

CHAPTER CHATTER

ASA Pittsburgh Chapter

By Jana Asher

The ASA Pittsburgh Chapter is alive and well and finally back in person. We participated in two major activities this past spring: the Pittsburgh Regional Science fair on March 22 and our annual chapter spring banquet on April 15.

We awarded two “sponsor awards” at the Pittsburgh Regional Science Fair to the two students whose use of statistical methods in their posters was the most interesting, creative, and accurate. To protect the students, we were not given their names and the awards were provided directly through the fair. The winning posters were the following:

- Comparative Analysis of Batch Correction Methods for Single Cell RNA Sequencing (scRNA-seq) Data
- The Relationship Between Vitamin D Supplementation and Symptoms of Postpartum Depression

Our first in-person spring banquet in three years was a smashing success, with 88 attendees, including 61 students. The event began with a poster session, during which 13 students competed for the Mihaela Serban Award for the best poster presentation. The winner was Jian Zou of the University of Pittsburgh Department of Biostatistics, who presented “CGMM: An Algorithm for Constrained Model-Based Clustering.”

The poster session was followed by the keynote presentation by Kathryn Roeder of Carnegie Mellon University. The title of her talk was “Model-Free Prediction Test with Application to Multi-Omics Single-Cell Data,” and she spoke at a level that students could understand.

During dinner, Chapter President Ying Ding shared news from the academic institutions represented at the banquet. The department of mathematics and statistics at Slippery Rock University—a medium-sized, post-secondary institution about an hour north of Pittsburgh—joined the departments of statistics and biostatistics from the University of Pittsburgh and department of statistics and data science from Carnegie Mellon University as a sponsor of and participant in the banquet.

The presentation of the Student of the Year awards and Statistician of the Year Award concluded the banquet. Yichen Jia of the University of Pittsburgh Department of Biostatistics, Ron Yurko of the Carnegie Mellon University Department of Statistics and Data Science, and Siyu Zhou of the University

of Pittsburgh Department of Statistics won Student of the Year awards. The Statistician of the Year Award was presented to Chad M. Schafer of the Carnegie Mellon University Department of Statistics and Data Science.



Slippery Rock University undergraduate students Aran Bybee and Shelby Coladonato, exchange student from Korea Jungeun Lee, and faculty member Jana Asher



The chapter business meeting update is given at the Pittsburgh Chapter's 2022 spring banquet.