

# E-Tidings Newsletter

## SCASA Events and News

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# SCASA Elections Continued:

## VP for Professional Affairs



**We are pleased to introduce Dr. Arnab Chowdhury, the nominee for Vice President for Professional Affairs, a currently vacant position on the SCASA Officers Board for the 2025-2026 term.**

### About the Nominee

Dr. Chowdhury earned his Ph.D. in Statistics from UC Riverside in 2018 and has since worked as a Statistician at the Beckman Research Institute at City of Hope. His expertise includes designing, monitoring, analyzing, and reporting pre-clinical and clinical studies using reproducible research principles, developing novel statistical methodologies, and staying at the forefront of advancements in the field through professional workshops, conferences, and manuscript reviews.

With a strong background in theoretical and applied statistics, particularly in Biostatistics and statistical computing, Dr. Chowdhury has hands-on experience in study design, statistical analysis planning, data interpretation, protocol review, and report writing. He is adept at critical thinking, effective communication, and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Dr. Chowdhury has been an active member of ASA since 2018 and SCASA since 2019, regularly attending our events. He is also a member of the ASA Orange County/Long Beach Chapter (since 2019), ASA's Biopharmaceutical Section (since 2019), and the Section on Statistical Learning and Data Science (since 2022).

Please take a moment to cast your vote at this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/56HSWFB>



# Report: SCASA Survey Results



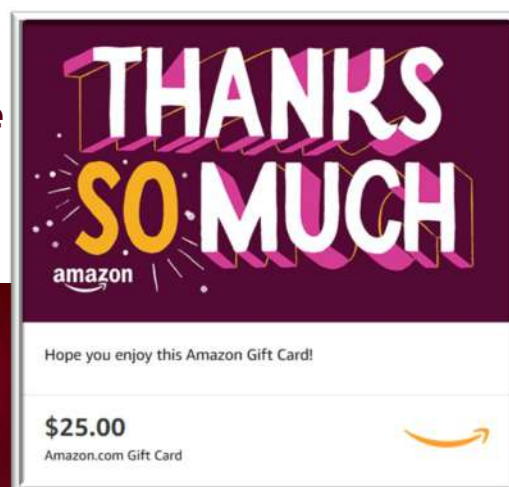
*By Eric Kawaguchi, USC, President-Elect of SCASA*

A huge thank you to all those who filled out our SCASA survey! We received valuable input from a plethora of perspectives (PhD students, junior and senior faculty, industry (bio)statisticians, econometricians, consultants, etc.). In general, it seems like SCASA can do better with visibility and engagement. Some respondents didn't even know about SCASA, and a surprising number didn't attend any events last year! It's unsure as to whether it's due to lack of interest or some other factors like scheduling, although many have also expressed that they'd like to see more workshops, trainings, and in-person network events being offered. A lot of respondents also wanted to see more local job opportunities being advertised. The SCASA officers will do their best to use these results to improve community engagement as we move forward into 2025! Speaking of workshops and in-person networking, we're hosting our first in-person Applied Statistics Workshop since 2020 on April 25th! See Page 7 for more information.

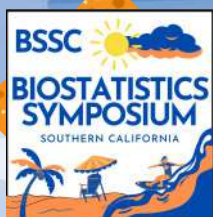
Thank you everyone who responded for contributing to the growth and success of SCASA!

Lastly, *Congratulations* to **Dr. Catherine (Kate) Crespi** for being our raffle winner!

Winner of the \$25 Amazon eGift Card is Kate Crespi, UCLA. Congratulations, Kate!







# Total-Success Event Report: Biostatistics Symposium of Southern California

The **Biostatistics Symposium of Southern California (BSSC)** took place on **February 21–22, 2025**, at the **Renaissance Newport Beach Hotel**, bringing together professionals from academia, industry, and regulatory agencies. The symposium was a resounding success, fostering networking and discussions on advancements in biostatistics and data science under the theme: **“Transforming Life Sciences Through Data Analytics, Innovation, and Collaboration.”**

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

- **Susan Abushakra, Ph.D.** – Chief Medical Officer, Alzheon
- **Joycelynne Palmer, Ph.D.** – Director, Division of Biostatistics, City of Hope National Medical Center
- **Allen Keel, MBA** – Senior Director of Innovation, Edwards Lifesciences
- **Peter Chang, M.D.** – Director, Center for Applied AI Research, University of California, Irvine
- **Ronald L. Wasserstein** – Executive Director, American Statistical Association



## PROGRAM

- Parallel tracks covering **clinical statistics, data science, and academic research**
- A **poster competition** and dedicated **poster session**, featuring **16 posters** from students and postdocs
- A **panel discussion for students**, featuring **four panelists**, addressing key trends and challenges in the **biostatistics profession**

A huge **thank you** to all **SCASA members** who helped organize and participated in this event. We look forward to expanding our presence and making next year’s symposium an even greater success!



