

# E-Tidings Newsletter



## SCASA Events and News

Volume 12, Issue 3

March, 2024



- PAGE 2**      ♦ **2024 Leo Breiman Junior Award Winner**
- PAGE 3**      ♦ **CALL FOR JUDGES: CSEF**
- PAGE 4**      ♦ **AI IN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, 3/18**
- PAGE 5**      ♦ **R LADIES IRVINE WEBINAR, 3/19**
- PAGES 6-8**   ♦ **43RD APPLIED STATISTICS WORKSHOP**
- PAGE 9**      ♦ **CALL FOR MENTORS: DATAFEST AT UCLA**
- PAGE 10**     ♦ **ASA TRAVELING COURSE, 10/18-10/19**
- PAGES 11-12** ♦ **SUMMER TRAINING FOR ASPIRING RESEARCHERS**
- PAGE 13**     ♦ **DR. NORMALCURVIDRAGON, PH.D. PRESENTS**



HAPPY  
*St. Patrick's*  
DAY





## 2024 Leo Breiman Junior Award Winner



Leo Breiman Junior Award Winner this year is **Mladen Kolar** who is a professor in the Department of Data Sciences and Operations at the USC Marshall School of Business. He earned his PhD in Machine Learning from Carnegie Mellon University in 2013. His research focuses on high-dimensional statistical methods, probabilistic graphical models, and scalable optimization methods, driven by the need to uncover interesting and scientifically meaningful structures from observational data. He currently serves as an associate editor for the Journal of Machine Learning Research, the Annals of Statistics, the Journal of Computational and Graphical Statistics, and the New England Journal of Statistics in Data Science.

The Breiman Junior Awards are determined by the Statistical Learning and Data Science Section (SLDS) of the American Statistical Association. The awards honor the profound impact of the work of Professor Leo Breiman (1928-2005) in Machine Learning and Statistics. The Breiman Awards, given every two years, include a monetary prize, a plaque, and an invited lecture at JSM two years later. The Breiman junior scholar must have received a doctoral degree no earlier than 2011 and been an SLDS section member at least for two years. The Breiman Award Committee selects the Breiman junior scholar based on outstanding theoretical or methodological contributions to machine learning and computational statistics, or contributions that have made a substantial, sustained impact on the subject and on practical applications. Nominations are accepted in odd-numbered years.

### Junior Award Winners Archives

2024 Mladen Kolar, University of Southern California; Rahul Mazumder, Massachusetts Institute of Technology ♦ 2022 Jing Lei, Carnegie Mellon University; Ali Shojaie, University of Washington ♦ 2020 Daniela Witten, University of Washington ♦ 2018 Yichao Wu, University of Illinois at Chicago ♦ 2016 Yufeng Liu, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Ming Yuan, University of Wisconsin



# CALL FOR JUDGES JUDGING ON TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2024

We are pleased to announce that the Judge Application System for the 2024 California Science and Engineering Fair is now open and waiting for you. As you may already know, judging for CSEF 2024 will again take place entirely online — this year on Tuesday, April 16. We appreciate your efforts in support of the fair in the past and hope you will choose to join us as a judge again this year. On Tuesday, April 16, as last year, all interviews with students will be face-to-face over video. Unlike last year, all will be scheduled as explained on the [Judges page of our website](#). The precise time on that day that you will need to be present depends upon the judging panel to which you are assigned. You will be given your judging panel assignment about a week before the fair, and your personal schedule of each project you will interview on Saturday, April 13, three days prior to the fair.

## **[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION TO BE A JUDGE.](#)**

When you click on this link you will be presented with a simple page asking for a username (we recommend your email address), your name, and your email address. It will then send you an email to confirm that you can receive email from us. If that confirmation email does not arrive within a minute or so, please check your spam/junk/clutter folders. Clicking on the link in the confirmation email will bring up the rest of the application which can be finished off in only a few minutes.

