

## **Bakersfield Conference A Success**

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The *Mathematics Education: Connecting Research To Practice* conference held on the California State University, Bakersfield campus on 10-11 September 2010 was a success. The conference, supported by CAMTE and other professional organizations, consisted of three separate-but-related activities that involved approximately 250 people. The focus of the conference was increasing student achievement in mathematics by engaging them in tasks with a high level of cognitive demand consistent with the QUASAR Project research in the 1990s. Many, but not all, of the sessions during the conference used Texas Instrument technology as an effective tool for accomplishing that goal. Those attending the Algebra Forum III conference on October 18-20 will hear more about the QUASAR research, as Peg Smith is one of the speakers there.

On Friday morning (September 10) from 8:30 - 11:30, nineteen Bakersfield-area school principals, assistant principals, superintendents, and other district officials learned about what is possible regarding ongoing formative assessment and differentiated instruction in mathematics classrooms and how TI-Nspire Navigator technology can be used to facilitate the process. Allan Bellman from UC Davis with Sacramento-area mathematics teachers Teresa Lazdowski, Leigh-Anne Fassiotto, and Katie Mulleague modeled the strategies that they are using to get incredible results in Algebra I. The administrator-participants were involved in hands-on activities as learners themselves.

The conference itself began at 7:00 PM on Friday with a keynote address by Dr. Ed Silver from the University of Michigan and director of the original QUASAR Project. It continued with sessions in 15 different rooms during four different 90-minute sessions during the day on Saturday and concluded with a keynote address by Dr. Carl Lager from UC Santa Barbara at 5:00 PM Saturday. Speakers for the individual 90-minute sessions came from Hawaii, New York, Ohio, Michigan, Nevada, Arizona, and Texas as well as California. Preservice teachers from CSU Bakersfield, Bakersfield College, Fresno State, and Fresno Pacific served as hosts and attended sessions.

The conference received support (non-financial) from the following professional organizations: Algebra Forum VIII, Bakersfield Mathematics Council, California Mathematics Council, California Mathematics Project, CSU Bakersfield Mathematics Club, Fresno Mathletes at Fresno Pacific University, and TODOS: Mathematics For All, as well as CAMTE. It received financial support from Texas Instruments, the Central California Partnership for Teacher Quality Programs (CCP~TQP), and the CSU Bakersfield Mathematics Project.

The conference was a "benchmark" activity along a continuum that began with a series of 2009-2010 Academic Year and summer 2010 workshops on the CSU Bakersfield campus and is continuing with follow-up activities for Bakersfield-area inservice and preservice mathematics teachers. Several Bakersfield-area mathematics departments are already working on plans to increase student achievement by using the formative assessment and differentiated instruction approach modeled by the Sacramento-area mathematics teachers.