**BIOSTATSYMPOSIUM.ORG**

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# REFLECTIONS ON THE INAUGURAL BIOSTATISTICS SYMPOSIUM OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (BSSC)

*By Eric Kawaguchi, USC, President-Elect of SCASA*

The **inaugural Biostatistics Symposium of California (BSSC)** took place on February 21-22 in Newport Beach, bringing together the vibrant biostatistics and data science community across Southern California. Organized in collaboration with the three local ASA chapters (SCASA, OCLB, and SD), the event was nearly a year in the making—my first email about helping out dates back to May 2024!

Having previously helped organize the OC Biostatistics Symposium, the predecessor to the BSSC, I was more than happy to serve as Co-Chair of the Academic Subcommittee. Together with Dr. Esra Kurum (Chair) and our dedicated committee members—Drs. Jessica Jaynes (CSUF), Grace Hyun Kim (UCLA), Weixin Yao (UCR), Zhaoxia Yu (UCI), and Xinlian Zhang (UCSD)—we curated three academic research sessions covering a diverse range of topics:

- Challenges in clinical and translational research
- Advanced statistical methods and data integration
- Recent developments in genomic, neuroimaging, and wearable device data

Each day kicked off with insightful keynote sessions. I was particularly captivated by the presentations from Susan Abushakra and Will Rote. Susan delved into the challenges and breakthroughs in Alzheimer's disease research/drug development, while Will provided a fascinating history of GLP-1 agonists. Though drugs like Ozempic might seem like overnight successes, Will's talk underscored how scientific advancements are often the result of decades of rigorous research.



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# REFLECTIONS ON THE INAUGURAL BIOSTATISTICS SYMPOSIUM OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (BSSC)

By Eric Kawaguchi, USC, President-Elect of SCASA

*Continued from the previous page.*

The conference concluded with a thought-provoking keynote by **Ronald Wasserstein, Executive Director of the ASA (pictured here)**, who discussed moving beyond a “ $p < 0.05$ ” world, inspired by his 2019 article in *The American Statistician*. One quote he shared, from Steven N. Goodman, particularly resonated with me: “It’s the same reason we can use money. When everyone believes in something’s value, we can use it for real things; money for food, and  $p$ -values for knowledge claims, publication, funding, and promotion.



It doesn’t matter if the  $p$ -value doesn’t mean what people think it means; it becomes valuable because of what it buys.”

The poster session, expertly organized by Olga Korosteleva, highlighted outstanding research from students across Southern California, showcasing the talents of the next generation of biostatisticians and data scientists. Beyond the sessions and talks, it was great catching up with old friends/colleagues.



A huge thank you to **Larry Shen, Lindsay Younis, and Gajanan Bhat (pictured right to left)**, and the entire BSSC board and committee members for their hard work in making this event a reality. I’d also like to extend my gratitude to the Renaissance Newport Beach Hotel for their excellent hospitality and, of course, the fantastic meals and snacks! Most importantly, thank you to all the speakers and attendees—this event wouldn’t have been possible without you.

I’m excited to add BSSC to my list of annual conferences, and I look forward to seeing everyone again next year!

# Mark Your Calendars! Friday, April 25, 9am-4pm, @ City of Hope SCASA's 44th Annual Applied Statistics Workshop

Join us for our 44th annual Applied Statistics Workshop hosted by the Southern California Chapter of the ASA! This year's topic is on "The Statistical Analysis of Composite Time-to-Event Outcomes: Win Ratio and Beyond" taught by Dr. Lu Mao, an associate professor in the Department of Biostatistics and Medical Informatics at UW Madison. This will be our first in-person ASW since 2019 and are thankful to the City of Hope for generously hosting this event.

