PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Jennifer Lewis, Managing Director
703-934-0163, ext. 213
703-359-7562, fax
jennifer@awm-math.org

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Karen E. Smith named 2016 Noether Lecturer

The Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM) and the American Mathematical Society (AMS) are pleased to announce that Karen E. Smith will deliver the Noether Lecture at the 2016 Joint Mathematics Meetings. Dr. Smith is the Keeler Professor of Mathematics at the University of Michigan. She has been selected as the 2016 Noether Lecturer for her outstanding work in commutative algebra and its interface with algebraic geometry.

Smith received a bachelor's degree in mathematics in 1987 from Princeton University. After a year of teaching high school, she went to the University of Michigan and received a PhD in mathematics in 1993 under the direction of Melvin Hochster. Immediately after receiving her doctorate Smith spent a year at Purdue University as an NSF postdoc working with Craig Huneke, followed by a position as a Moore Instructor at MIT. In 1997, even though she was promoted to assistant professor at MIT, she chose to move back to the University of Michigan, where she continues to teach and do research.

Smith's research in commutative algebra was recognized in 2001 when she received the Ruth Lyttle Satter Prize. Given every two years, this prize recognizes an outstanding contribution to mathematics research by a woman in the previous six years. The citation states: "The Ruth Lyttle Satter Prize in Mathematics is awarded to Karen E. Smith of the University of

Michigan for her outstanding work in commutative algebra, which has established her as a world leader in the study of tight closure, an important tool in the subject introduced by Hochster and Huneke. It is also awarded for her more recent work which builds new bridges between commutative algebra and algebraic geometry via the concept of tight closure."

In addition to the Satter Prize, Smith is the recipient of a Sloan Research Award, a Fulbright award, and research grants from the National Science Foundation and the Clay Foundation. She has twice (in 2002–2003 and 2012 – 2013) helped organize a Special Year in Commutative Algebra at the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI) in Berkeley CA. In 2014, she was an invited speaker at the International Congress held in Seoul, Korea. Smith has been on the editorial board of eight journals, including the two she is currently editing.

Smith has had sixteen PhD students, and she currently has three more working with her. She is the director of an NSF funded Research Training Group (RTG) program, which has supported ten PhD students, ten post-docs and five undergraduates each year since 2005.

Karen Smith is featured in the book *Complexities: Women in Mathematics* edited by Bettye Anne Case and Anne M. Leggett, published in 2005 by Princeton University Press.

The 2016 Joint Mathematics Meetings will be held January 6 - 9 in Seattle, WA. The lecture honors Emmy Noether (1882 - 1935), one of the great mathematicians of her time. She worked and struggled for what she loved and believed in. Her life and work remain a tremendous inspiration. Recent Noether Lecturers include Carolyn Gordon, Susan Montgomery, Barbara Keyfitz, Raman Parimala, Georgia Benkart and Wen-Ching Winnie Li.