

# ChessFest News

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Elizabeth Shaughnessy, featured speaker at ChessFest

## *“BLINDFOLD CHESS” to be held at the new Chess Plaza on the first day of ChessFest 2011*

UT Dallas International Master **Julio Sadorra** will show his amazing skills playing blindfolded against challengers in the new Chess Plaza located between the Student Services Building and Lot F from 11 a.m. to noon on Feb. 22. This free event features the UT Dallas Chess Program’s giant chess set called “Chess Grande.” From noon to 1 p.m., UT Dallas Chess Champions will direct the large pieces to illustrate some of the famous end games in chess history. This is a chance to meet members of the elite UT Dallas Chess Team. Free and open to the public.

*For information:* Jim Stallings, 972-883-4899 or Tom Koch, 972-883-4951.



UT Dallas Chess Team members **Sal Bercys** (International Master) and **Alejandro Ramirez** (Grandmaster), with their backs to the chess board at the new Chess Plaza, practice their blindfold skills.

## ChessFest X fetes leading Irish chess teacher, organizer

### *Elizabeth Shaughnessy to lecture*

The *10th Annual ChessFest* will honor renowned Irish chess educator Elizabeth Shaughnessy. The event is a collaboration and celebration of chess organized annually by The University of Texas at Dallas’ McDermott Library and Chess Program.

The free, public presentation by **Shaughnessy** will be held at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 23 in the library’s McDermott Suite. Her topic is “The Importance of Chess in the American Community Today.”

The public is invited to a reception beginning at 6:15 p.m. A light buffet will be provided. If you plan to arrive early for the reception, RSVP **Jim Stallings** at james.stallings@utdallas.edu or call 972-883-4899.

Shaughnessy’s teaching philosophy for children is to engage the students’ intelligence and imagination by making the instruction both challenging and fun the while being sensitive to the “whole child.” This philosophy has proven to be successful in producing students with high levels of chess expertise.

“We are especially pleased to welcome an honoree with such a broad array of experience as Elizabeth Shaughnessy to UT Dallas,” Stallings said. “Ms. Shaughnessy has much to tell us about the programs she has steadily developed in California.”

Shaughnessy will receive the UT Dallas Chess Educator of the Year Award after the presentation. Past recipients of the award are **Susan Polgar**, 2004; **Sunil Weeramantry**, 2005; **Erik Anderson**, 2006; **David MacEnulty**, 2007; **Beatriz Marinello**, 2008; and **Dr. Stephen Lipschultz**, 2009; and **Dr. Jonathan Rowson**, 2010.

Shaughnessy has made a significant contribution to chess education in America. She founded the non-profit Berkeley Chess School in 1982. Today it serves more than 5,000 students in 150 schools by offering tournaments, camps and evening classes.

She was Northern California coordinator for the US Chess Trust’s Chess for Youth Program (1984) and was appointed by United States Chess Federation (USCF) as the Scholastic Director for Northern California. She has been a delegate of the USCF since 1986. She served as President of CalChess (2003–2005) and was on the board of the USCF in 2004. She represented the USA at the Chess Olympiad in Spain the same year.

Among her many recognitions she received a \$25,000 Avanti! MAGIC award for community service.

She played in her first chess Olympiad in Lublin, Poland for Ireland in 1969 and became the Irish women’s champion in 1970. In 2010 she represented the USA as a USCF board member.