**DATE AND TIME:** Friday, April 25 · 9am - 4pm PDT

**LOCATION:** Platt Conference Center, Cooper Auditorium, at City of Hope, 1500 East Duarte Road Duarte, CA 91010

**REGISTRATION FEE:** (Early bird until April 18 / General) ♦ Student (Undergraduate, Graduate, Post-doc): \$25/\$30 ♦ SCASA Member (SCASA/OCLEB/SDASA): \$50/\$60 ♦ Non-SCASA Member: \$60/70 ♦ Light breakfast and lunch to be provided for those who register by April 21st

**EVENTBRITE REGISTRATION LINK:** click [here](#) or scan the QR code

**LUNCH PREFERENCES:** can be specified during registration

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:** 9:00-9:30am - Registration

9:30am-10:30am – Introduction

10:30am - 10:45am - Break

10:45am-11:45am – Hypothesis testing

11:45am-1:00pm – Lunch + a 15-minute presentation by the first place winner in our Regional Data Visualization Poster Competition

1:00pm – 2:00pm – Nonparametric Estimation

2:00pm - 2:15pm - Break

2:15pm – 3:15pm – Semiparametric Proportional Regression & Miscellaneous Topics

3:15pm-3:45pm – Q & A + our traditional book raffle



**ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:** Professor Lu Mao is an associate professor in the Department of Biostatistics and Medical Informatics at University of Wisconsin (UW) - Madison. He joined the department as an assistant professor after obtaining his doctoral degree in Biostatistics from UNC Chapel Hill in 2016 under Dr. Danyu Lin. His research interests include survival analysis (particularly composite outcomes), causal inference, semiparametric theory, and clinical trials. He is currently the PI of an NIH R01 grant on statistical methodology for composite time-to-event outcomes in cardiovascular trials and an NSF grant on causal inference in randomized trials with noncompliance. Besides methodological studies, he also collaborates with medical researchers in cardiology, radiology, cancer, and health behavioral interventions, where time-to-event and longitudinal data are routinely collected and analyzed. He has taught several short courses on statistical methods for composite outcomes to general audiences, including a recent one at the 2024 Joint Statistical Meeting (JSM) in Portland, OR.



For questions email the event organizer Eric Kawaguchi at [ekawaguc\[at\]usc.edu](mailto:ekawaguc[at]usc.edu).

# Mark Your Calendars! ASA Traveling Course!

## Two half-days: Friday, September 19, online & Saturday, September 20, in person

SCASA is super thrilled to announce that this year we have been awarded an ASA traveling course instructed by no one else but our own immediate past president Dr. Anna Yu Lee, a founder and owner of Concierge Mental Health & Associates.

**DATES:** Friday, 9/19/2025, online & Saturday, 9/20, 2025, in person

**TITLE:** Statistical Therapy & Consulting: Combining Traditional and Quantitative Approaches to Provide Emotional Support in Educational & Mental Health Settings

**ABSTRACT:** This seminar explores Statistical Therapy Consulting (STC), and Statistical Therapy (ST) as novel approaches to supporting existent forms of evidence-informed mental health care. The workshop begins with an overview of distinctions and similarities between psychotherapy, ST, and STC. Included is research that underscores the development of ST and STC, interactive exercises, and opportunities for group discussion. Highlighted are various applications of STC for the treatment and prevention of common mental, emotional, and relational concerns including stress, cognitive distortion, anxiety, depression, fear, and burnout. Some of the statistical tools applications include probabilistic thinking, distribution analysis, bayesian inference, algorithmic decision-making, and data categorization analysis. Controversial and exploratory techniques such as, 'Statistics Masochistics,' are also discussed, with the focus being on integrity, transparency, ethics, and cultural diversity/respect as fundamental and integral within the delivery of all mental health services.

**Bio:** Dr. Anna Yu Lee holds multiple roles as Immediate Past President of the SoCal Ch. of the American Statistical Association, Adj. Professor in the School of Community & Global Health at Claremont Graduate University, and founder and senior consultant at Concierge Mental Health & Associates (CMHA). Her education and clinical training spans the fields of multicultural psychology, public health, and biostatistics, and her professional backgrounds are in counseling, residential care management, health promotion science, journalism, undergraduate/graduate instruction, and marketing. In her private practice, Dr. Yu Lee operates as a consultant, not a psychotherapist. Dr. Yu Lee's publications have appeared in journals of public health, social and behavioral health, and statistical education. She has presented to academic, clinical, and industry audiences in multiple countries in North America, Western Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East, and has taught in the Marriage & Family Therapy program in the USC Rossier School of Education, in Azusa Pacific University's MS in Biostatistics program, and UG Dept. of Mathematics, Physics, and Statistics, UG Dept. of Psychology, in addition to the UG Dept. of Psychology at Cal Poly Pomona.





