

BCASA NEWSLETTER

Boston Chapter of the American Statistical Association

Serving

Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont

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

Newsletter: BCASANews@verizon.net

SCHEDULED EVENTS		
Saturday, September 24, 2011	New England Symposium on Statistics in Sports	Cambridge, MA
Monday, October 3, 2011	Ethics Panel Discussion	Boston, MA
Saturday, November 5, 2011	New England Isolated Statisticians Meeting	Boston, MA

Event schedule at the chapter website: <http://www.amstat.org/chapters/boston>

Detailed announcements appear later in this newsletter. All events are announced in advance to members on our email list. We are currently planning events for the coming year. If you have suggestions please contact Chapter President Tom Lane (tlane@alum.mit.edu).

New England Symposium on Statistics in Sports

Date: Saturday, September 24, 2011

Location: Harvard University Science Center
Lecture Hall C
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Summary: The 2011 New England Symposium on Statistics in Sports will be a meeting of statisticians and quantitative analysts connected with sports teams, sports media, and universities to discuss common problems of interest in statistical modeling and analysis of sports data. The symposium format will be a mixture of invited talks, a poster session, and a panel discussion. Students in particular are encouraged to submit abstracts; a prize will be awarded to the best student poster as decided by a panel of judges. The proceedings of the symposium will be published in a special issue of the [Journal of Quantitative Analysis in Sports \(JQAS\)](#).

Highlights: **Speaker: J.P. Ricciardi**

- Special assistant to the New York Mets general manager
- Former general manager of the Toronto Blue Jays
- Former Director of Player Personnel on the Oakland A's under "Moneyball" General Manager Billy Beane

Panel Discussion

Afternoon panel discussion on NBA analytics:

- **Sam Hinkie** - Executive VP of Basketball Operations, Houston Rockets
- **Roland Beech** - Director of Basketball Analytics, Dallas Mavericks
- **Kenny Atkinson** - Assistant Coach, New York Knicks

with moderator

- **Zach Lowe** - NBA writer for SI.com, the Sports Illustrated web site

StatDNA Soccer Analytics Research Competition winner

Congratulations to Sarah Rudd of On Football Research and Consulting. She will present "A framework for tactical analysis and individual offensive production assessment in soccer using Markov chains"

Information: See the conference web site at nessis.org or contact the co-organizers with any questions:

- Mark Glickman (mg@bu.edu)
- Scott Evans (evans@sdac.harvard.edu)
- Jason Rosenfeld (jwrosenf@fas.harvard.edu)

Panel Discussion: Real-Life Ethical Dilemmas Encountered in the Practice of Statistics

Shelley Hurwitz, Chair of the ASA Committee on Professional Ethics
Arlene Ash, UMass Medical School
Katherine Halvorsen, Smith College

Date: Monday, October 3, 2011

Time: 6:30 light dinner
7:00 panel discussion

Location: One Brigham Circle, 4th Floor
1620 Tremont St.
Boston, MA 02120

Directions: Take the Green Line to the Brigham Circle Green Line stop. This stop is also on the Bus 66 route, among others.

The building also has a Stop & Shop, J.P.Licks, Walgreen's, T.G.I.Fridays, and Bank of America. Enter the office building on the first floor, flash your ID, and ask the guard to release the elevator to the 4th floor for the "BCASA Event." Then follow the signs to "BCASA." (Entering the stairwell from another floor will not work.) In case of a problem, call 978-201-2128.

Parking: Meters are free after either 6pm or 8pm, and there are a few strictly-enforced 90-minute spaces in the Stop & Shop lot.

Summary: This year, JSM featured an excellent ethics panel discussion that included three members of our chapter. These members have agreed to reprise that discussion for us.

Shelley Hurwitz was the organizer and will introduce the panelists. Arlene Ash will present her personal ethical dilemma related to the Bush-Gore election and eleventh-hour data. Katherine Halvorsen will discuss an ethical dilemma related to teaching undergraduate statistics that will ring true for many teachers. Just as at JSM, there will be time for floor discussion.

Registration: By September 30 at <http://bcasa3oct2011.eventbrite.com/>.

Cost: Dinner is \$8 members, \$10 nonmembers. Panel discussion is free.

