



SILVER STATE-ISTICS

NEVADA Chapter of American Statistical Association



Nevada Chapter News Letter

Vol. 1 No. 1

We are pleased to send you the first NV-ASA newsletter.

♣ We hope you find it informative and helpful ♣

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Upcoming Events:

- Northern Nevada Mixer – Friday, Apr. 30
- Southern Nevada Dinner Speaker – Tuesday, May 4
- Annual Meeting – Saturday, Oct. 23 – Las Vegas

📅 Please mark on your calendar 📅

Our First Two Years

By Past-President Sandra Catlin

Prior to 2002, Nevada was one of only six states without a chapter of the ASA. In September, 2001, Monica Solis, a graduate student in the Department of Mathematical Sciences at UNLV, and I sent letters to all current ASA members in the state of Nevada, asking of their interest in starting a new Nevada Chapter. We received an overwhelmingly positive response, and in November, organizational meetings were held in Reno and Las Vegas.

The NVASA was approved as the ASA's 79th Chapter by the Council of Chapters Governing Board in January, 2002. Our first official event was the Spring Kick-Off Celebration in May, 2002, in Las Vegas. This was followed by our First Annual Meeting and Career Day (including a student poster competition) and the Teaching Symposium: Active Learning of Basic

Statistics in October, 2002. June Morita (U. Washington) and Richard Scheaffer (U. Florida) were our invited speakers at both events. They also visited Durango High School to speak at an assembly of A.P. Statistics students about the importance and usefulness of statistics. Reports and pictures can be found at <http://www.nevada.edu/~nvasa/symposium2002.html> and <http://www.nevada.edu/~nvasa/career2002.html> (or in the June, 2003, AmStat News). An ASA Career Day Grant in the amount of \$500, ASA sponsorship of Dick Scheaffer's visit, and generous support by the UNLV Department of Mathematical Sciences made these events possible.

In 2003, we started the year by receiving the Council of Chapters Traveling Course. This enabled Luis Escobar to come to Las Vegas to give the short course, "Statistical Methods for Reliability Data", which was held in April. In early October, the ASA sponsored a pizza party and visit to Las Vegas by the Western District Vice-Chair, Mark Reiser (Arizona State), who spoke on, "Testing an Intervening Variable in Logistic Regression: Analysis of Ratings from Multiple Reporters". Later in October, the ASA sponsored a visit by Sallie Keller-McNulty (Los Alamos National Laboratories) to Reno, where she gave two talks, "Information Integration Technology Challenges in Defense Applications" at a dinner at Famous Murphy's, and "From Policy to ANOVA: Scientific Excellence Will Prevail" at the NVASA Chapter's Second Annual Meeting and Career Day. These events were also funded by the Center for Research Design and Statistical Methods at the UNR.

I have enjoyed my term as President, but I am also happy to pass the torch to Debra Stiver, who has the commitment, vision, and drive to take the Chapter to a new level. My deepest thanks goes out to the fantastic team of officers on the Executive Committee during 2002-2003: Suzanne Perumean-Chaney (Vice-President), Paul Nakayu (Treasurer), Dorothy Wilson (Secretary), and Hokwon Cho (Chapter Representative) as well as our entire membership base, which has been incredibly helpful and supportive. Without you all, the NVASA would not have been possible. ♦

Our Next Two Years

By President Debra Stiver

Greetings to all Nevada members! On behalf of the entire Nevada chapter, I would like to congratulate and thank Sandra Catlin for her service as the chapter's first president. The development of a new chapter takes a great deal of effort. She and the executive board are to be commended for making our Nevada chapter a reality. Sandra has presided over several events, including guest speakers, student events for all levels (K-12, undergraduate and graduate), and statistical development courses. I would also like to thank Suzanne Perumean-Chaney, Nevada ASA Vice-President who spear-headed the efforts in the north. Suzanne is leaving Nevada to pursue career goals. We will miss her in the north and are grateful for her efforts.

Goals for This Year:

My primary goal for this first year is to increase membership and awareness of the Nevada chapter, both for professional members and students. The Las Vegas area so far has produced the largest membership numbers and activity. I would like to see a greater presence in the rural counties and the Reno-Carson City-Tahoe area. Your northern Vice-President, Alicia Hansen and I are planning a spring mixer to be held on April 30th. We hope to bring together current members, non-member professionals, college students from both UNR and the community colleges, and AP high school students and their mentors. Look for the announcement giving specific details in you emails soon.

Poster Competition and Speaker in the South:

We are very pleased to announce the first Nevada Statistics Poster Competition for K-12 students in the state. The competition organizers were pleasantly surprised with the overwhelming response by students throughout the state and their interest in statistical uses and methodology. The success of the competition is largely due to the efforts of NV ASA member David Thiel, who spear-headed the entire contest. Thanks David for a job well-done! This competition will be an annual event and next year, due to the response, we expect to see two venues, one in the north and south. Nevada ASA members are sponsoring this contest in conjunction with the Nevada Mathematics Council.

