

BCASA NEWSLETTER

Boston Chapter of the American Statistical Association

Serving

Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont

Volume 26, No. 3, January 2008

Homepage: <http://www.amstat.org/chapters/boston>

Newsletter email: bcasa_news@yahoo.com

SCHEDULED EVENTS

January 26, 2008	Short Course	Web Conference Event
January 26, 2008	Winter Party	Newtonville, MA
February 12, 2008	Evening Lecture	Natick, MA
March 11, 2008	BCASA Mosteller Statistician of the Year Banquet	Boston, MA

An event schedule is available at <http://www.amstat.org/chapters/boston/schedule.html>. Detailed announcements are below. All events are announced through our email list. We are currently planning events for the coming year. If you have suggestions please contact Dominique Haughton (dhaughton@bentley.edu).

ANNUAL WINTER POTLUCK DINNER AND PARTY

Social

At the home of Katherine Monti

Date: Saturday, January 26, 2008

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: 30 Lothrop Street, Newtonville, MA

RSVP: By January 23 to Sue Perry (susan_perry@rhoworld.com or 617-965-8000 x22); after Jan.23 please, be sure to also send a copy to katherine_monti@rhoworld.com. Please provide (1) your name, (2) how many people will be in your party, (3) what you would like to bring (appetizer, entrée, side dish, salad, or dessert), and (4) how to be contacted by phone and email (so that you can be reached in case of weather problems).

Directions: For a map, **click here**. Lothrop Street is off of Crafts Street between Washington Street and Watertown Street. Crafts Street is off Washington Street, between Pike Exit 17 and Walnut Street. The condo is at the end of Lothrop Street, on the right; #30 is the unit closest to the road. The first few guests can park in the double bay associated with the condo (turn right into the condo driveway, then park behind the first garage on the right), or in one of the spaces at the far end of the condo lot, or in the driveway alongside #30. Those who arrive later can park on Lothrop or Jennison Streets, or even Judkins Street, if necessary. Lothrop Street dead ends just past the condo. If there has been snow, parking may be tight since the streets are narrow.

In Case of Snow: In case of heavy show, we will have to cancel or reschedule. In the event of very light snow, we will party on! Please feel free to email katherine_monti@rhoworld.com if you have questions or to give notice of last-minute changes. Check the chapter web site for cancellation and rescheduling information.

SHORT COURSE

An Introduction to R

Kay Tranbarger
Amherst College

- Date:** Saturday, January 26, 2008
- Time:** 10 am to 4 pm
- Cost:** \$30 for members, \$40 for non members
- Location:** This is a web conference course and the software being used requires initiation from a Windows browser.
- Registration:** By noon Thursday, January 24 please contact Sue Perry at sperry@rhoworld.com and mail a check to "BCASA", addressed to Yu Zhao, Harvard School of Public Health, Department of Biostatistics, 651 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Ma, 02115. After successful registration please contact Dominique Haughton (dhaughton@bentley.edu) to administrate the conference server logon information.
- Abstract:** R is a free statistical software package that can run on Windows, Mac, Unix, and Linux. This one-day workshop is designed to help you master the basics of R using lab assignments that can be later used with your students. We'll also discuss the creation of new undergraduate lab materials in R and share our experiences teaching statistical ideas and methods using computer software.

EVENING LECTURE

Life in Statistical Software Development

Tom Lane and Peter Perkins
The MathWorks, Inc.

- Date:** Tuesday, February 12, 2008
- Time:** 6:30 pm light dinner, 7:00 pm lecture
- Cost:** Dinner is \$8 for chapter members, \$10 for others. The talk is free.
- Location:** The MathWorks
One Apple Hill Drive
Natick, Massachusetts 01760
- Directions:** Please see <http://www.mathworks.com/company/aboutus/directions.html> . The meeting room is in the first (westernmost) building as you enter Apple Hill Drive. As you approach the garage, it's on your right. You can park anywhere in the lot or garage.
- Registration:** Contact Sue Perry at sperry@rhoworld.com by Friday, February 8. . Please note whether you will attend the dinner, or just the talk .
- Abstract:** What kind of person studies statistics, and then never does any data analysis, teaching, or research? One such kind is a statistical software developer. The speakers will give a glimpse of life in statistical software development, using the MATLAB Statistics Toolbox and other software as examples. Some of the daily challenges include designing software to give accurate results and deal gracefully with extreme cases, understanding requests for unfamiliar statistical methods and tracking down ways to provide them. Other challenges include turning academic or textbook algorithm descriptions into software that works in real situations, and trying to design and explain complicated methods so they are usable by a wide audience. These and other challenges must be met simultaneously with meeting imposed deadlines and the "bottom line". The speakers will also address what drives the daily decisions that they need to make.

MOSTELLER STATISTICIAN OF THE YEAR BANQUET

Richard DeVeaux
Williams College

- Date:** Tuesday, March 11, 2008
- Cost:** Dinner is \$30 for chapter members, \$35 for non-members, and free for students. The presentation is free.
- Time:** 6:00 pm social; 6:30 pm dinner; 7:00 to 8:00 pm presentation
- Location:** Frontier Science
900 Commonwealth Ave
Boston, MA 02215
- Registration:** By Wednesday, March 5, to Sue Perry (sperry@rhoworld.com or 617-965-8000 x22).
- Directions:** Frontier Science is at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and St. Paul Street. Please enter the building on St. Paul and go to the second floor, where someone will let you in. There is a Green Line (B) stop at this intersection. On-street parking is available on St. Paul and on Commonwealth. A Boston University parking Lot, which charges a fee, is across Commonwealth, on Buick Street.
- Details:** The details of this event will be later distributed via email.
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

2008 ASA Strategic Plan

A draft 2008 ASA Strategic Plan (<http://www.amstat.org/news/index.cfm?fuseaction=strategicplanfeedback>) is available on the ASA website. This draft has been created and revised with input from over 70 participants and discussed at the ASA board July meeting. Chapter members' feedback to the task force on the draft plan is welcome and can be provided according to directions at the above website. When completed, this plan should provide a concise set of objectives and strategies to guide decisions made by future ASA presidents and boards. The deadline for comments is February 15, 2008, and adoption of the final plan is expected at the March meeting of the ASA board.