This registration site serves both Category Award judges and Sponsored Award judges. When you register your intentions, please take care to select "Category Awards" and do not select any Sponsored Award organization. Both sets of judges will be interviewing the students at similar, but nonconflicting, times.

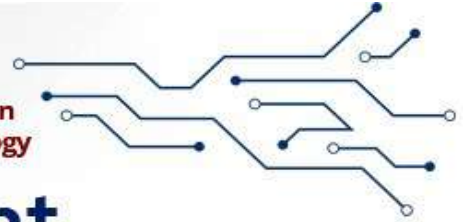
During this virtual fair, each project will be represented by a standard [Project Presentation](#) that will take the place of a physical display used during in-person fairs. These project presentations will be available for your inspection on the Judge Registration site incrementally over the next few weeks until April 4 when all should be present. We hope to see you on Tuesday, April 16. Please submit your application soon.



**NISS** National Institute of  
Statistical Sciences



Federal Committee on  
Statistical Methodology



# AI in Federal Government

## Challenges in Confidentiality, Privacy, and Ethics for Use of AI by Federal Agencies



Monday, March 18, 2024 | 12 pm – 1:30 pm PT

Sponsorship  
provided by



### Speakers:

- ◆ Ellen Galantucci (Federal Maritime Commission) "Safeguarding Confidentiality in Federal Statistics: Navigating AI Challenges"
- ◆ Emily Hadley (RTI International) "Practical Approaches for Ensuring the Responsible Use of AI"
- ◆ Benjamin Reist (NORC) "Talk Title Coming Soon"
- ◆ Kristi Boyd (SAS) "Talk Title Coming Soon"

**Moderator:** Lisa Mirel (NSF)

This series aims to benefit federal practitioners and managers by providing behind-the-scenes information on uses of AI in federal agencies and from insights on how agencies meet organizational, managerial, and ethical challenges in harnessing the power of AI.

The National Institute of Statistical Sciences (NISS) and the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) are collaborating on a series of webinars on Artificial Intelligence (AI). This webinar focuses on Challenges in Confidentiality, Privacy, and Ethics for Use of AI by Federal Agencies. The event's website is located [here](#).



## WEBINAR STATISTICS, EPIDEMIOLOGY, TEAM (DATA) SCIENCE: WASTEWATER SURVEILLANCE

MARCH 19, 2024, 4:30-6 PM PT

*By Madeline Bauer, USC (retired) and organizer of this event*

R-Ladies Irvine (<https://www.rladiesirvine.org/>) is very excited to host this free virtual meeting on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 from 4:30-6 pm PDT!! The two speakers, Professor Katherine Ensor and Dr. Julia Schedler, are affiliated with Houston Wastewater Epidemiology (<https://hou-wastewater-epi.org/>) and the Department of Statistics at Rice University. Professor Ensor will illustrate how Spatial-Temporal Modeling is applied to Public Health Surveillance through Wastewater and Dr. Schedler will share three stories about Reproducibility in Team Science.

### Schedule

4:30 - 4:45 PM | Announcements

4:45 - 5:45 PM | Speakers

5:45 - 6:00 PM | Questions

Register for this event on the meetup.com site:

[https://www.meetup.com/rladies-irvine/events/299683440/?utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_campaign=share-btn\\_savedevents\\_share\\_modal&utm\\_source=link](https://www.meetup.com/rladies-irvine/events/299683440/?utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=share-btn_savedevents_share_modal&utm_source=link)



