SCASA Leadership Legacy Corner

From the list of Past P residents of SCASA:

2023-2024 Anna Yu Lee, Claremont Graduate University

Dr. Anna Yu Lee contributed over a decade of leadership, service, and creative educational programming to the Southern California Chapter of the American Statistical Association (SCASA) from 2014 to 2025. During this time, she served as President and in numerous leadership roles, supporting students, colleagues, and mentors while promoting connections between psychology, public health, history, and philosophy.

Her long-term service includes judging, mentoring, and hosting numerous student research competitions and DataFests, including the International Science and Engineering Fair, local research events such as SCASA's annual poster competition, and most recently, *Statistical "Therapy": The Game Show*. This groundbreaking program celebrated SCASA's 100th anniversary as the first locally founded ASA chapter in the United States.

The program platformed a broad community of volunteers, students, mentors, and sponsors, highlighting data science, psychology, and public access programming. It emphasized ethical and transparent uses of statistics in mental health, inviting students and professionals to reimagine how statistical thinking can support emotional insight, decision-making, and well-being. The title itself raised thoughtful questions about what can be considered "evidence-based" in both statistics and psychology.

Dr. Yu Lee's early work in teaching statistics was motivated less by affection for the subject and more by concern over the discipline's inherently insecure foundations. Her initial focus centered on reducing statistics anxiety in university classrooms and counseling settings. In later years, she experimentally explored the reverse direction of effect, examining how statistical tools and philosophies might be applied within broader mental health contexts. Her recent work emphasizes transparency and the ethics of human and AI collaboration in data analysis and mental health practice.

During her leadership with SCASA, Dr. Yu Lee contributed to and helped coordinate many of the chapter's primary events, including Annual Kickoffs, Career Days, and student-centered programming. Across all settings, she consistently promotes curiosity and courage over boredom and fear. Among the highlights of her most recent work with the ASA, she taught ASA Traveling Courses in Mississippi-Alabama and Southern California within the past year. These courses examined both the uses and risks of statistics and artificial intelligence in mental health, supported student teams at the Los Angeles City College Datathon, and advanced public dialogue on transparency across scientific disciplines. Her teaching spans K-12, undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, industry, and community-based settings. In 2025, she was nominated for the ASA Outstanding Teaching Award in the Health Sciences.

Additional Information

During her graduate studies and work with SCASA, Dr. Yu Lee developed a feline-based emotional assessment poster designed to support survey engagement and respondent feedback. This tool has been used at ASA conference booths, research and outreach initiatives, and mental health events locally and internationally. It is available in 13 languages and by a request at *www.AnnaYuLee.com*.

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