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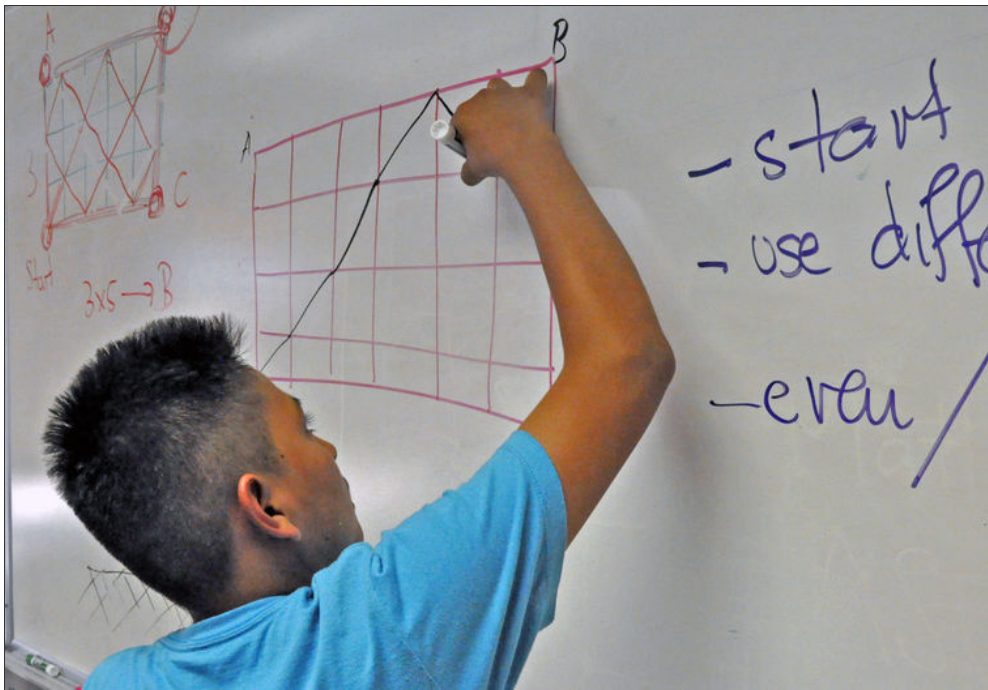
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# 'Navajo Math Circles' delves into the educational program that brings math to underserved areas

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## Navajo Math Circle



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Posted: Monday, March 7, 2016 3:30 pm | Updated: 6:50 pm, Tue Mar 8, 2016.

Madison Lantelme-Capitano | For The Post

The Athena Cinema will offer free admission for the screening Tuesday of a spotlight documentary on the Navajo Math Circles, a group that focuses on teaching mathematics to Navajo children in an interesting and engaging way.

The documentary *Navajo Math Circles*, directed by George Csicsery, will focus on the cross-cultural connections that are

#### If You Go

What: Screening of Navajo Math Circles  
Where: The Athena Cinema, 20 S. Court St.  
When: 7 p.m., Tuesday  
Admission: Free

made through mathematics and the impact that Navajo Math Circles can have on a community.

Csicsery's film is comprised of 19 days of filming throughout three expeditions, which with a year's worth of editing became the hour-long documentary.

"Right away we interviewed Henry Fowler (a mathematician at Dine College)," Csicsery said. "And I realized that there was this different way of storytelling that I had never experienced before. I knew then that we had to use this in the film, this way of storytelling had to be incorporated."

Csicsery said the Navajo culture, and their specific way of storytelling, played an extremely important role in shaping the final product.

The screening, scheduled at 7 p.m., will be followed by the opportunity to ask questions and talk to a panel composed of Robert Klein, an associate professor and undergraduate chair in the Department of Mathematics at Ohio University, and Charmayne Seaton, 16, who has been a participant in the Navajo Math Circles for three years.

Seaton is also featured in the documentary.

"(Seaton) was so open about her story and she quickly became a focus for us," Csicsery said. "She exemplifies the struggles of many students in rural areas where just getting to class can be difficult."

Klein, as a former Math Camp leader and current co-director of the Navajo Nation Math Circles Program, has a special connection with the documentary.

"We do something very unique (in Navajo Math Circles) ... connecting students to their identities as students who are very good at mathematics, but also their identities as Navajo, is extremely important," Klein stated on the documentary's [website](#). "We don't want to see Navajo as somebody outside, or somebody on the fringes of the mathematical community. We want them to see themselves as part of that community, as Navajo, as mathematicians."

Kirsten Cupach, a junior studying journalism and women's and gender studies, said she would consider attending.

"The issue feels kind of familiar," Cupach said. "It's all about making education a pervasive thing, but the whole setting and cultural influence is new to me so I'm pretty interested (in the film)."

Csicsery's goal for the documentary is a new understanding from a different perspective.

"I want people to appreciate the culture and the innovation it takes to create a program like this," Csicsery said. "In a place where getting good education can be so difficult, bringing all of these minds to the students is really just amazing."



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