Speaking of Sponsors

You should have received a letter in early February asking for your support for the Poster Competition. We thank all the individuals who have donated their time and effort so far, but it's never too late to send in a donation to sponsor this worthwhile outreach activity. David Thiel will be submitting both pictures and the story of the final results of the state-wide competition. The winners will be competing nationally. Let's show our support for the education of Nevada's youth!

Coming Attractions

We've already made plans for the next annual meeting which will be held in Las Vegas on October 23. The speaker for the event will be Robert Mason from the National ASA organization. Plans are in the works to possibly co-meet with SPSS Directions, the SPSS User Conference. This would give attendees a double bang-for-the buck opportunity! The third Annual Career Day will be held during spring 2005 in Las Vegas. This event keeps growing and we hope to see you there.

Do You Have a Newsworthy Event We Need to Know About?

If you have any suggestions for improving the Nevada chapter, sponsoring or holding events, or other information, please do not hesitate to contact me at stiver@unr.edu or 775-784-1124. We'd like to start a "kudos" to our members section in our newsletters and let everyone know of members' accomplishments. Examples include a newly published paper, conference speech, promotions etc. (or just some good old interesting announcements). Send them in and help us grow our chapter!

Sincerely,
Deb Stiver

Nevada Statistics Poster Competition

By David Thiel

On March 20, 2004, judging will take place for NV-ASA's first Nevada Statistics Poster Competition. The Education Committee, in conjunction with the Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program, Nevada Mathematics Council, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, and University of Nevada-Reno, has sponsored this contest as a means of outreach to K-12 teachers and their students. The state competition is a preliminary event to the national ASA Poster Competition and mirrors those done by local chapters in Northeast Ohio, Michigan, and Pennsylvania.

Cash prizes will be awarded directly to the students creating winning posters. As of this time, about \$400 has been raised through donations from NV-ASA members and a generous contribution of \$300 from Nevada Mathematics Council, a professional organization of mathematics teachers affiliated with the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Winning posters will be forwarded to the national ASA Poster Competition in April. Photos of the winning posters will be posted on the NV-ASA website.

Student posters are submitted in one of four grade categories: K-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12. Students may work individually or in small groups, and their posters may display original data or data collected from

other sources. Most posters received this year were results of student-conducted surveys.

Judging will be done by a collection of elementary, middle, and high school teachers, university professors, and professional statisticians. These judges will be evaluating 166 posters produced by nearly 400 students from 25 Nevada schools. Over one-half of the posters are in the 4–6 grade category, including 35 from Lied Middle School and 30 from Tomiyasu Elementary School, both in Las Vegas. The largest participant from northern Nevada was Our Lady of the Snows School in Reno with 14 posters. ♥

Second Annual Career Day

By Alicia Chancellor Hansen, Suzanne Perumean-Chaney, Paul Nakayu, Sandra Catlin
(Published in AmStat News, February 2004)

The Nevada Chapter of the American Statistical Association's 2nd Annual Career Day was held Saturday, October 18, 2003 at the University of Nevada, Reno. The day of networking and career opportunity discussions in statistics began at the welcome table. Paul Nakayu, Chapter Treasurer, handed out name badges, schedules and evaluation forms to the 35 attendees, including 17 new chapter members and one new ASA member. Student attendees received copies of the ASA Career Kit paid for with ASA Career Day Grant funds. Individual copies of the ASA Careers in statistics brochures were available to other attendees, along with information on ASA membership. Also on display were recent copies of ASA journals and other publications, including Chance magazine and AMSTAT News. A continental breakfast provided by the University of Nevada, Reno Department of Economics was beautifully set up by Debra Stiver, Lecturer at the University of Nevada, Reno. Dr. Suzanne Perumean-Chaney, Chapter Vice-President kicked off the day's events which featured a keynote speaker and Career Day Panel.

Following the rousing welcome, the keynote speaker took the stage. Dr. Sallie Keller Mc-Nulty is Group Leader for the Statistical Sciences Group at Los Alamos National Laboratories. She presented on the topic "Information Integration Technology Challenges in Defense Applications." Her team tackles problems of evaluating the "performance, reliability and safety" of complex weapons systems and other one-of-a-kind systems that cannot be fully tested. Information of all types, from many different sources, must be combined to provide the tools needed for policy and decision making. New methodology is required to address these complex problems. Collaborative teams have been developing Information Integration Technology (IIT), utilizing Bayesian statistics and diverse data sources to address the challenges of defining mission success, uncertainty

quantification, incomplete data and model development for the decision making process.

Following Dr. Keller McNulty's fascinating talk, the audience returned to the foyer to enjoy the student poster session and exhibitors booths. SAS, SPSS, Minitab, Duxbury, the Department of Mathematical Sciences at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Nevada, Reno & the Department of Economics at the University of Nevada, Reno were all represented. The Department of Economics featured a quiz regarding basic statistics with a prize of a University of Nevada, Reno Economics t-shirt. All the vendors had clever gifts for attendees.

