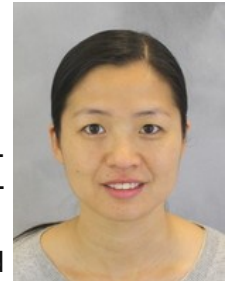




NC ASA CHAPTER BULLETIN

Fall/Winter 2020

Greetings from NC ASA President Amy Shi



Despite all challenges, NC ASA had an engaging year in 2020!

We kept hosting webinars in 2020 as part of the Professional Development Webinar Series. All the four webinars were very successful. The webinar series will continue in 2021.

Due to the impact of the coronavirus, we decided to host this year's Statistics and Data Science Career Fair virtually. We sincerely appreciate all the positive response and support we received from organizations and individuals. The Fair took place on Sept 2nd and it's a great event (see Page 3 for more details)!

In 2020, 8 Students were given the NC ASA Student Travel Award. Applications are reviewed every three months year-around. Students can receive up to \$250 to attend a conference or workshop that is held in the state or sponsored by ASA.

I have enjoyed to serve as NC ASA President this year and learned a lot about this amazing community. I was deeply inspired by the strength and commitment that is being demonstrated across our community.

Please welcome NC ASA 2021 President, Susan Simmons, as she transitions to her leadership role. A big thank you goes to you, NC ASA chapter members, for giving me the opportunity, participating at various events, and contributing to our local statistics community's success this past year!

ASA Code of Conduct



To ensure the best possible experience for all ASA members, we have established some basic guidelines for participation: <https://community.amstat.org/northcarolina/codeofconduct>

ASA Groups rules have been specified, including E-group Etiquette that is important when most of our events and activities have been moved to be online. For example, members should include a signature tag on all messages while joining in a virtual meeting, that include the person's name, affiliation, location; it also suggests to state concisely and clearly the topic of comments in the subject line.

Please take a moment to acquaint yourself with these important guidelines. If you have questions, contact the ASA member services department or **Becky McNeil** at rmcneil@rti.org, who is our VP on the NC ASA Executive Board.

In order to preserve a climate that encourages both civil and fruitful dialogue, ASA reserve the right to suspend or terminate membership on all lists for members who violate these rules. Thanks for being part of our ASA community!

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Professional Development

Webinars: <https://community.amstat.org/northcarolina/webinarseries>

Series IV: Bias, Equity, and Anti-racism in Data Science and Machine Learning



Emily Hadley

Our fourth webinar in 2020 was held on Friday, Dec 4th at noon, presented by **Emily Hadley** from RTI International Center for Data Science. This webinar had a great turnout! Attendees were genuinely interested in Emily's presentation.

Abstract: As statisticians and data scientists, we collect data, store data, transform data, visualize data, and ultimately impact how data are used. With this responsibility, it is imperative that we confront the ways in which data and algorithms have been used to perpetuate racism and eliminate racist decisions and algorithms in our own work. Join a conversation where we discuss the landscape of bias, equity, and anti-racism in data science and machine learning. Consider questions to ask throughout the data lifecycle and walk away with anti-racist tools to incorporate into data science and data-driven decision-making.

Bio: Emily Hadley is a Data Scientist with the RTI International Center for Data Science. Her work spans several practice areas including health, education, social policy, and criminal justice. Emily holds a Bachelor of Science in Statistics with a second major in Public Policy Studies from Duke University and a Master of Science in Analytics from North Carolina State University.

The recording of this webinar is [available on NC ASA's YouTube channel](#). You can watch all our past webinars on that website!

NC ASA Member Social

On Jan 23rd, 2020, NC ASA members met at a local restaurant for a Pop-up social. After that, we had to redesign member socials to be virtual. The remaining socials were done through Zoom meeting and they all had a great turn-out: we had over 20 chapter members join us for every virtual pop up social in the year of 2020.

In 2021, we will continue to host member socials. We encourage everyone to join. Watch out for the email announcement for a social!

Chapter Awards

Each year, NC ASA gives out two types of Chapter awards: Chapter Service Award and Senior Statistician Award.