# SCASA Leadership Legacy Corner



## From the list of Past Presidents of SCASA:

**1994-1996 Jay Devore, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo**

**1985-1986 Jay Devore, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo**

Dr. Jay Devore, Professor Emeritus, is depicted here with some of the books that he wrote showing in the background. Jay is happily retired after a BS in Engineering Science from Berkeley, a PhD in Statistics from Stanford, teaching full-time at the University of Florida, Oberlin College, and Cal Poly SLO (the latter for 34 years, including 7 as department chair), teaching part time at Stanford, Harvard, University of Washington, NYU, and Columbia, winning Cal Poly's Distinguished Teaching Award, writing multiple editions of seven books for Brooks/Cole, Thomson, Cengage, Springer, and Wiley, being an Associate Editor of both Journal of the American Statistical Association (JASA) and The American Statistician (TAS), and being elected an American Statistical Association Fellow in 1995.

**Qs: How long have you been involved with SCASA, and in what capacity (besides the presidency)? Were there any particularly memorable events you helped organize or participated in during your time with SCASA?**

I had significant involvement with the SCASA chapter for a period of perhaps 20 years, stretching from perhaps 1982 or so to 2002. I worked extensively with Bob Newcomb on a variety of events and initiatives. Details are fuzzy at this point, but I especially remember organizing the Statistics Career Day at the City of Hope for several years. I also enjoyed seeing friends and listening to guest speakers at the fall and spring meetings. I especially remember David Moore's visit.



The "SCASA Leadership Legacy Corner" as part of our celebration of the 100th anniversary of our chapter. This special feature highlights the incredible contributions of our past presidents and active members, honoring their dedication and leadership that have shaped SCASA's rich history. This year, each issue spotlights additional past SCASA leader, providing insights into their achievements and the lasting impact they have had on our organization and the broader statistical community. We invite you to join us on this journey through SCASA's legacy.

A complete list of SCASA's past presidents is available for viewing here:

<https://community.amstat.org/scasa/about-us/new-item>

Keck School of Medicine of USC  
Department of Population and Public Health Sciences



# LA's BeST @USC

LA's **Biostatistics & Data Science Summer Training**  
Program at the University of Southern California



**Attention all mathematics, statistics, and science students seeking a summer opportunity!**

## What is LA's BeST @USC?

A six-week program to give students in math and science the opportunity to:

- ✓ do quantitative research in population health and medicine
- ✓ learn about careers in public health from biostatisticians, epidemiologists, data scientists and other population health experts
- ✓ get professional development training in presentation skills, the graduate school application process, and more

**Tentative dates: JUNE 16 - JULY 25, 2025\***

### APPLICATION PERIOD:

Dec. 2, 2024 - Mar 14, 2025

Offers will be made on a rolling basis.

### Eligibility:

U.S. citizen or permanent resident  
Completed at least 2 years of undergraduate study

## What sets us apart:

- ✓ Earn College Credits
- ✓ No tuition or fees, \$3K Stipend
- ✓ Housing & Transportation covered
- ✓ Networking & Mentorship Opportunities
- ✓ Extracurricular Activities

**Learn** health data analysis, epidemiology, clinical trials, statistical genetics and spatial statistics for geographical modeling

**Train** using R, a widely used software in research

**Immerse** in data from groundbreaking public health research studies such as the Southern California Children's Health Study

**We seek a diverse group of students interested in solving complex health issues**



**\*For more information and to apply, visit:**

**LASBEST.USC.EDU**

or contact Nicole Avila, LA's BeST Coordinator at [nreyes@usc.edu](mailto:nreyes@usc.edu)







# 2025 SCASA REGIONAL DATA VISUALIZATION POSTER COMPETITION FOR GRADES 10-12

**PHOTO/IMAGE OF PHYSICAL POSTER OR PDF  
FILE WITH A SINGLE-SLIDE DIGITAL POSTER  
IS DUE BY **FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2025****

For more information on the competition rules, go to  
**<https://community.amstat.org/scasa/postercomp>**

Everyone will receive a certificate of participation.

Winners will be notified by April 1, 2025.

The top five winning teams will receive cash prizes,  
and the judges will submit the winning posters to  
the national level of the competition.

