

# BCASA NEWSLETTER

Boston Chapter of the American Statistical Association  
Serving Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont

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Volume 29, No. 3, January 2011

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

Newsletter: [BCASANews@verizon.net](mailto:BCASANews@verizon.net)

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## Upcoming Events

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**January 15**  
**6:00 pm**

**30 Lothrop Street,  
Newtonville, MA**

**Annual Winter Potluck  
Dinner and Party**

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**February 15**  
**6:00 pm**

**Simmons College**

**Statistician of the Year:  
Xiao-Li Meng**

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### From Dominique Haughton

As past BCASA president it is my pleasure to wish you all a wonderful 2011!

I am also delighted to officially leave the BCASA in the competent hands of our new President, Tom Lane.

Many may recognize Tom's name because they receive e-mails from him. Tom started running BCASA e-mail activities in March 1999. In September of that year he created the chapter's web site. He also served as Program Chair from 2003 to 2006.

Tom was born in Boston and raised in Dedham. He did both his undergraduate and graduate work at MIT, while Herman Chernoff tried to establish a statistics program at the school. At MIT he also worked with Bill DuMouchel and Roy Welsch. His Ph.D. dissertation was on serial dependence in logistic regression.

Since graduate school, Tom has worked on the development of statistical software. He began at IBM, where they used APL to write software that specialized in reliability analysis and quality control, but joined Bill DuMouchel at Bolt Beranek and Newman (BB&N) in 1987. At BB&N he focused on experimental design and computer-assisted data analysis. Since 1999 he has been at MathWorks, working on the MATLAB Statistics Toolbox. Work there includes multivariate analysis, machine learning, and PK/PD modeling.

### From Tom Lane

I hope everyone had a happy and restful New Year holiday and is ready for the year ahead. Please help us continue the holiday celebration by joining our annual social on *January 15*. This is always a good time and a good opportunity to meet your colleagues in a different environment.

This is my inaugural report as chapter president. As you can see on the web site and at the end of this newsletter, Maureen Mayer and Sachiko Miyahara are also starting new terms. Maureen was re-elected as Program Chair. Sachiko was appointed as Secretary to replace Tzu-min Yeh, who moved out of the area. I look forward to working with Maureen, Sachiko, and the rest of the team.

There are other, perhaps less obvious changes. You probably received this newsletter from Ching-Ti Liu, who has taken over my old job of maintaining the web site and e-mail list. Most

of the newsletter was compiled by Vanessa Xanthakis, who joins Stan Morse and Nick Horton on the newsletter's Editorial Team.

Perhaps you would like to see *your name* here! There are many ways to contribute to the chapter. These range from showing up at a planning committee meeting to offer an opinion, to taking a more active role such as those already mentioned. Please consider joining us.

I'd like to close with a tribute to two former Chapter Presidents, Dominique Haughton and Kathy Monti.

Dominique upheld the tradition started by George Washington, who voluntarily limited himself to two terms as president. We are grateful for her contributions to the chapter, the area, and the profession. Thanks to Dominique we now offer the opportunity to attend chapter events remotely (over the internet). This helps us to better serve statisticians throughout our region. Her Bentley University Virtual Analytics Symposium is also a fine addition to the set of professional opportunities available in the Boston area. And her on-line journal, *Case Studies in Business, Industry and Government Statistics*, is a welcome outlet for applied research.

Kathy ended her very successful term as President ten years ago. Since then she has contributed at the national level through the Biopharmaceutical Section, the Council of Chapters, and the Board of Directors. She was named an ASA Fellow in 2007. Fortunately, she has continued to provide the Boston Chapter with the benefit of her experience and wisdom. I am one of many chapter officers who have appreciated her guidance over the years. Sadly, her advice will be a little harder to obtain from now on, as she plans to move to Chicago to be closer to family. We are fortunate that she will once again host the *Annual Social* this year. *Please join us at the social to wish Kathy a fond farewell!*

**TREASURER'S REPORT\***2010 INCOME

Membership - ASA	\$5,784.50
Bank Accounts	\$25,177.79
Membership - Local	\$21.00
CDs	\$22,915.83
Short Courses	\$2,829.03
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$8,634.53</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$48,093.62</b>

2010 EXPENSES

Short Courses, Events	\$5,148.32
Planning Committee	\$845.25
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$5,993.57</b>

**NET GAIN** **\$2,640.96**

\*Reflects accounts as of December 20, 2010

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Statistician of the Year

In 1989, at the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the American Statistics Association (in Boston), the BCASA awarded its first Statistician of the Year Award to *Fred Mosteller*. Prof. Mosteller received the award for his excellence in teaching and mentorship, his influential research, and his service to the profession. In his honor the award was subsequently renamed the *BCASA Mosteller Statistician of the Year Award*.