New England Isolated Statisticians Meeting (NEISM 16)

Bob Goldman, Simmons College
John McKenzie, Babson College
Organizers

Date: Saturday, November 5, 2011

Location: Emmanuel College, Boston, MA

Summary: The sixteenth New England Isolated Statisticians Meeting (NEISM16) will be held on November 5, 2011 at Emmanuel College in Boston. This annual event is a wonderful opportunity for statisticians isolated (usually, but not always, statistics faculty in mathematics departments) to discuss, in some depth, topics related to teaching statistics.

The organizers, Bob Goldman and John McKenzie, would particularly like to encourage new statistics teachers and instructors who have not attended previous NEISMs to come to NEISM16. The event is sponsored by the Boston Chapter of the American Statistical Association and is free; we ask only that participants pay for their own transportation.

Earlier NEISMs were held at various New England colleges; Williams, Amherst, Smith, Babson, Bryant, Simmons, and Pine Manor. Last year, 26 statistics instructors from all over New England participated in NEISM1, also at Emmanuel College. The organizers were particularly pleased that we were able, for the first time, to reach out to several instructors from community colleges.

If you know of someone who may be interested in this event, please forward this notice to them.

Registration: Please register for NEISM16 by November 3 at the latest. Space is limited and so we urge you to register ASAP. Simply email John McKenzie (mckenzie@babson.edu) or Bob Goldman (robert.goldman@simmons.edu) your interest in attending.

OFFICER REPORT: PROGRAM CHAIR

Maureen P. Mayer
Fisheye Software

Welcome to a new BCASA program year! On behalf of the entire BCASA Program Committee, I would like to thank all of our speakers and hosting sites for a banner 16-event year, with many having a remote attendance option. Events planned last year are listed below.

2010

- *Causal Business Analytics*: Victor Lo, Buckingham Browne and Nichols (BB&N), Sept 28,
- *Statistical Consulting in Lawsuits Panel Discussion*: Arlene Ash, UMass Medical School, Worcester ; Rich Goldstein, Consultant; Scott Evans, Harvard School of Public Health; Dominique Haughton, Bentley; Roy Welsch, MIT; Jim Greiner, Harvard Law; at Suffolk University Law School, Oct 04.
- *Q Central Limit Theorems, Tsallis' Q Statistic, and Their Applications*: Sabir Umarov, Tufts University; at Nashua Public Library Oct 26,
- *Bayesian Statistics Short Course: A Practical Introduction*: Mark E. Glickman, Boston University School of Public Health; at MathWorks, Oct 30.
- *Statistical Science: My Story; Planning the Future of Statistics by Understanding its Past*: Emanuel Parzen, Texas A&M University, at Frontier Science, Nov 10.
- *Predicting Teacher Candidates' Success for Educator Licensure: An EM-Algorithm Approach*: Matthew Tom and Kimberly Sofronas, Emmanuel College; at Emmanuel, Dec 7.

2011

- *BCASA Annual Potluck Holiday Party*: Jan 22 (canceled due to snow).
- *Mosteller Statistician of the Year Award Presentation*: Xiao-Li Meng, Harvard University, at Simmons College, Feb 15.
- *Statistics Career Day*: Keynotes: Lisa Sullivan (BU), Arnold Barnett (MIT), Mark Glickman (Harvard), at UMASS Boston, Mar 12.
- *An Introduction to R*: Katherine Tranbarger Freier, UMASS Medical School, Worcester, Mar 19, 2011.
- *Applying Survival Analysis to Forecasting Subscriber Levels*: Michael J. A. Berry, Data Miners, Inc., at Emmanuel College, Mar 29, 2011.
- *New England Statistics Symposium*: Keynotes: Brad Carlin, University of Minnesota and Jun Liu, Harvard University, at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, Apr 16, 2011.
- *Statistics in Bioinformatics*: John Quackenbush, Harvard School of Public Health and Dana Farber Cancer Institute, UMass Medical School, Worcester, Apr 28, 2011.
- *Endogenous Selection*: Christopher Winship, Harvard University, (co-author Felix Elwert, University of Wisconsin), at BB&N, May 2, 2011.
- *Confounding and Effect Modification*: Herbert I. Weisberg, Correlation Research, Inc., at Simmons, May 17, 2011.

