

News from the World of Statistics



THE WORLD OF
STATISTICS

May 4, 2016

Nominations Open for International Prize in Statistics



The music and entertainment industries have one, as do professions spanning the areas of international security, medicine, physics and economics - to name a few. Now, the field of statistics has an award of its own - the biannual [International Prize in Statistics](#) – recognizing a significant achievement by an individual or team in the field of statistics.

A joint effort created by five international statistical societies including the American Statistical Association, International Biometric Society, International Statistical Institute, Institute of mathematical Statistics and the Royal Statistical Society, the International Prize in Statistics also raises awareness of the invaluable role that statistics, data analysis, probability and the understanding of uncertainty play in science, technology, human welfare and the overall advancement of society.

While the impact statistics has on our daily life is a lasting one, the nomination period won't be. Submissions must be received by August 15, 2016, so don't delay in applying or nominating a worthy candidate. The winner will be announced this October, and the award will be presented at the ISI World Statistics Congress in July 2017.

ISI Conducts Workshop on Leadership and Management in Cameroon



The International Statistical Institute (ISI), in cooperation with the National Statistical Institute of Cameroon, organized a [Workshop on Leadership and Management](#) in Yaoundé, Cameroon, on April 6-8, 2016. Sixty participants from 30 countries intensively discussed how to build a strong community of innovative leaders in order to respond effectively to the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Romania Hosts Workshop on Modernization of the European Statistical System



The [European Statistical System Modernization International Workshop](#) took place March 15-17 at the National Institute of Statistics in Romania. More than 100 attendees, including specialists from government and executives from Eurostat, which organized the event, gathered to promote dialogue on the modernization of the European Statistical System (ESS) and the development of best practices regarding processing programs and

management of challenges within ESS. The event also served to strengthen the link between national and European projects pertaining to the ESS Vision 2020, an initiative aimed at building the future of European statistics through the development of a common strategic response to four key challenges: data revolution, new metrics, the price of statistics, and the future of Europe.

Health Workers in Pakistan Trained to Capture, Value Data



Led by Dr. Abu Zar Taizai, 20 medical technicians in Nowshera, Pakistan, were trained in processes to better understand and capture data to coincide with numerous public health measurement tools such as mother-child and family planning registries, OPD tickets, and bed occupancy rates, among others. Taizai, was recently selected as a focal person for the Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response System (IDSRs). As a coordinator with the District Health Information System,

he collects, analyzes and interprets morbidity and mortality-related data, which he then converts into practical information for decision-makers.

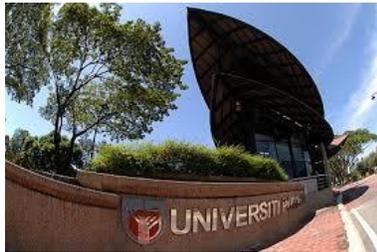
Statisticians Work to Increase Population, Commerce on St. Helena



On April 18, the first-ever passenger plane landed on [St. Helena](#), an island in the South Atlantic Ocean that is a British Territory. A four year-project funded by the UK Department for International Development seeks to boost economic growth through tourism and business opportunities and improve educational and health care outcomes for residents as previous barriers caused by lack of access will be mitigated.

Statistics teams there are currently establishing the baseline from which to measure the economic and social impacts of air access. The demand for data from a developing location is so great that the UK Office for National Statistics plans to employ additional statistics personnel in the coming year to guide critical developments and ensure robust data is available for policymakers in the UK.

Malaysian Seminar Empowers Students to Advance Society with Statistics



The Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), in collaboration with the Malaysia Institute of Statistics (ISM), conducted a seminar titled “Empowering Applications of Statistics in Industry and Society” on February 18. The event drew 85 participants, which included students, instructors, and industry practitioners, and focused on educational opportunities, the exchange of ideas and professional network development. Dr. Kamarulzaman Ibrahim, president of ISM, delivered the opening remarks, and the keynote address was given by Encik Toh Hock Chai of Jabatatan Perkhidmatan Statistik (JPS).