March 1st Deadline for Nominations to Mu Sigma Rho

Please consider nominating your students (both undergraduate and graduate) for membership in Mu Sigma Rho, the national honorary society for statisticians. Inductees receive a free membership in the American Statistical Association and BCASA, as well as a subscription to *Chance*. This is a great way to encourage careers in statistics for your top students. The process is straightforward for both the nominator and the nominee. More information about this opportunity and the nomination form can be found at <http://www.math.smith.edu/~nhorton/msr.html>. Completed forms should be sent to Shelley Hurwitz at hurwitz@hms.harvard.edu and are due by March 1st, 2008.

2008 Joint Statistical Meeting Upcoming Deadlines

The 2008 Joint Statistical Meetings will be held in Denver, Colorado from August 3 through 7. Online abstract submission closes February 4. Mail-in abstract submissions are due January 22. Please see the web site for important information and due dates: <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/index.cfm?fuseaction=confinfo>.

Fraud in Medical Ethics Lecture a Success

Ted Colton, Professor and Chair Emeritus, Boston University Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, presented several thought-provoking cases of Fraud in Medical Research during an evening lecture on Tuesday, December 11 at the University of Massachusetts in Lowell. There were over 20 attendees and a lively post lecture discussion of practical research ethics. Dr. Colton reminded us of steps to take to eradicate false assumptions or unintentional fraud in our research.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

SENIOR BIOSTATISTICIAN - New England Research Institutes, Inc. (NERI) has an opening for a Senior Biostatistician. In that position, the Senior Biostatistician will communicate directly with senior investigators inside and outside of NERI on matters related to study design and results, select appropriate statistical methods and conduct complex analyses. The Senior Biostatistician will write sections of collaborative manuscripts and/or full papers on study design and methodological issues. The Senior Biostatistician will collaborate with other senior scientists on research proposals and related business development. NERI is a dynamic, independent company specializing in clinical trials management, public health research, survey research and media development. NERI offers clients exceptional capabilities as a first rate Contract Research Organization together with the deep knowledge and broad experience of one of the nation's premier public health research institutes. Qualifications for this position include excellent oral and written communication skills; a strong background as a biostatistician to coordinate needs across multiple research projects and to stimulate methodological research, proven ability to secure and successfully conduct funded research (both contracts and grants), and an interest in both applications and theoretical/methodological innovations in statistics. Also required are a Ph.D. in biostatistics, statistics, or closely related field, 6+ years experience in a collaborative research setting with biostatistical expertise in one or more of the following areas: multi-center clinical trial design and analysis, chronic disease epidemiology, cardiology, longitudinal analysis, and/or complex designed experiments, experience in the design and oversight of multi-center clinical trials, grant and manuscript writing in collaboration with other researchers, an ability to mentor junior statisticians also necessary. If interested, please send your resume and cover letter to Human Resources at humanresources@neriscience.com or visit us at www.neriscience.com. NERI is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer M/F/D/V.

SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES DECISION SUPPORT (HRDS) ANALYST- Merck & Co. Inc. is looking for an HRDS. Established in 1891, Merck is a global research-driven pharmaceutical company dedicated to putting patients first. Reporting to the Manager, HR Decision Support, and the Senior HRDS, the analyst will partner with HRDS colleagues and Divisional Operations Leaders to execute projects, standard reports and statistical models. Responsibilities include but are not limited to: developing metrics and targets; providing quarterly performance monitoring and analysis; and engaging with clients to proactively evaluate HR and business information needs; recommending and developing appropriate solutions and/or research approaches (e.g. analysis plan, data collection methods, tool functionality); integrating and reducing data from internal reporting tools and external sources; supporting clients needs by conducting statistical analyses and developing conclusions, encouraging self-sufficiency, and consulting on the use of our HR Decision Support Reporting Suite; and presenting analyses directly to client and/or senior executive teams. The required qualifications for this position include a bachelors degree required (preferably in Math, Statistics, Finance, Business or related discipline); master's degree or MBA (preferably in Math, Statistics, Finance, Business, HR, I/O psychology or related discipline); at least 1 year experience required if in possession of a graduate degree; basic statistical training (e.g. descriptive statistics, correlations, significance testing); demonstrated expertise in statistical software (preferably SAS); and excellent verbal and written communication skills. Desired qualifications for this position are: at least 3 years experience in information analysis or related field; advanced statistical training (including multiple regression analysis and predictive modeling); experience with HR metrics and/or Balanced Scorecard methodology; strong analytical and problem solving skills; initiative and creativity; consulting experience and/or project management skills. We offer an excellent salary and an industry-ranked benefits program. Merck's retirement package includes a pension plan and one of the best 401(k) plans in the nation. To be considered for this position, please visit our career site at www.merck.com/careers to create a profile and submit your resume for requisition # HUM001164. Merck is an equal opportunity employer, M/F/D/V.

The BCASA Newsletter is published four times during the academic year and is emailed to current BCASA members. Send comments and suggestions to Maureen Mayer bcasa_news@yahoo.com or to any of the individuals listed below.

BCASA OFFICERS

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Vice-President, 2008-09	Jim MacDougall , Microbia
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