

E-Tidings Newsletter

SCASA Events and News



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In This Issue

- PAGE 2** **A Heartfelt Note of Thanks**
- PAGE 3** **OC/LBASA Duck Club meeting**
- PAGES 4-6** **ASA Traveling Course**
- PAGE 7** **ASA District 6 Career Panel**
- PAGE 8** **National ASA Awards and Honors Received by District 6 Members**
- PAGE 9** **Upcoming ASA-organized Events**
- PAGE 10** **Dr. Normalcurvesaurus, Ph.D. Presents**





A Heartfelt Note of Thanks

by Olga Korosteleva

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for honoring me with the 2026 Southern California Chapter Outstanding Service Award. I am deeply touched and truly grateful for this recognition.

It has been a privilege and a joy to serve our Southern California Chapter of the American Statistical Association over the years, as president and event coordinator, and currently as treasurer, webmaster, and editor of our eNewsletter. I genuinely love this work and the wonderful community it has allowed me to support.

This award belongs in many ways to all the colleagues, volunteers, and friends who have worked alongside me, trusted me, inspired me, and made every initiative possible. Your generosity, enthusiasm, and friendship have meant more to me than I can express.

Although I have worn many hats, I certainly do not wish to monopolize any of them! I warmly welcome new people, fresh ideas, and the rotation of leadership. I am always happy to mentor others, share what I have learned, and help prepare the next generation of chapter leaders.

Thank you for this beautiful honor and for recognizing not only my service, but also the strength, authenticity, kindness, and passion that I have always tried to bring to our work. I will treasure this award and all the memories and friendships behind it for many years to come.



ASA[®] Orange County/Long Beach Chapter

Mini-Symposium: *Rethinking Clinical Research Methodology in a Complex, Evolving Data and Decision-Making Environment*

Thursday, September 24, 2026, 10AM-1PM, in person, at The Duck Club

By Gajanan Bhat, PhD
Chair, Section on Biopharmaceutical Statistics, OCLBASA
Senior Vice President, Clinical Science, Spectrum Pharmaceuticals

This is an in-person mini-symposium with two keynote talks. First one focuses on efficient estimation and inference of causal contrasts in the presence of missing-not-at-random outcomes via double-sampling.

Second topic goes in depth of how AI agents begin changing how teams evaluate evidence, simulate trial scenarios, and support complex decision making, and how statisticians will play a critical role in ensuring that innovation remains rigorous, transparent, and clinically meaningful.

Speakers:

- **Sebastien Haneuse PhD, Professor and Chair of Statistics, UCI**
 - o Title: Efficient estimation and inference of causal contrasts in the presence of missing-not-at-random outcomes via double-sampling
- **Yuan Ji, Professor of Biostatistics, University of Chicago; Co-founder Bayesoft, Inc.**
 - o Title: Clinical Trial Design in the Agentic Age

Date: Th., September 24, 2026

Time: 10 AM – 1:00 PM

Venue: Duck Club, 15 Riparian

View, Irvine, CA 92612

Registration: Free to OCLBASA

members; Membership can be signed up on-site



Join us for an informative program, thoughtful discussion, and an opportunity to connect with colleagues across the Southern California statistics community!



The Traveling Course

Sat., October 24, 2026

DAY/TIME: Saturday, October 24, 2026, 9AM-1PM (PDT)

PRESENTATION MODE: Online

COURSE TITLE: Tree-Based Machine Learning Methods for Prediction and Variable Selection

INSTRUCTORS: Drs. Hemant Ishwaran and Min Lu, University of Miami

REGISTRATION SITE: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1998996166345?aff=oddtcreator>

ZOOM LINK: Will be emailed to registered participants

REGISTRATION FEES:

- SCASA members:
 - \$10 student/retiree
 - \$25 general
- Non-SCASA-members:
 - \$28.52 students
 - \$55.20 academic participants
 - \$81.88 non-academic participants

The same course will be offered by:

- ♦ The San Francisco Bay Area Chapter on September 26: [Registration page](#)
- ♦ The Missouri Chapter on October 3: [Registration page](#)

More details are on the next two pages.