Source: <https://magazine.amstat.org/blog/2024/03/01/julia-schedler/>



# 43rd Applied Statistics Workshop

## Saturday, April 13, 2024

### TOPIC: STATISTICS FOR PUBLIC POLICY

**PRESENTER: JEREMY WEBER**

**WHEN: Saturday, April 13, 2024, 9AM - 3PM**

**LOCATION: <https://csulb.zoom.us/j/81532967761>**

**COST: Free**

**REGISTRATION: not required**



### EVENT SCHEDULE

- ◆ 9:00 AM – 9:45 AM Introduction and Overview
- ◆ 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM Session I **Big ideas: The role of statistics in public policy**  
**Do data ever drive a policy decision? What's different about statistics in policy vs. academic settings?**
- ◆ 11:00 AM – 11:05 AM Break
- ◆ 11:05 AM – 12:00 PM Session II **'Is this a random sample?' is the wrong question: What statistical essentials must the statistically savvy policy aide wield with confidence?**
- ◆ 12:00 PM – 12:45 PM Lunch Break + presentation by the first-place winner at the SCASA Regional Data Visualization Poster Competition
- ◆ 12:45 PM – 2:30 PM Session III **Is "large" the right adjective? How can you distinguish small from large and communicate statistics to diverse policy-minded audiences?**
- ◆ 2:30 PM – 2:45 PM Q/A
- ◆ 2:45PM – 3 PM Book Raffle and Wrap-up

Continued on the next page.

Continued from the previous page.

## WORKSHOP ABSTRACT



Using statistics in public policy settings presents challenges not commonly addressed in academic statistical training. This workshop seeks to bridge theory and practice, and not academic practice but practice with the Mayor's staff as they size up issues, consider options, and make decisions. It does so through three sessions, starting first with big-picture ideas such as the roles that statistics can play in policy decisions and how academic and policy practice can differ. The second session discusses statistical essentials important for a policy aide to wield with confidence, such as knowing the details of definitions behind the data and how to gauge the value of statistics from nonrandom samples. The third session addresses the controversial but important task of selecting and defending adjectives to convey whether a number is large or small, alarming or ignorable. The session also explains principles for communicating statistics to diverse audiences, ranging from policy wonks to high-level decision makers, so that the statistics are seen, understood, and believed.

## ABOUT THE PRESENTER

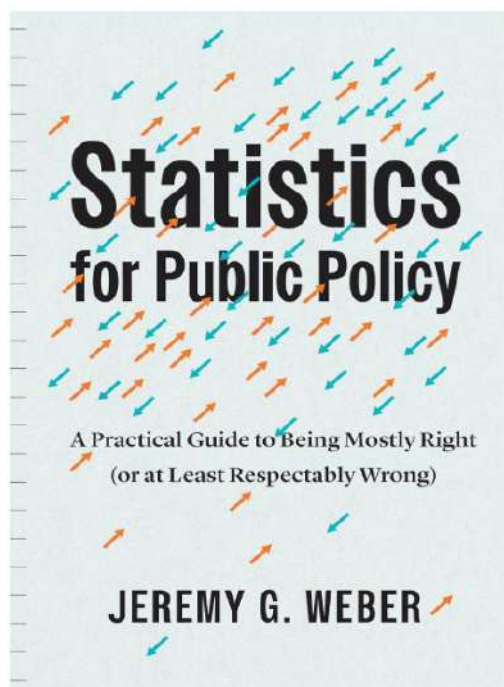
**JEREMY WEBER** is a professor at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and author of "Statistics for Public Policy: A Practical Guide to Being Mostly Right (or at Least Respectably Wrong)." His teaching includes courses in quantitative methods and policy analysis, and his research addresses empirical questions in energy and environmental economics and policy. He regularly engages with non-academic audiences and has extensive policy experience, having worked as a research economist at a Federal statistical agency (the Economic Research Service) and as a chief economist at the White House (the Council of Economic Advisers).

Continued on the next page.