- [Chapter Service Award](#)

NC ASA recognizes a statistician for his or her long and outstanding service to the North Carolina Chapter. This year, the award goes to:

Brian Gaines (SAS)

Brian Gaines is a Machine Learning Developer at SAS. Brian became involved with NC ASA as a member of the Industry Interests Group (IIG) Core Strategic Team and the IIG's liaison to the Scholastic Council. In this capacity, he helped to launch the NC ASA's successful webinar series. In addition, he organized the inaugural NC ASA Career Information Fair. Brian also served on the NC ASA Executive Board as the Treasurer from 2018-2019. During his tenure, he focused on securing sponsorships and balancing the budget to make the new Chapter initiatives and events more sustainable.

- [Senior Statistician Award](#)

The NC Chapter recognizes two senior statisticians for their outstanding contributions to the theory and practice of statistics, particularly for their role in the development of the subject in the state. This year, the winners are:

Gayle Bieler (RTI)

Gayle Bieler is a Senior Director for the Center for Data Science at RTI. Gayle has been a statistician for over 30 years and her accomplishments have spanned from collaborating on the development of SUDAAN®, RTI's commercial statistical software package design for analyzing complex survey data, to being the founding director of RTI's Center for Data Science which just celebrated its sixth anniversary. She has grown the Center for Data Science from 3 staff to be a multidisciplinary team of 26 data scientists, software developers, and visual designers with a mission of "data science for social good".

Jacqueline Hughes-Oliver (NCSU)

Dr. Hughes-Oliver is currently a professor of statistics at North Carolina State University and has made significant contributions in the areas of Drug discovery, transportation modeling, point source modeling, group testing, spatial modeling and covariance non-stationarity. Throughout her time at NCSU, she has secured numerous grants and has worked with many students.

Statistics and Data Science Career Fair 2020

NC ASA organized its first-ever [Career Information Fair](#) for chapter members in 2019. This year, we planned to host another on-site fair in April 2020, but it had to be changed due to COVID-19. We initially postponed the fair and then decided to reimagine the event in an all-virtual format.



Over 130 statistics professionals and students attended our Virtual NC ASA Career Information Fair on September 2nd, 2020. Attendees learned about the variety of careers and opportunities available to statisticians and data scientists at twenty-two organizations and universities in the Triangle area.

The Career Fair opened with a large introductory session via Zoom in which each participating organization gave a short presentation about their own company and the kind of work they do. After the introductory session, attendees had a chance to call into separate virtual meetings hosted by the participating organizations. These breakout sessions were designed to allow participants to meet briefly with representatives from each organization for a question and answer session, similar to moving from table to table at a physical Career Fair.



Although this was the first time NC ASA organized an all-virtual career fair, the event was well received by both attendees and organization representatives. Please see [feedbacks](#) from a survey sent out to participants after the event. Our Secretary, Kristen Foley, wrote a nice article titled "[NC Chapter Offers Tips for Holding a Virtual Career Fair](#)" to introduce how to host a virtual career fair and give nice advice on how to make it successful, and the write-up has been published on AmstatNews.

The NC ASA executive board would like to thank everyone that participated for their support of this event. We look forward to hosting another Career Information Fair in the future! If your organization is interested in participating in a potential career fair next year (time and location TBD), please contact the NC ASA Executive Board (ncasa.board@gmail.com).

NC ASA thanks the following corporate sponsors for their generous support: [Abt Associates](#), [Duke Department of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics](#), [IDDI](#), [NC State Department of Statistics](#), [PPD](#), [Premier Research](#), [Red Hat](#), [SAS](#), [Sciome](#), [UNC-Chapel Hill Department of Biostatistics](#), [ViiV Healthcare](#). Other organizations participating in the fair include: [Duke CTSI Biostatistics](#), [Epidemiology and Research Design \(BERD\) Methods Core](#), [Grifols Therapeutics](#), [Infinia](#)



[ML](#), [National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences](#), [NC State University's Institute for Advanced Analytics](#), [Rho](#), [RTI International](#), [Target RWE](#), [UCB Biosciences, Inc.](#), [US Environmental Protection Agency](#), [Westat](#).