I thank you for this opportunity to serve the local statistical community as your Program Chair for the past several years. Many thanks also to the hard working members of the Program Committee without whose help organizing these events would not have been possible. Our hopes are that you enjoy attending these as much as we do.

After careful consideration, I have made the decision to step down as the BCASA Program Chair in order to spend more time with my family. If you are interested in joining the program committee please contact Tom Lane. It is rewarding and allows you the opportunity to shape the local affordable statistical community event options.

OFFICER REPORT: COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS REPRESENTATIVE

James MacDougall
Ironwood Pharmaceuticals

The Boston chapter serves statisticians in Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Rhode Island. As of September 15, our membership consists of 461 people. We remain one of the most active chapters in the nation. The chapter planning committee is coordinating the program for the upcoming year; as always, suggestions for speakers and topics are welcomed. The Boston chapter also remains an active affiliate of Mu Sigma Rho.

In August, the Council of Chapters (COC) Representatives convened for its annual gathering at the Joint Statistics Meetings in Miami. Of note, Boston Chapter's Nicholas Horton election as the COC representative to the ASA Board was announced (serving from 2012-2014) and he received the Chapter Service Recognition Award. Also at this meeting, Bob Rodriguez, ASA President -Elect requested the chapters get involved in the 175th anniversary JSM which will Boston will host in August 2014.

Congratulations to the new ASA fellows from the Boston Chapter region, announced at the JSM in Miami (see news item below).

EVENT FUNDING: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFPS)

The Boston Chapter of ASA is accepting proposals for supplementary support funding to plan and conduct events with a statistical theme. Qualified events include short courses and other educational events but are not limited to these. The RFP is open until further notice.

Proposal requirements and additional information:

- Proposals should be no more than 3 pages in length with 2 pages being a description of the program, date and time, program sponsors, location and information on parking or public transportation, targeted audience/expected attendees, rationale for why the program is important and will be attractive to potential attendees, and people responsible for program planning and conduct. The last page is a budget plan.
- Funding for up to \$750 can be requested.
- The event must be open to all chapter members.
- The event must be advertised in the chapter newsletter.
- It is expected that the BCASA is not the only resource supporting the event (e.g., a department or other sponsor should be involved in organization or nominal fees to attendees should be charged).
- Any fees charged to attendees should be reasonable, with special discounts for students. The expectation is that the event will be affordable to statisticians.
- A report of the event must be submitted to BCASA upon completion of the event with possible publication of the event in the BCASA newsletter. The report should include an estimate on the number of attendees, attendee comments, an evaluation of the program, and a financial summary.
- Unused funds should be returned to the BCASA.
- Proposals will be reviewed by members of the Planning Committee of the BCASA. Applicants will be contacted shortly after the Planning Committee meeting that follows application submission.
- Questions should be directed to Scott Evans, Ph.D. (evans@sdac.harvard.edu).
- Proposals should be electronically submitted at least 6 weeks prior to the program to Scott Evans, Ph.D. (evans@sdac.harvard.edu).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nominations for Mosteller Statistician of the Year

The BCASA Mosteller Statistician of the Year award is presented each year at a banquet/lecture in February to a distinguished statistician who has made exceptional contributions to the field of statistics and has shown outstanding service to the statistical community and the Boston Chapter.

The current Statistician of the Year is Xiao-Li Meng. Previous award recipients are Fred Mosteller, 1990; Herman Chernoff, 1991; Marvin Zelen, 1992; Ralph D'Agostino, 1993; William DuMouchel, 1994; Don Rubin, 1995; Nan Laird, 1996; David Hoaglin, 1997; Richard Goldstein, 1998; Arlene Ash, 1999; Cyrus Mehta, 2000; Alan Gelfand, 2001; Alan Zaslavsky, 2002; John D. McKenzie, Jr., 2003; Louise Ryan, 2004; Carl Morris, 2006; LJ Wei, 2007; Richard DeVeaux, 2008; David Hosmer, 2009; and Stephen Lagakos, 2010.

Please forward all nominations by October 5, 2011 to Tom Lane, tlane@alum.mit.edu. Include a brief description of the candidate's qualifications for the award. Voting will take place at the next Planning Committee meeting.