The award is presented each year in February, at a banquet/lecture, to a statistician who has made exceptional contributions to the field and shown outstanding service to the statistical community and the Boston Chapter.

The recipient of the 2011 award is *Xiao-Li Meng* of Harvard University.

*Congratulations Xiao-Li!*

### New England Isolated Statisticians Meeting

The fifteenth New England Isolated Statisticians Meeting (NEISM15) was held on November 6, 2010 at Emmanuel College in Boston. This annual event provides a wonderful opportunity for statisticians in isolated settings (usually attached to mathematics departments in small colleges) to interact with one another and explore issues related to the teaching of statistics.

Twenty-six statisticians from all over New England participated in NEISM15. For the first time, statistics from community colleges attended. In the morning participants discussed how to integrate into an introductory statistics course the *statistical literacy topics* Jessica Utts set out in *What Educated Citizens Should Know About Statistics and Probability*. The afternoon session offered participants a chance to submit questions for group discussion. Questions covered pedagogy, textbooks, course content, software, and the use of technology in the classroom.

Previous NEISM meetings were held at Williams, Amherst, Smith, Babson, Bryant, Simmons, and Pine Manor colleges. Since we usually stay at one place for two years, NEISM16 will probably again be at Emmanuel College. The date is *Saturday, November 5, 2011*.

Previous NEISM have been organized by Bob Goldman at Simmons College and John McKenzie at Babson College. We are grateful to BCASA for its continuing financial support and to Matthew Tom for being our host at Emmanuel. We are always anxious to expand the reach of NEISM. If you would like to be invited to NEISM16 please do contact one of us.

Bob Goldman  
[robert.goldman@simmons.edu](mailto:robert.goldman@simmons.edu)

John McKenzie  
[mckenzie@babson.edu](mailto:mckenzie@babson.edu)

## **Statistics Career Day**

This year the BCASA will hold its *Statistics Career Day* on March 5 or March 12, probably at UMass Boston. The aim is to give high school students and instructors involved with Advanced Placement Statistics courses a “live” opportunity to envision what a career in statistics might be like and how to pursue such a career. To do this we will create a setting in which participants can interact with statisticians in government, industry, and academia as well as with undergraduate and graduate students in the field.

We need help from statisticians and students from all areas and with varied interests. *Your* participation would make a great difference! AP students want very much to hear what statisticians do, how they go about it, what paths they have taken, and prospects in different areas of statistics.

We also need suggestions for someone who could give a keynote speech: a dynamic lecturer able to connect well with high school students and to show them how much fun statistics can be.

If you are interested in helping us or have any suggestions, please contact:

Miriam Chernoff: [mchernoff@sdac.harvard.edu](mailto:mchernoff@sdac.harvard.edu)  
Lijuan Deng: [ldeng@sdac.harvard.edu](mailto:ldeng@sdac.harvard.edu)

## **Mu Sigma Rho Honorary Society**

The BCASA encourages all faculty teaching statistics in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine to consider nominating undergraduate and graduate statistics students for membership in *Mu Sigma Rho*, the national honorary society for statistics.

Inductees will receive a free membership in the ASA and BCASA and a subscription to *Chance* magazine. This is a great way to encourage careers your top students to pursue a career in statistics and to introduce them to many useful resources and job opportunities.

The process is straightforward for both the nominator and nominee. Nominees should fill out a 1-page form and attach a transcript (unofficial is fine) and \$5 induction fee for each nominee. The nominee only needs to confirm his or her interest.

More information and nomination form can be found at:

<http://www.math.smith.edu/~nhorton/msr.html>

Completed forms and induction fees, which are due by March 1, 2011, should be sent to

Dr. Liam O'Brien  
Department of Mathematics  
Colby College  
5838 Mayflower Hill  
Waterville, ME 04901-8858

Mu Sigma Rho officers for 2011-2013 are:

President: George McCabe  
Vice President: Lynne Seymour  
Secretary-Treasurer: Jackie Dietz  
Directors at Large: Scott Evans, Chris Malone, and Bob Stephenson

## **New Biostatistics Major at Simmons College**

In May, 2010 the Simmons College faculty approved a new undergraduate major in *Biostatistics*. The major is housed in the Mathematics and Statistics Department.