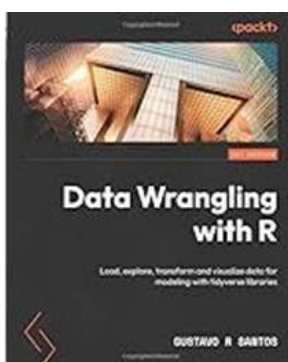
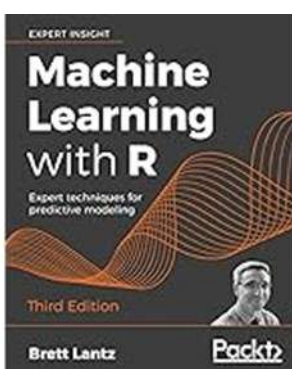
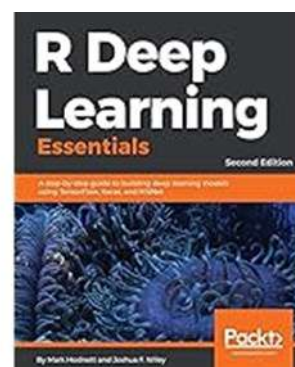
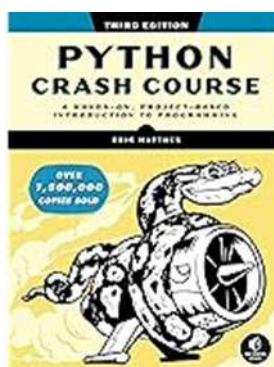


Continued from the previous page.

# BOOKS FOR RAFFLE (SPOILER)



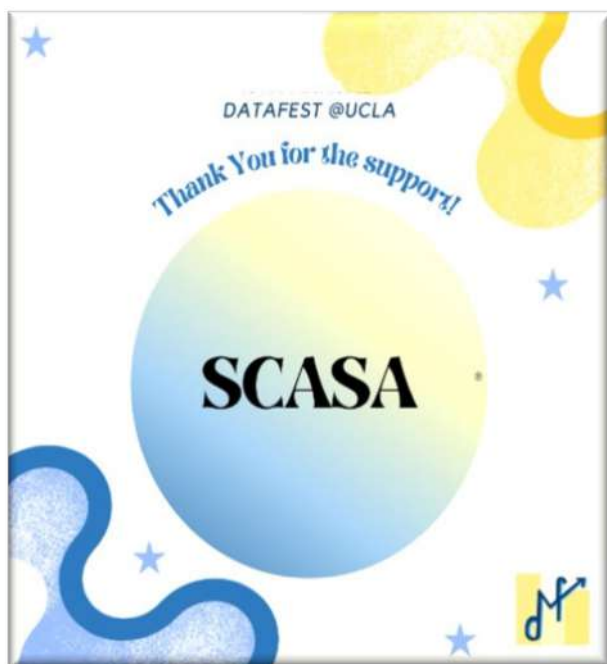
x 5 signed books !!!







The 14th ASA DataFest at UCLA 2024 will be held on April 26-28, 2024, at the UCLA Ackerman Grand Ballroom (same site as the past two years). It is a 48 hour data competition for undergraduate students which also involves the Southern California Statistics/Data Community. We are actively looking for mentors and sponsors. If you would like to be a mentor please sign up here <https://forms.gle/WkFbAcEY1GbiEuPc9>. If you know of a company willing to sponsor the event please share this site with them <https://giving.ucla.edu/datafest2024>. If you would like to be a judge or have any questions about the event please contact Dr. Linda Zanontian (DataFest organizer) at [linda@stat.ucla.edu](mailto:linda@stat.ucla.edu). FYI, SCASA donated \$500 this year to support DataFest at UCLA, as we try to do every year.





## ASA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS TRAVELING COURSE

### OCTOBER 18-19, 2024, 10AM-2PM PT

### ONLINE

SCASA is pleased to announce that this year we have been awarded an **ASA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS TRAVELING COURSE**. It will be a full-day course split into two half-day courses.

