Mathematicians' work helps change how people vote
8 November 2019, by Heidi Opdyke

A green outline shows Pennsylvania's 7th Congressional district prior to redrawing in 2018. The district was called "Goofy Kicking Donald Duck" for its odd shape, and was often pointed to by pundits and experts as one of the most gerrymandered districts in the country. Credit: Carnegie Mellon University

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf appointed Pegden to the Pennsylvania Redistricting Commission, which was aimed at developing proposals to make redistricting more fair. The commission completed its work in August and recommended forming an 11-member bipartisan commission to draw three maps that would then be voted on by all or part of the state's General Assembly.

Beyond simply determining whether a map is gerrymandered or not, Pegden has helped develop a new redistricting protocol that could lead to fairer maps. The process would involve members of one political party in a state drawing districts to their liking, and then members of the other party being given the chance to "freeze" one district before remapping the others. Each party would continue taking turns freezing and redrawing the remaining districts, in a protocol which produces a map...
accounting for both parties' preferences. Pegden
developed the protocol with Associate Professor of
Computer Science Ariel Procaccia and visiting
student Dingli Yu.

Provided by Carnegie Mellon University
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