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To Alan Kelm, a dear soul whose devotion to the CMS was boundless

It seems appropriate homage to our late colleague – the CMS's IT guru – to reflect upon how and why I have supported my Society over the years. My time with the CMS has given me great satisfaction, and a sense of being part of something larger than myself.

I became a member of the Canadian Mathematical Society when I took up my first postdoctoral fellowship, at the University of Alberta. In graduate school in the USA, I'd received a free membership to the American Mathematical Society and learned of a larger community I'd never imagined existed. It was natural for me to sign up to the CMS, and later the Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM); it gave me an identity, even when I didn't know if I had earned the title of "mathematician" yet.



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For many years, as I established in parallel my career and my family, my membership in the CMS was a wonderful accessory: I sometimes read the Notes for news of my profession, and I always looked forward to seeing what sessions were planned at the biannual meetings, in case I could make it. Within my department, I enjoyed helping out at the annual CMS Math camp, grateful that others were creating these wonderful opportunities for young mathematical minds.

As my university career settled into routine, I found myself looking for more: a new challenge, new things to learn. At the same time, I felt a need to start giving back, and to make my community better for the next

generation. At my university, I took on administrative positions, organized research workshops and took greater roles in outreach and mentorship. But I eventually felt the limits of the impact of this work, and wanted more: more impact, more opportunities, more reach, and a larger community to learn from... and this is what the CMS has given me.

I've served on the Board of Directors, and more recently as a Vice-President on the Executive Committee. I've served on several committees, working with amazing and passionate colleagues. I signed on as Scientific Director of the CMS summer 2020 75th anniversary meeting plus one 2021 summer online meeting and the (please, oh, please) 2023 summer meeting in Ottawa.



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In my roles, I've had incredible opportunities, like representing the Mathematical Community to NSERC, and to members of my Provincial Parliament, on behalf of the CMS. As a member of the CMS Equity, Diversity and Inclusiveness committee, I helped usher in the open call for abstracts that is now a part of our biannual meetings – a change we hope will welcome even more of our community to the CMS. And on a personal note, I think I've visited more Canadian cities for the purpose of attending a CMS meeting than for any holidays!

I also learned a lot about what the Society does. For example, the Math Olympiad is the most prestigious math competition in the world and our Team Canada has done extremely well over the years. I had taken for granted this was a government (or at least government-sponsored) program – but no, it's the Canadian Mathematical Society that undertakes the whole thing: from recruiting and selecting and training the team, to handling the logistics of sending them to represent Canada, halfway across the world.



For another, the CMS manages and funds a massive network of Math Camps for school-age children, run by local organizer volunteers who are devoted to inspiring our next generation of mathematicians. It's a diverse collection – each camp has its own target population (from students on the spectrum, to students in the North, to students in a particular grade) and style (from weekend camps to day camps and week-long overnight camps). But it is through the CMS and these signature Math Camps that these individual efforts are amplified to a national community of mathematical outreach.

Volunteering to serve as Scientific Director for a summer meeting was a step up for me. A huge motivation was pride in my university – wanting to show off our new math building, and showcase the diversity, richness and success of our collective mathematical research portfolio. At first, I worried about the work involved – I've hosted small mathematical workshops at my university, and the logistical problems always took up about ten times what I'd prepared for. But the CMS meeting machine is well-oiled, and I have great joy in focussing on the mathematical aspects of this national conference instead.

I'm a lifetime member of the CMS, and a proud annual donor. I view my donation as an

investment in the future – such as the new House of Mathematics! – ensuring that the next generation will have this sense of community that I have loved so much. The CMS is not a stagnant institution: it grows and changes and evolves with the needs and initiatives of its members, of its leadership team (including particularly Executive Director

Termeh Kousha, whose innovations these past few years have reset the CMS on a successful path) and of the members of its many committees, each working on a part of the whole.

My support is not entirely selfless. My department and Dean recognize my contributions to the Canadian Mathematical Society, and this gives me greater voice when I argue for a cause, at any level. I have met and worked with colleagues from across Canada, in all mathematical disciplines, and I benefit from having such an extraordinary network to tap into. Through the CMS, I have opportunities to take a leadership role in causes that matter to me, at a national level. And certainly not least, I am deeply honoured to have been named a Fellow of the CMS.

Thinking of becoming more involved in your Society, of investing in the future of our Canadian mathematical community? Here are some ideas, for a variety of tastes:

- Sign up graduate students as student members; there's a discount if it's part of your department's institutional membership;
- Read the CMS Notes and contribute articles about what matters to you;
- Submit your research articles to the journals of your Society;
- Propose a CMS Math camp, and inspire the next generation;
- Organize sessions at CMS conferences (including the lovely one in Ottawa next summer!), and encourage your graduate students to attend;
- Apply to join a CMS committee, working with colleagues from across Canada on a cause that matters to you.

In the end, I support my Society because of the people that form it. I am proud to be part of this joint venture with my fellow committee members and with the devoted office staff – who are just now settling into the new House of Mathematics... with its newly christened Alan Kelm Server Room.