Tree-Based Machine Learning Methods

Prediction, Inference, and Variable Selection
with the randomForestSRC Ecosystem

Half Day

4 Hours

Virtual Only

COURSE OVERVIEW

This half-day virtual workshop gives a practical, code-centered introduction to tree-based machine learning methods using R. Tree-based methods are useful for nonlinear signals, mixed data types, robustness, and scalable prediction. The workshop focuses on random forest ensembles and centers on the R-package randomForestSRC, which implements random forests for regression, classification, and survival. Topics include out-of-bag inference, test-data prediction, and variable selection using permutation VIMP, minimal depth, and rule-based variable priority with varPro. Advanced topics cover class imbalance, imputation and test time OOD, random hazard forests (RHF), and super greedy trees (SGT). Related packages in the randomForestSRC ecosystem will also be discussed.

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

1 Training

- Regression, classification, survival
- Examples and R code
- Worked interpretations

2 Inference and Prediction

- Out-of-bag inference
- Test-data prediction
- Restore mode and partial plots

3 Variable Selection

- Permutation VIMP
- Minimal depth
- Variable priority with varPro

4 Advanced Topics

- Class imbalance
- Imputation and test time OOD
- Random Hazard Forests
- Super Greedy Trees

SOFTWARE ECOSYSTEM



[randomForestSRC](#)

Unified forests for regression, classification, survival, and competing risks.



[varPro](#)

Rule-based variable priority for model-independent variable selection.



[randomForestRHF \(RHF\)](#)

Random hazard forests for time-varying covariates in survival analysis.



[randomForestSGT \(SGT\)](#)

Super greedy trees and flexible split geometry.

Designed for applied statisticians and data scientists who want hands-on R workflows for prediction, inference, and variable selection.

Instructors

Workshop leaders for Tree-Based Machine Learning Methods



Hemant Ishwaran

Professor of Public Health Sciences
Graduate Program Director; Director of Statistical Methodology
Division of Biostatistics, University of Miami

Hemant Ishwaran develops machine learning methods for complex biomedical and time-to-event data and turns them into practical open-source tools for investigators. He created Random Survival Forests and the R package randomForestSRC. His work has been applied in cardiovascular disease, heart transplantation, cancer, and genomics.

 <https://ishwaran.org>



Min Lu

Research Associate Professor
Division of Biostatistics, University of Miami

Min Lu works on random forests and trees, causal inference, variable selection, infectious disease modeling, statistical genomics, and meta-analysis. She develops methods and software in the randomForestSRC and varPro ecosystem and collaborates on practical applications in medicine and public health.

 luminwin.net

Workshop software ecosystem



randomForestSRC



varPro



RHF



SGT

randomForestSRC • varPro • randomForestRHF (RHF) • randomForestSGT (SGT)

American Statistical Association (ASA) District 6

WESTERN STATES STATISTICS CAREER PANEL

FOR UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE STUDENTS & ANYONE CURIOUS ABOUT STATISTICS CAREERS



FRIDAY • NOVEMBER 13, 2026

90 MINUTES

ONE PANEL DISCUSSION ACROSS FOUR TIME ZONES • START TIMES:

8:00 AM	=	10:00 AM	=	11:00 AM	=	12:00 PM
HAWAII STANDARD TIME		ALASKA DAYLIGHT TIME		PACIFIC DAYLIGHT TIME		MOUNTAIN DAYLIGHT TIME

MEET THE PANELISTS

- ALISON PEOPLES**
Argonne National Laboratory • Albuquerque, NM

Economic Resilience Analytics Team Lead
- ARNAB CHOWDHURY**
City of Hope • Duarte, CA

Staff Scientist
- LESLIE GAINS-GERMAIN**
Neptune and Company, Inc. • Santa Fe, NM

Lead Environmental Statistician
- MIRIAM ALVAREZ-PINTOR**
The Boeing Company • Seattle, WA

Lead Engineering Data Scientist
- RANDY PETERSON**
Alaska Department of Fish and Game • Juneau, AK

Biometrician / Statistician
- XIAOLONG (RON) YU**
Gilead Sciences • Foster City, CA

Executive Director, Biostatistics

PANEL MODERATOR

OLGA KOROSTELEVA

Vice Chair for ASA District 6

WHAT TO EXPECT

Real career stories, day-to-day work, standout projects, and live audience Q&A.

JOIN ON ZOOM

csulb.zoom.us/j/84873124384



National ASA Awards and Honors Received by District 6 Members



*Fifteen chapters across eleven states.
We practice Statistics. It captivates.*

Congratulations to the District 6 members recognized by the American Statistical Association in 2026!