**DATES AND TIMES:** Friday, October 18, 2024, 10AM-2PM PT and Saturday, October 19, 2024, 10AM-2PM PT **LOCATION:** Online



**REGISTRATION:** Will open in August on Eventbrite.com, Zoom link will be available to registered attendees

**COST:** \$30 general/\$10 students or retirees whether you attend one or both days. Reminder: traveling courses cost us \$25/person that we pay to ASA. Consider sponsoring your students.

**TOPIC:** Data: Ethical Issues and Best Practices and Ethical Issues and Best Practices in Analytics

**INSTRUCTOR:** David Corliss, *Principal Data Scientist at Grafham Analytics and University of Michigan Institute for Data Science (MIDAS) as a Data and AI in Society Specialist*

**COURSE OVERVIEW:** This workshop discusses ethical issues in data and analytics. The class spends 20-30 minutes each on a series of issues, alerting students to the existence of these issues and how to identify them. The course includes a half day on data issues such as privacy and data ownership, followed by a half-day on analytics issues such as p-hacking, sources of bias, and responding to algorithm failure. The workshop teaches a practical and applied understanding of ethical issues in data and analytics, presenting concrete examples of both good and bad practices, enabling course attendees to be better aware of and address potential issues.

Day 1: Ethical Issues in Data Ownership, Use, and Practices • Data Ownership • Data Privacy • Ethics of Data Usage • Ethics of Data in the Workplace

Day 2: Analytics and Algorithms - Ethical Issues and Best Practices • Bias in Analytics • Ethics of Algorithm and Model Failure • Ethical Analytics Practices in the Workplace • Analytics intentionally used to cause harm

**ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:** David J Corliss, PhD is the Principal Data Scientist at Grafham Analytics and holds an appointment at University of Michigan Institute for Data Science (MIDAS) as a Data and AI in Society Specialist. His work in ethical best practices includes writing a column on Data for Good in Amstat News and serving on the steering committee of the Statistics section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr. Corliss is the founder of Peace-Work, a volunteer cooperative of statisticians, data scientists and other researchers applying analytics in issue-driven advocacy.

## 2024 STAR PROGRAM

The Department of Statistics at Columbia University is offering a **six-week program during Summer Session A (May 20 - June 28, 2024)** for undergraduate students who are aspiring to become future researchers in statistics, data science, or a related field. The goal of the STAR Program is to broaden the pathways into these fields for students who have overcome substantial obstacles on their journey to applying to graduate school and those who have demonstrated a commitment to serving or studying historically underrepresented populations. Through formal courses, skill workshops, networking events, and research seminars, the program aims to provide participants with intensive training in mathematics, probability, statistics, programming, and research skills, along with rich opportunities for professional and personal development. In addition, participants of the STAR Program will receive mentoring from graduate statistics students and interact with the faculty of the Department of Statistics at Columbia University.

\*Students enrolled in local community colleges are strongly encouraged to apply

**For more information  
scan QR code below**



### IMPORTANT DATES:

- APPLICATION OPEN: AFTER FEBRUARY 12, 2024
- FINAL APPLICATION DEADLINE: APRIL 10, 2024
- NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE: AFTER APRIL 1, 2024

\*Completed applications will be reviewed in the order in which they are submitted and completed.

### For the application, you will need:

- Application Form
- A statement of interest (500-word max) addressing:
  - What are your academic interests?
  - How do you envision the STAR Program can benefit you?
  - How can you contribute to the STAR Program?
  - What excites you about the STAR Program?
  - Anything else you would like us to know when considering your application.
- A one-page resume or a one-page CV
- Undergraduate Transcript including Fall 2023 grades
- A copy of result page of most recent FAFSA form

Program participants will receive tuition credit for a 3-credit summer course from the approved list and a \$3,500 stipend. Summer housing is not covered by the program.