NC ASA Chapter Member Profiles



Member: Rakhi Kilaru (PPD)

Rakhi Kilaru is Director of Statistical Science at PPD. In this role, she provides input into study design, analyses and leads enterprise level business critical initiatives. Her research interests and contributions also include centralized statistical monitoring tools and scientific surveillance methods. She was office based in Wilmington and led a group of statisticians for several years before transitioning into her current role. Rakhi plays an active role in the ASA Biopharmaceutical section as an ad-hoc member of the Executive Committee and member of the

newly endorsed Leadership in Practice Committee (LiPCom). As member of the steering committee, she has helped organize sessions for the Regulatory-Industry Statistics Workshop and the Duke Industry Statistics Symposium on multiple occasions and given talks on a variety of topics. She has over 18 years of experience in the industry as a senior statistical reviewer and lead statistician on several phase II-III trials in cardiovascular outcomes, neuroscience and inflammatory disorders. She was at Duke Clinical Research Institute for eleven years prior to joining PPD. Rakhi received her MS in Biostatistics and an MBA in Finance from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She also holds a Masters in Microbiology from University of Delhi. She has co-authored and analyzed data to support several manuscripts published in peer reviewed journals.

Member: Fedesia Stukes (JCSU)

Dr. Fedesia Stukes is an assistant professor of Computer Science at Johnson C. Smith University (JCSU) in Charlotte, NC. She is a proud alumna of North Carolina A&T State University, where she received a Bachelor's degree from the College of Engineering in Computer Science. She earned a Master's in Information Technology and a Ph.D. in Computing and Information Systems from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Dr. Stukes joined JCSU in the fall of 2017 as the first African American faculty in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering. In 2019, she founded the Social



Computing Lab where her research is situated at the intersection of communities and technology, using computer models and data science to explain social phenomena. Her research is also focused on computer science (CS) education to find more effective approaches to bring computer science to a wider and more diverse audience. More recently, Dr. Stukes led a Department of Defense funded project aimed to increase minority participation in computing through data science education and research through sport. The project uniquely paired data science curriculum grounded in the real-world for practical use with applied research experiences using human performance, player tracking and sports team analytics equipment.

Dr. Stukes served as program co-chair for the 2019 Research on Equity and Sustained Participation in Engineering, Computing, and Technology conference and as registration chair for the 2019 blackcomputeHER conference. She is also part of numerous regional and national initiatives, which help create greater opportunity for women in computing careers.

Dr. Stukes is happily married to her high school sweetheart, and together they have four children.

Look for us on social media!



@NCAmStat



@NC_ASA

NC ASA Student Travel

Award

We are continuing to accept applications for the Student Travel Award.

Applications are reviewed every three months with the next review occurring on March 1, 2021. North Carolina statistics students at any level can receive up to \$250 to attend a conference or workshop within North Carolina or any ASA sponsored conference. Consideration is given to the impact conference attendance would have on the person applying. To submit an application go [here](#).

Past winners include Xiaoqian Liu (NCSSU), Lesia Semenova (Duke Univ.), Phuc Nguyen (Duke Univ.), Zahra Saki (NCSSU), Hanyu Song (Duke Univ.), Becky Tang (Duke Univ.), and Romesh Thanuja (UNC-Greensboro).

NC ASA 2021 Executive Board Election

The elections ran from Nov 31 to Dec 8th, 2020. Around 100 NC ASA members casted their votes and selected **Shaina Race** as the new Vice President 2 and **Cynthia Bland** as the new Secretary for the 2021 Executive Board. Congratulations to Shaina and Cynthia, and welcome to the board!

We also would like thank all the other candidates who participated in the election.

2020 Executive Board Committees:

President - [Amy Shi](#)

Vice President - [Susan Simmons](#)

Vice President 2 - [Becky McNeil](#)

Secretary - [Kristen Foley](#)

Treasurer - [Jamie Ridenhour](#)

ASA Representatives - [Ryne VanKrevelen](#)

Past President - [Emily Griffith](#)