NEWS RELEASE

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UCM Students Participate in Online Kryptos Challenge

WARRENSBURG, MO (May 5, 2015) – Nine students in three teams from the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at the University of Central Missouri recently competed in the fifth annual online Kryptos Challenge.

The challenge, managed by two members of the Pacific Northwest section of the Mathematical Association of America, challenges three-person teams of undergraduates to tackle the cryptanalysis, or breaking of the coded in coded material. Each challenge presents contestants with a brief scenario together with an encoded message. The goal is to discover the original English plaintext message.

The three teams from UCM included Amos Bailey, a junior math and computer science major; Joshua Covey, Jr., a junior math major; and Joanne Gossell, a sophomore statistics major on Team 1; Luke Menges and Jordon White, junior computer science majors, and Anthony Willett, a junior math major, on Team 2; and Joshua Bounds, a senior computer science major; Brandon Burns, a senior actuarial science major; and James Mixco, a senior math major, on Team 3.

The UCM teams were among 153 students on 67 teams from colleges, universities, academies, institutes and high schools across the nations who participated in the five-day challenge. Students worked at their own locations with challenges presented online, using an inanimate resource available to meet the deadline for submitting their results.

UCM teams 1 and 2 were recognized at Master Codebreakers for solving all three challenges. Team three achieved the Amateur level by solving one of the three challenges.

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