# 2024 STAR PROGRAM

## The STAR Program Offers:

- Tuition credit for one six-week summer 3-credit summer course in mathematics, probability, statistics or programming at Columbia University during the Summer Session A (May 20 - June 28, 2024).
  - A list of approved courses will be announced and updated on the STAR website.
  - Note: Statistics courses 4100 or above, if passed successfully, can count towards transfer credits if the STAR Program participant will enroll in the MA in Statistics Program at Columbia in the future.
- One-on-one mentoring, course support, and a math refresher session from graduate student mentors.
- Weekly skill workshops, events, and seminars that focus on programming, academic writing, professional development, communication/presentation, and networking.
- Networking with faculty and graduate student mentors.
- Interaction with participants in other summer undergraduate programs at Columbia.

## Eligibility:

Rising sophomore, rising junior, and rising senior undergraduate students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents are eligible for the 2024 STAR Program. All applicants will be considered on an individual basis for the program, and special considerations will be given to those applicants who:

- will be the first in their family to attend graduate school;
- overcome substantial obstacles on their journey to applying to graduate school;
- have lived or worked in a diverse environment; and/or
- have, through their undergraduate education or work experience, demonstrated the commitment to serving historically underprivileged populations or demonstrated the commitment to the academic study of historically underrepresented populations;
- Minimum overall GPA of 3.65 or above by the end of Fall 2023 semester.

**Special Requirement:** Students accepted to the program will need to comply with Columbia University's Health Safety Protocols. Columbia University's most up-to-date health requirements and protocols can be found in the COVID-19 Resource Guide for the Columbia Community <https://covid19.columbia.edu/>.

The 2024 STAR Program is made possible with support from Columbia University

- [Department of Statistics](#) and
- [GSAS](#) and Faculty of Arts and Sciences Graduate Equity Initiative.

**Collection of Self-Identification Data:** The Department of Statistics at Columbia University is acting on the evidence that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strengthen the scientific communities and the quality, social relevance, and impact of research. Self-identification data provides information on the diversity of the student population applying for and receiving summer program funds. This data is important for monitoring the fairness of our summer program and informing future measures to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion among all those involved in the research enterprise.

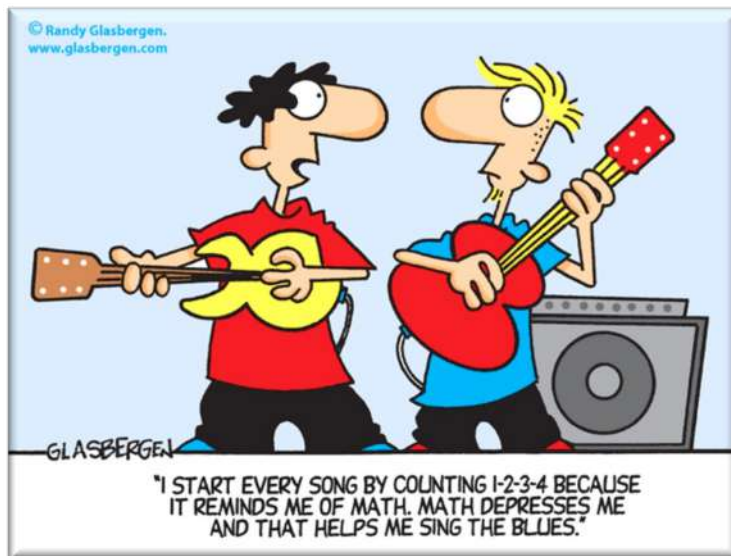
The program will not consider the voluntary check-the-box race/ethnicity self-identification during its selection process.

For more information, visit the program website:  
<https://stat.columbia.edu/summer-training-for-aspiring-researchers-star-program/>  
or email:  
[STAR-Statistics@columbia.edu](mailto:STAR-Statistics@columbia.edu)



# Dr. Normalcurvesaurus, Ph.D. pre- sents

Researchers at Institute of Incomplete Statistics inform that 9 in every 100 people.



A recent study has identified operations with the highest rates of mortality. In the United States it's open heart surgery. In Australia it's liver transplants. In Russia it's opening a window...