## Cash Prizes:

<b>First Place:</b>	<b>\$200</b>
<b>Second Place:</b>	<b>\$150</b>
<b>Third Place:</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Fourth Place:</b>	<b>\$50</b>
<b>Fifth Place:</b>	<b>\$50</b>

The first-place winning team will be invited to present during  
lunch at the virtual Applied Statistics Workshop in April 2025.

If you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Le at  
**[becky\\_le@yahoo.com](mailto:becky_le@yahoo.com)**



## ASA DataFest at UCLA 2025

ASA DataFest at UCLA 2025 is set to take place on **April 25–27, 2025**, at the Ackerman Grand Ballroom! This exciting 48-hour data competition for undergraduate students brings together the Southern California statistics and data science community, offering a unique opportunity to analyze a large, complex dataset. Each year, the event attracts hundreds of participants, mentors, and judges, fostering collaboration and innovation.

We are actively seeking **mentors**, **sponsors**, and **judges** to support this year's event. Mentors can join either in person or virtually—sign up here:

<https://forms.gle/C5dBJ2cqJju3HGN9>

Sponsors can contribute financially or donate items like pens, USB drives, notepads, or water bottles to enhance the event. For more information on sponsorship opportunities, visit

<http://datafest.stat.ucla.edu/support-datafest/giving/>

If you're interested in judging or have any questions, contact **Dr. Linda Zanontian** at [linda@stat.ucla.edu](mailto:linda@stat.ucla.edu). Let's make this year's DataFest the best one yet!



# Working with Clinical Trial Data? There's a Pharmaverse Package for That



Pharmaverse Blog By Sunil Gupta

Working with clinical trial data is no small task. It needs to be precise, compliant, and efficient. Traditionally, this meant using proprietary tools and working within siloed systems, which often made the process more complicated and expensive than necessary. But we think there's a better way.

The **pharmaverse** is an open-source ecosystem of R packages built specifically for clinical trials. These tools integrate seamlessly with the **Tidyverse**, making data management more flexible, efficient, and transparent.

## Table of contents

Key Stages of Clinical Reporting

Example: Creating ADSL

Who Are the Key Players in Pharmaverse, and Do You Need to Use All Packages?

How Pharmaverse Differs from Tidyverse & How to Learn It Effectively

Getting Started with the Pharmaverse

Resources

Whether you're collecting, validating, analyzing, or preparing data for regulatory submission, there's a **pharmaverse package** designed to support your workflow and help you work smarter.

## This post covers:

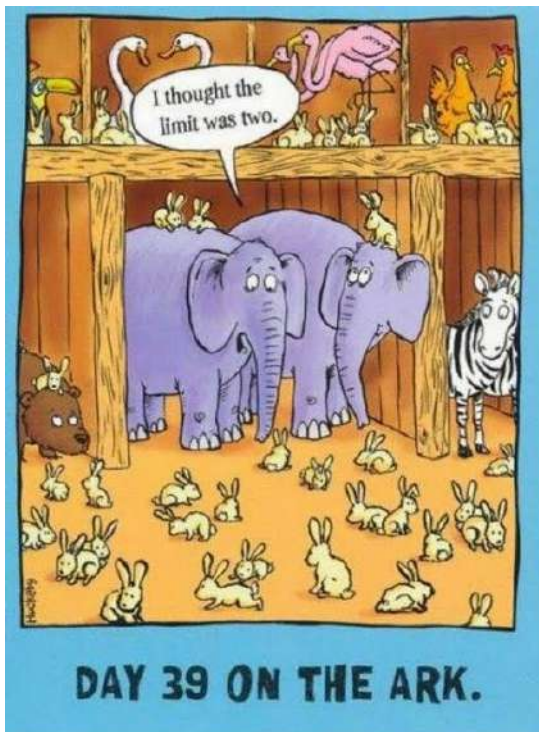
- Key stages of clinical trials and the R packages that support them
- Creating **ADSL datasets** and essential programming steps
- Key players in **pharmaverse** and whether you need all packages
- How **pharmaverse** compares to Tidyverse and how to learn it

By the end, you'll have a clear understanding of how **pharmaverse supports clinical trial operations**

and how to apply these tools in your work.

<https://pharmaverse.github.io/blog/posts/2025-02-28-theres-a-pharmaverse-package-for-that/managing-clinical-trial-data.html>

# Dr. Normalcurvesaurus, Ph.D. presents



"The kids don't listen, so I have to repeat myself. I'm always repeating myself. You know, always saying the same thing more than once. I say it once, and then they make me say it again..."