Nominations for Mu Sigma Rho

Mu Sigma Rho is the national honorary society for statistics. Its purpose is to encourage scholarly activity in statistics and to recognize outstanding achievement among students in statistics. At the start of this academic year we issue this reminder to consider nominating qualified students for induction. For further information visit the website <http://www.math.smith.edu/~nhorton/msr.html> or contact the chair of the Mu Sigma Rho nominating committee, Liam O'Brien (lobrien@colby.edu) of Colby College.

Planning Committee Meetings

The BCASA Planning Committee is open to all interested members and includes BCASA officers and committee chairs. We meet approximately every six weeks to plan upcoming events of the chapter. This is a good opportunity to provide service to your chapter as well as to discuss statistics with your colleagues. During the October meeting we will vote on the Mosteller Statistician of the Year award recipient. If you have ideas for a specific event or for the chapter in general, or if you would like to join the Planning Committee, please contact any of the chapter officers listed at the end of the last page of this newsletter.

Election Results

The following officers were elected at our event in May for two-year terms that begin on January 1, 2012:

- Vice President: Vanessa Xanthakis
- Secretary: Sachiko Miyahara
- Treasurer: Huichao Chen

This election also ratified proposed constitution changes to add Webmaster and Newsletter Editor as new officer positions, and a Mu Sigma Rho Nominating Committee as a new standing committee. You can see the new constitution on the Chapter web site.

New ASA Fellows

Congratulations to the following statisticians from our region who were named as Fellows at the Joint Statistical Meetings this summer:

- Tianxi Cai, Harvard University, Boston, MA
- Dominique M. A. Haughton, Bentley University and Université Toulouse I, Arlington, MA
- Eric D. Kolaczyk, Boston University, Newton, MA
- Herbert I. Weisberg, Correlation Research, Inc., Needham, MA

Member News

Sharon Hessney is featured in the August Amstat News. Earlier this year, she was selected for the Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship Program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy. See this news item at <http://magazine.amstat.org/blog/2011/08/01/hessneyaug11/>.

Nicholas Horton was elected to the ASA Board of Directors starting in January. In addition, he and co-authors won the Best Paper Award for the *Journal of Statistics Education* for 2010, for the article

Pfannkuch M, Regan M, Wild C and Horton NJ. Telling data stories: essential dialogues for comparative reasoning, *Journal of Statistics Education*, 2010;18(1).

Cassandra W. Pattanayak, Paul T. Edlefsen, and Xiao-Li Meng of Harvard University are among the winners of the "Promoting the Practice and Profession of Statistics" video competition held by The Public Awareness Group of the American Statistical Association (ASA). The video is available at <http://www.amstat.org/youtube/>.

Their trailer was created for the Gen Ed course EM 16: Real-Life Statistics: Your Chance for Happiness (or Misery).

After winning the award, Xiao-Li paid tribute to his co-authors' creativity and effort. The video not only helps to promote statistical literacy and education to the general public, but also showcases Harvard's commitment to pedagogical endeavor and innovation, especially at the General Education level.

Holiday Cheer

It's not too early to start thinking about our chapter's winter party, typically held in January. If you would like to host the party this year, please contact Tom Lane (tlane@alum.mit.edu) or any member of the planning committee. This is a potluck event, so you provide the hospitality, attendees bring the food, and the chapter pays for drinks.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

MATHWORKS: MathWorks has multiple openings including statistical software developer (two positions) and technical writer (one position). Both positions typically require a graduate degree in statistics or a related field, as well as familiarity with MATLAB or a similar technical computing language such as R. For more information visit the company web site, mathworks.com.

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

BCASA OFFICERS	
President, 2011-12	Tom Lane, The MathWorks
Program Chair, 2011-12	Maureen Mayer, Fisheye Software
Vice-President, 2010-11	Vanessa Xanthakis, Boston University
Secretary, 2010-11	Sachiko Miyahara, Harvard School of Public Health
Treasurer, 2010-11	Huichao Chen, Harvard School of Public Health
Council of Chapters Representative, 2009-11	James MacDougall, Ironwood Pharmaceuticals
Past President, 2011-12	Dominique Haughton, Bentley University
Webmaster, 2011-2012	Ching-Ti Liu, Boston University
Newsletter Editor, 2011-12	Stan Morse, University of Massachusetts Boston

BCASA COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS	
<i>Mu Sigma Rho</i>	Liam O'Brien, Colby College