

# CHAPTER CHATTER

## Arizona Chapter

By Rodney Jee

### DataFest Competition

The Arizona Chapter held a successful ASA DataFest competition for the three public universities in Arizona the weekend of March 25. The event was held virtually using Zoom and Slack.

The decision to continue with a virtual event was made easier in part by a favorable satisfaction survey conducted at the end of the 2021 event. Seventy-five percent of the students who responded said they were somewhat or very satisfied, and 63 percent said they would recommend DataFest to others. Also, the very satisfied rating was dominant in all specific elements rated.

DataFest's success was due to the work of a strong planning committee comprised of faculty representatives from each participating institution (Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, and Northern Arizona University); the return of a majority of the previous year's planning committee, which provided continuity of processes; access to last year's written procedures for working the many (and more complicated than expected) virtual aspects of the event; and adequate leftover funds from previous sponsorships, which relieved the committee of having to spend time on soliciting sponsorships.

However, with DataFest funds now near depletion, the core committee members plan to work on developing new sponsor relationships. The committee is preparing formal presentation material they can use with prospective sponsors as early as this summer to raise funds for 2023.

DataFest for the Arizona Chapter has been the main event for the chapter, drawing the best participation in the community in recent years (even before COVID). All chapter officers actively served on the planning committee, with President Helen Zhang taking the lead on judging coordination, Secretary Tierra Stimson involved with registration and judging, and Treasurer Rodney Jee serving as co-chair and sponsor relations contact. ASA members Yi Zheng of ASU was a returning co-chair and managed much of the behind-the-scenes IT infrastructure, including the satisfaction survey, and Xueying Tang of the University of Arizona served as a judge. Overall community participation included 70 undergraduate students registered for the competition from all three universities, 30 mentors from academia and industry, and six judges from academia and industry.

**Formation of Advisory Board**

The Arizona Chapter officers held their first meeting with the newly formed advisory board on March 8. Short-term goals from the meeting include drafting new chapter by-laws and advertising ASA membership to students and professionals.