The new major is a response to recent surge of student interest in the subject at Simmons. More than 50 percent of our Math graduates in the past three years have completed or are currently completing graduate programs in statistics or biostatistics. Simmons has a traditional strength in health-related fields with popular programs in Nursing, Physical Therapy, Nutrition, and Public Health. The existence of these allied programs was the primary reason our department chose to establish a biostatistics rather than a statistics major. Other reasons were the inclinations of the faculty and the presence of numerous health-related organizations on our doorstep.

After the introductory, applied course, students in Biostatistics will take two intermediate level applied biostatistics courses (one on regression models and one on design). This is followed by the year-long Probability Theory and Mathematical Statistics sequence. The prerequisites for this sequence are three semesters of Calculus and Linear Algebra. The major also requires students to take a course in Computer Programming, an applications course using SAS, and two Biology courses.

Establishing the major required a couple of new courses at a time when resources at the college were tight and existing programs were being carefully scrutinized. Within the department there was (not unreasonable) concern that a successful Biostatistics major would come at the expense of the Math major. It is still early days but we are optimistic! At this point we have six majors and several minors.

For further information, please contact

Bob Goldman: [robert.goldman@simmons.edu](mailto:robert.goldman@simmons.edu)



## **U.S. VERSION OF *CENSUS AT SCHOOL* PROGRAM**

The ASA and Population Association of America (PAA) established the U.S. version of *Census at School*, an international classroom project that engages students in grades 4 through 12 in statistical problem solving. Students complete an online survey, analyze their class census results, and compare their class with random samples of students in the United States and other participating countries. The project began in the United Kingdom in 2000 and now includes Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland, and Japan. The ASA and PAA are seeking champions to expand the U.S. Census at School program. This is a wonderful opportunity for statisticians and statistics educators to perform outreach in their communities. For more information about how you can get involved, contact

Martha Aliaga: [martha@amstat.org](mailto:martha@amstat.org)

Rebecca Nichols: [rebecca@amstat.org](mailto:rebecca@amstat.org)

## **UPCOMING NEW ENGLAND SYMPOSIUM ON STATISTICS IN SPORTS**

The symposium will be held at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts on Saturday, *September 24, 2011*. Save the date.

For more information contact the organizers: Mark Glickman and Scott Evans.

## **BCASA Planning Committee**

The BCASA Planning Committee meets about once every six weeks. The chapter provides (tasty) dinners during the meetings. Come and have an impact on chapter events and activities.

Contact BCASA President Tom Lane: [tlane@alum.mit.edu](mailto:tlane@alum.mit.edu)

## EVENTS

### ANNUAL WINTER POTLUCK DINNER AND PARTY

<b>Date</b>	Saturday, January 15, 2011
<b>Time</b>	6:00 pm
<b>Location</b>	Home of Katherine Monti, 30 Lothrop Street, Newtonville, MA
<b>Information</b>	<a href="http://bcasaparty.eventbrite.com/">http://bcasaparty.eventbrite.com/</a>
<b>Directions</b>	<p>Lothrop Street is off 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. Unit 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 the unit. 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. For map see:</p> <p><a href="http://mapq.st/hoDtcW_">http://mapq.st/hoDtcW_</a></p>
<b>In Case of Snow</b>	<p>In case of heavy show, we will have to <i>cancel</i> or <i>reschedule</i>. In the event of very light snow, we will party on! Please feel free to email <a href="mailto:katherine_monti@rhoworld.com">katherine_monti@rhoworld.com</a> if you have questions or to give notice of last-minute changes. If it snows, <i>be sure to check the chapter web site</i> for cancellation and rescheduling information.</p> <p>By Thursday, January 13 to:</p> <p><a href="http://www.luckypotluck.com/potluck/BCASAAnnualParty">http://www.luckypotluck.com/potluck/BCASAAnnualParty</a></p>
<b>RSVP</b>	<p>Please provide your name, how many people will be in your party, what you would like to bring (appetizer, entrée, side dish, salad, or dessert), and phone or email contact information (so that you can be reached in case of weather problems).</p>

## STATISTICIAN OF THE YEAR BANQUET: XIAO-LI MENG

<b>Date</b>	Tuesday, February 15, 2011
<b>Time</b>	Social: 6:00 pm; Dinner: 6:30 pm; Presentation: 7:00 pm
<b>Location</b>	Simmons College, 300 The Fenway, Boston, MA  An abstract and more specific information about location will be distributed by email and posted to the Registration web site (below).
<b>Registration</b>	<a href="http://meng.eventbrite.com/">http://meng.eventbrite.com/</a>
<b>Cost</b>	Dinner: \$30 for chapter members; \$35 for non-members; students free. Presentation: free.