NATIONAL ASA AWARDS

- **Dave Osthus**, Los Alamos National Laboratory — Bob Riffenburgh Award
- **Amy Braverman**, California Institute of Technology — Karl E. Peace Award for Outstanding Statistical Contributions for the Betterment of Society
- **Alana Unfried**, California State University, Monterey Bay — Early Career Education Award

NEWLY ELECTED ASA FELLOWS

- **Andrea J. Cook**, Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute
- **Judy X. Li**, AstraZeneca
- **Jingyi Jessica Li**, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center
- **Miguel Marino**, Oregon Health & Science University
- **Volodymyr Minin**, University of California, Irvine
- **Herbert Pang**, Genentech/Roche
- **Jeffrey R. Wilson**, Arizona State University
- **Yingqi Zhao**, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center

OUTSTANDING CHAPTER SERVICE AWARDS

- **Robert Buscaglia**, Arizona Chapter
- **Min Li**, Sacramento Chapter
- **Yiran Jia**, San Diego Chapter
- **Olga Korosteleva**, Southern California Chapter
- **Debra Stiver**, Nevada Chapter
- **Theresa Utlaut**, Oregon Chapter

Warmest congratulations to all the honorees! Their achievements and service bring great distinction to District 6 and strengthen the statistical community. Hip, hip, hooray!

[Read more about the District 6 honorees.](#) For recipients from across the nation, see the [2026 ASA Awards Book](#).



Upcoming ASA-organized Events

Women in Statistics and Data Science

The American Statistical Association's 2026 Women in Statistics and Data Science Conference will take place **October 28–30 in Cincinnati, Ohio**. The conference brings together students and professionals from academia, industry, and government to celebrate women's achievements and support their advancement in statistics and data science. Designed for participants at every career stage, the program features technical presentations, panel discussions, career-development activities, mentoring, and networking opportunities.



Attendees can gain new knowledge, establish multidisciplinary collaborations, strengthen leadership and communication skills, and build meaningful professional connections. Two optional short courses: **"Finding Your Voice: How to Be an Effective Statistical Communicator"** and **"Applied SQL for Data Analysis"** will be offered on October 28. Registration-fee scholarships are available to eligible students and early-career professionals. [Learn more and register](#).

Symposium on Data Science & Statistics

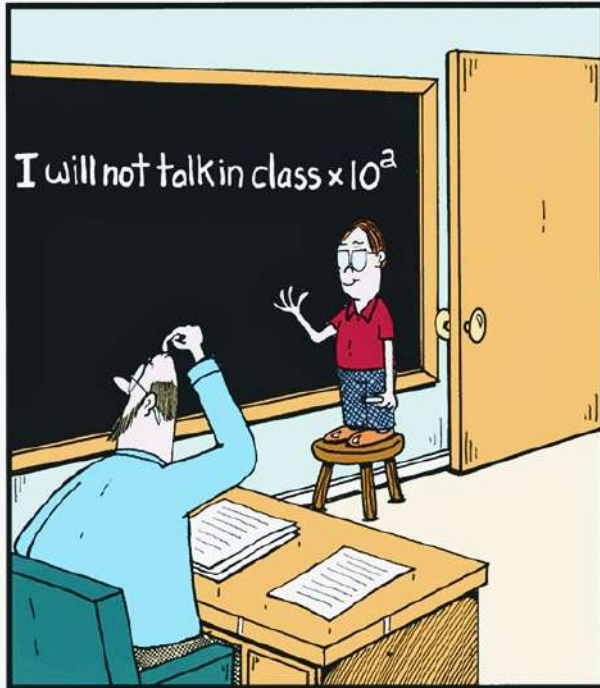
The American Statistical Association's Symposium on Data Science and Statistics (SDSS) brings together statisticians, data scientists, and computer scientists from academia, industry, and government to exchange ideas and explore emerging developments. The program offers opportunities to learn about innovative methodology, computational tools, applications, and best practices through technical presentations, invited sessions, lightning talks, and professional-development activities.



The ninth annual symposium was held in Milwaukee in 2026. The next SDSS will take place **April 27–29, 2027**, at the Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel at Station Square in **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**. Refereed abstract submissions will be accepted **October 15–November 30, 2026**, fol-

lowed by lightning abstract submissions **January 7–February 5, 2027**. Registration and housing will open January 7. [Learn more](#).

DR. NORMALCURVESAURUS, PH.D., PRESENTS



Alan had certainly learned a lesson, but his math teacher wasn't sure whether it was the right one.

