "People have stereotypes when they first come to campus, but math is a very communal environment, not solitary at all," says the mathematics major from Parma, Ohio. In fact, she says, to be a mathematician today requires deep interest and proven ability to collaborate. "It's what makes research possible," she says.

As co-president of the Princeton Math Club, Broderick worked hard to increase the visibility of the University's incredible mathematics faculty and exciting visiting speakers and to create "an obvious math community" for Princeton undergraduates.

That's the motivation behind events like the annual Pi Day celebration on the calendar's most pi-like day, March 14, for which the math club sponsors an interdepartmental pie-eating contest and students vie to recite the most digits of the famously infinite number. Last year, the club also sponsored a weekly math movie night, showing films like "Pi," "Proof" and "Good Will Hunting" with discussions and snacks afterward.

With an eye on future math majors, Broderick helped organize the math club's first ever Princeton University Mathematics Competition for high school teams from across the country.

Broderick's interests at Princeton weren't limited to math. The University's undergraduate education requirements let every student weave a wide variety of courses into their own unique academic plan. Broderick's senior thesis, for example, was equal parts math, neuroscience, physics and computer science, requiring two faculty advisers in physics and computer science and a third reader in the math department.

Outside of class at Princeton, Broderick was an avid runner and served two years as a leader for Outdoor Action, a week long outdoor adventure program for incoming Princeton freshmen.

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