## JOB OPENINGS

### **Biostatistics and SAS Programmer/Analyst, Epidemiology Group**

We are an epidemiology research group located in Boston, MA. Our group is actively engaged in pharmacoepidemiology, chronic disease epidemiology and genetic epidemiology research. We have several positions open for biostatisticians and SAS programmers/analysts to work on several new and continuing research projects.

*Responsibilities:* Assist in data management and analysis; write, document, and maintain SAS programs; construct, quality-check, and clean large analytical datasets; execute SAS programs, summarize and document output; collaborate with the principal investigator, senior biostatistician, and programmers on the preparation of datasets, reports, manuscripts and new proposals.

*Qualifications:* Master's degree in biostatistics, statistics, epidemiology or public health, with at least two years of SAS programming experience or proficiency in SAS. Experience analyzing large databases; excellent written and oral communication skills; ability to work independently and as leader of a team; strong organizational, documentation, and problem solving skills. Must be a U.S. Citizen.

*Desired Skills:* Working knowledge of statistics, experience with data management; experience with other statistical analysis and graphics packages and PC software; facility with Microsoft Office, particularly Word, Excel and Powerpoint; ability to program on a UNIX platform and in SQL or other high-level languages are beneficial; knowledge of study design, research methodology, statistical analysis

*Contact:* For information on how to apply for these positions please e-mail your resume, cover letter, contact information of two references, and at least one SAS programming example to

Dr. Kelly Cho: [stat.sasprgm@gmail.com](mailto:stat.sasprgm@gmail.com)

## **Statistician, Mass General Hospital**

The Massachusetts General Hospital Biostatistics Center is seeking a faculty level statistician or biostatistician with two or more years of postdoctoral experience, preferably in Clinical Studies. The person would have the appropriate academic appointment at the Department of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Responsibilities will include collaboration with faculty at the Massachusetts General Hospital on clinical trials and other medical studies.

*Required Experience:* Ability to effectively communicate results and explain complex statistical methods orally, graphically, and in written reports, Ability to work as part of an interdisciplinary research team. Interest in developing and applying innovative statistical research methods to problems in health care. The candidate must have a PhD in Statistics or Biostatistics.

*Job Setting:* Massachusetts General Hospital is arguably the largest research hospital in the world with a research budget of over 300 million dollars. The Massachusetts General Hospital Biostatistics Center is a group of 20+ PhDs and Masters Level Statisticians. We provide statistical support to multiple research groups within the Massachusetts Hospital. We are the statistical center for three national research projects and one international project and have an active research program in statistical methodology. We are located in downtown Boston.

*Contact:* Please send cover letter and CV to

Nora Lavery: [nlavery@partners.org](mailto:nlavery@partners.org)

## Statistical Software Developer, MathWorks

MathWorks is the leading developer of mathematical computing software for engineers and scientists. Founded in 1984, MathWorks employs 2200 people in 15 countries, with headquarters in Natick, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

*Job Summary:* We are seeking a talented, creative statistician to join our math/statistics development team and enhance the statistical offerings of The MathWorks. You should have skills in statistical analysis and scientific computing. You should also have experience in use of other statistical software and in writing mathematical software.

*Responsibilities:* You will help propose, plan, and develop the statistical programming tools we offer to our MATLAB customers. This includes the design, architecture, and development of statistics functions written in MATLAB. The ability to work constructively in a team environment is vital. You should have experience taking a project from concept to delivery, through a complete development cycle.

*Qualifications:*

- Ph.D. in statistics or similar quantitative field, M.S.+ 3-5 years relevant experience
- Expertise in computational math
- Experience with technical computing languages such as MATLAB and R
- Excellent written and verbal communication
- Ability to formulate realistic goals and meet commitments
- Knowledge of object-oriented design and implementation skills, OO, Java, C++

*Pluses:*

- Knowledge of statistical learning algorithms, Weka
- Knowledge of Markov Chain Monte Carlo methods, WinBUGS
- Experience practicing data analysis
- Experience with MATLAB
- Experience with various computer platforms (UNIX, Windows)
- Interest in GUIs and visualization
- Experience writing commercial software

*To apply:*

<http://bit.ly/fN5ICZ>

*Questions to:*

Tom Lane: [tlane@mathworks.com](mailto:tlane@mathworks.com)

<b>BCASA OFFICERS</b>	
<i>President</i>	<i>Tom Lane MathWorks</i>
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The BCASA Newsletter is published four times during the academic year and is emailed to all chapter members. Please send suggestions and comments to the editor, Stan Morse, at [BCASANews@verizon.net](mailto:BCASANews@verizon.net).