

September 26, 2013

Dear Fellow Statisticians in Christ,

It is with thanksgiving that I write to update you on what is happening in our sphere. I wasn't at the annual meeting this year, but my thanks to Andrew Hartley and Paul Stephens for leading the meeting! There were about 20 present, with some old and some new. Most of the time was devoted to attendees sharing with the group how their faith informs their work. For more details, please see Andrew's statement (attached). I've heard that it gave the usual "breath of fresh air" from the main conference.

At JSM's Sunday evening awards ceremony, Bob Rodriguez announced that the ASA would be starting a new award in honor of Lingzi Lu, the student at Boston University studying statistics who was killed in the Boston Marathon bombings (<http://www.amstat.org/awards/lingzilumemorialaward.cfm>). CSIDG member Nathan Tintle noted that Lingzi Lu was exploring the Christian faith (<http://christiannews.net/2013/04/22/boston-bombing-victim-lingzi-lu-had-been-involved-with-christian-student-ministry/>). He arranged for any donations from our group members to be combined so that if we collectively exceed the \$500 or \$2500 marks that our group name "Christian Statisticians" would be listed as a founder on the award. I have since confirmed from an Inter-Varsity staff member at BU who knew Lingzi Lu that she was not a Christian, but was active in their group activities, indicating her interest in Christianity.

To donate, go to <https://www.amstat.org/giving/index.cfm?fuseaction=ShowApp> and individually fill out the form indicating "Lingzi Lu - Christian Statisticians" in the text box. Donations for this scholarship will be accepted through the end of the year.

As of 8/12/13, we collectively gave \$670, meeting the first goal.

As announced prior to the meeting, Dan Fitzsimmons completed his draft of "Scientists of the Faith". Once we finalize the list, he is going to assemble it into a quilt with [tentatively] six squares by six squares, with one picture on each square. This quilt will then be displayed as the backdrop to our table at JSM. The current list of images, with the current record of their justification, can be found on our website (www.christianstatisticians.org). Please keep sending your suggestions for additional people, better images, further evidence, comments, etc. to Dan at <dfitzclan@att.net>. The vision behind the collection is multi-faceted. Some of the facets are: (1) Show that Christians have been at the highest levels of scientific progress throughout history, (2) Show that there is a diversity of perspectives within the Christian community on the non-essentials of the faith, (3) Show that there are Christians even among today's distinguished

scientists, (4) Provoke discussion about following Christ among JSM attendees, as well as CSIDG members.

Some have mentioned that we should put out another newsletter with some substantive content. Since Novie retired as editor back in 2006, we have not produced any. So I have two requests:

- (1) Please contact me if you'd be willing to edit a newsletter
- (2) Please send me any material you'd like included in a newsletter. Please look at our newsletter archive for ideas (www.christianstatisticians.org). Examples would include: a faith-related article, review of a book of interest to the group, suitable news item, opinion piece, testimony, and so on.

On a related note, I would like to thank Aric LaBarr, Alexia Makris, and Andrew Hartley for volunteering to help with the new website. I'll send an announcement when it's done, as I think it is going to be a nice upgrade.

In closing, I'd like to leave you with this word,

"For by [Christ] all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, ... all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together." (Colossians 1:16-17)

You are an expert in one realm of the invisible things -- namely the underlying structure of the universe as described by the laws of probability, and the statistical tools of quantifying it. Without the sustaining hand of Christ, what we do would be impossible. And apart from Christ, there is no good explanation for why it coheres so ubiquitously and beautifully. Imbibe this. Let it move you to worship (Ps 19:1). Let it inspire your work (Rom 1:20). Let it inform and give confidence to your gospel proclamation (1 Pet 3:15). Thank you for all you are doing for our Lord Jesus. May the LORD bless your year.

In Christ,

Jason Wilson
CSIDG Coordinator

The CSIDG held its annual meeting for about 1 ¾ hours on Monday, 5 Aug AD 2013. The following items were covered:

1. Each attendee had the opportunity to share with the others some facets of their professional lives, with emphasis on how their faith informs and influences how they serve as statisticians, professors and the like.
2. Andrew Hartley announced the Call For Proposals by the Templeton Foundation regarding Randomness and Divine Providence, described in detail at <http://www.calvin.edu/mathematics/randomnessproject/project-descriptions.html> and announced last summer. While there was some interest in collaboration resulting in a proposal, in the end, none of the many proposals turned out to be from Statisticians. Nine were accepted, with a preliminary conference this past June, and a conference for the results in June 2015.
3. Andrew also reminded members of the existence of the group's web site, <https://sites.google.com/a/biola.edu/christianstatisticians/>, which presents various resources including the group's purpose statement, faith statement and issues of the "Counted for Righteousness" newsletter.
4. Dan Fitzsimmons introduced the "Scientists of Faith" project, and discussed its display at the CSIDG table.
5. Nathan Tintle announced that the American Statistical Association, along with the Chinese Statistical Association, is co-sponsoring a scholarship named after Lingzi Lu, a Chinese student studying statistics at Boston University when she was tragically killed in the Boston Marathon bombings. CSIDG members are encouraged to donate to this cause; see separate e-mail from Nathan sent to the CSIDG email on yahoogroups.

Post-meeting notes:

1. Many of the group enjoyed a meal and fellowship after the meeting, at an Italian-style restaurant.
2. Ideas for the 2014 meeting are hereby solicited. Let's get started now, to think about such aspects as
 - a. Advertising our existence & purposes
 - b. Display table
 - c. Topics for discussion at the meeting

Respectfully submitted by Andrew Hartley