

The SUMO Speaker Series for Undergraduates

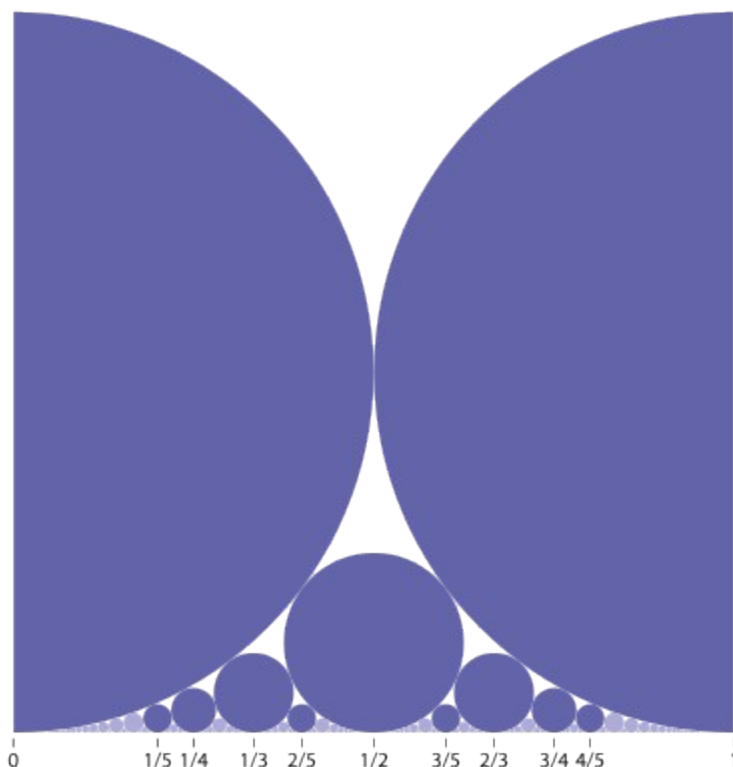
Thursday, December 6th

4:15-5:05, room 380C

(Food Provided)

The story behind the Ford circles

Professor John Stillwell (USF)



ABSTRACT:

The Ford circles are a beautiful geometric configuration obtained from a pair of equal circles, tangent to each other and the x-axis, by recursively inserting circles tangent to the x-axis and to circles constructed previously. The circles are also interesting because of their points of contact with the x-axis, the so-called Farey fractions. This talk will describe the surprising history of Farey fractions and the Ford circles, and the way in which they are brought together by the geometry of complex numbers.

sumo.stanford.edu/speakers