Lunch was sponsored by the ASA Career Day Grant. A networking luncheon featured ongoing discussions in small side rooms on different statistical topics and career options, with experts in those fields on hand to moderate the discussions. This provided more intimate settings for students to network and have their questions answered. The Biostatistics & Government area was chaired by Dr. Wei Yang, Career Day Panel Speaker and Dr. Gary Cutter. The Business Area was headed up by Dorothy Wilson, Chapter Secretary. Academia was chaired by Dr. Inmaculada Aban and included Dr. Anna Panorska, Career Day Panel Speaker, Dr. J. Scott Shonkwiler and Dr. George Fernandez. Statistical Computing was chaired by Paul Nakayu, Chapter Treasurer and Susan Walsh, a representative from SAS.

Then it was time for the much anticipated Career Day Panel. Dr. Scott Shonkwiler, Professor in the Department of Applied Economics and Statistics at University of Nevada, Reno, introduced the panel participants consisting of Dr. Wei Yang, Dr. Anna Panorska & Bayard Webb.

The first panelist, Dr. Yang is the State Chief Biostatistician and Director of the Center for Health Data & Research of the Nevada State Health Division. His presentation was on "Public Health Indicator and Interactive Health Databases." He demonstrated for the audience the online, interactive databases available on the Nevada State Health Division website. He emphasized how he was the sole biostatistician 8 years ago and his department has now grown to more than a dozen statisticians, demonstrating an increasing need for statisticians in the government.

The second panelist was Dr. Panorska. Dr. Panorska is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Nevada, Reno. She detailed the twists and turns her career in statistics has taken from private industry to academia. On her adventures, she found several skills necessary for success. The primary one is good communication skills, both oral and written. Also necessary are technical skills, computer and programming skills, a strong work ethic,

respect for others' work and beliefs and, last but not least, a good sense of humor.

The final member of the Career Day Panel was Bayard Webb from the Game Design Department at International Gaming Technologies in Reno, Nevada. Bayard presented the view that in the business world, versatility is key. His degree is a tool that he uses every day to implement projects for his company. Unlike an academic, he is rarely called upon to prove a theorem, but must show that his work behaves correctly in the real world. He described his role as being that of a numerical engineer, using the knowledge he gained in school to build gaming machines.

The Career Day Panel concluded with a question and answer session. The information presented throughout the day was well received by all. The sentiments of one participant sum up the day, "The program gave a great opportunity to network with people dealing with statistics and biostatistics. The program was not too big so it was easier to obtain information [from exhibitors and panelists] and establish networking."

After the Career Day Panel, everyone was looking forward to the raffle. A separate raffle was held for all those who turned in evaluation forms, resulting in an excellent response and great feedback regarding the event. Many wonderful prizes were donated by Minitab, SAS, Insightful, Thompson Publishing - Duxbury and Freeman Publishing. Many attendees went home with books on varied aspects of statistics. Other prizes included 2 copies of SAS Learning Edition, 2 certificates for SAS books, a certificate for a full version of Minitab 14, a certificate for a copy of S-plus Standard Edition and certificates for 2 books from Insightful. The student poster winner was Alicia Chancellor Hansen for her poster entitled "Univariate t-tests vs. Hotelling's Multivariate T^2 Test." She received the book "Data Mining Using SAS Applications," donated by the author, Dr. George C.J. Fernandez, associate professor in the Department of Applied Economics and Statistics at the University of Nevada, Reno. The day concluded with the annual meeting of the Nevada Chapter.

Our thanks go out to all who contributed to the career day event. Without the financial support of the ASA, the Center for Research Design and Statistical Methods, and the University of Nevada, Reno Department of Economics, the event would not have been possible. Special thanks also go to Susan Walsh from SAS, Melanie Dutton and Carolyn Crockett from Thompson Publishing - Duxbury for attending and Michael Hansen for serving as photographer. Thanks also go to the organizing committee, which consisted of Suzanne Perumean-Chaney, Inmaculada Aban, Scott Shonkwiler, Debra Stiver & Alicia Chancellor Hansen.

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☺ ☺ ☺ New Officers ☺ ☺ ☺

The Executive Committee for 2004 consists of:

President – **Debra Stiver** (New)
Past President – Sandra Catlin
Southern Vice President – **Chad Cross** (New)
Northern V. P. – **Alicia Chancellor Hansen** (New)
Secretary – Dorothy Wilson
Treasurer – Paul Nakayu
Chapter Representative – Hokwon Cho

For contact and other information regarding the officers please see our website at: <http://www.nevada.edu/~nvasa>.

✍ Request for Submissions ✍

If you would like to contribute to our website or newsletter, please email Debra Stiver (stiver@unr.edu) or Alicia Chancellor Hansen (aliciah@unr.nevada.edu).
✉

Check our website:

<http://www.nevada.edu/~nvasa/>