The Land Down Under Looks to Expand Emphasis on Early Education in Statistics



The Statistical Society of Australia is conducting a [STEM National Colloquium and Workshop](#) on June 2-3, 2016, at the University of Technology Sydney. Aimed at initiating a transformation in statistics education from kindergarten to post-doctoral levels, the event is tailored to primary and secondary educators, government, industry leaders and other interested parties and will feature speakers and representatives from Harvard University, Australia’s Office of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Qantas and many more.

UN Statistical Commission Meets at 47th Plenary Session



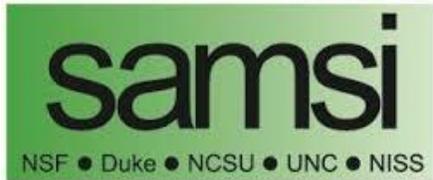
Tudorel Andrei, president of the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) and Bogdan Oancea, adviser to the president of NIS, attended the works of the [47th Plenary Session of the UN Statistical Commission](#), held at the United Nations headquarters in New York, March 3-12, 2016. Lenni Montiel, assistant for economic development to the secretary general, emphasized the committee’s key role in establishing a framework of statistical indicators to monitor the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Discussion points surrounded the use of big data sources in official statistics, national accounts, Environment-Economic Accounting, International Comparison Programme, International Statistical Classifications System, industrial statistics, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), refugee statistics, climate change statistics, governance, and regional statistical development in Western Asia.

Young Statisticians Find, Expand Presence on Social Media to Help Census



A group of young statisticians representing a variety of Arab countries have established a group on Facebook known as [Arwa](#) and are currently creating a public education campaign for the Egyptian census effort this November and are eager to contribute to helping younger generations understand the importance of statistics in daily life.

Precision Medicine Gathering in U.S. Establishes Multidisciplinary Connections



Personalizing medical treatment is regarded as the best means to achieve optimum clinical and patient outcomes, and this data-driven approach has become a central focus of the U.S. health care system and subsequently a major research agenda item at academic institutions across the country. In April, the Statistical and Applied Mathematical

Sciences Institute (SAMS), along with the Burroughs Wellcome Fund, led a workshop titled [“Methodology for Precision Medicine: Integrating Statistical and Mathematical Approaches,”](#) that featured presentations by scientists and clinicians at the forefront of precision medicine. Attendees from diverse professional backgrounds identified synergistic opportunities for methodological integration and brainstormed future joint projects.

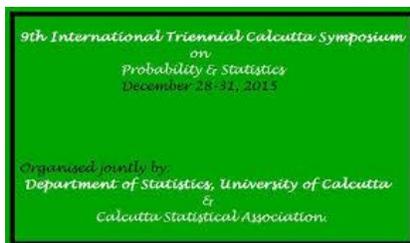
Cuba Conference on Operations Research Touches on Critical Issues



In March, Cuba hosted the 12th International Conference on Operations Research, which included a track on Probability and Statistics. Presenters came from the United States, Mexico and France, with attendees spanning government, academia, professional organizations and the private sector. Some of the statistics-related sessions covered a wide range of consumer

issues, including “Prediction of the quality of fresh water in a basin,” “Application to the analysis of bike sharing systems,” “Growth rate and behavior of economic variables in the production of coffee in Mexico,” “Discrimination against migrants in urban Vietnam,” and “Modeling dengue outbreak data using nonlinear mixed effects model.”

India Hosts International Symposium on Probability and Statistics



Nearly 200 statisticians from India and other countries gathered in Calcutta last December for the Ninth International Triennial Calcutta Symposium, giving participants involved in both theoretical and applied statistics a platform to interact, exchange ideas and learn about new applications and research ventures. The event consisted of seven lectures, 19 invited technical sessions and 24

contributed technical sessions. Sam Efromovich, University of Texas at Dallas provided the keynote address.

New Editors, Journal Covering Areas of Biostatistics and the Climate System



The journal, [Biostatistics](#), published by Oxford University Press (OUP), has welcomed two new editors: Dimitris Rizopoulos and Jeffrey Leek.

Rizopoulos is an Associate Professor in the Department of Biostatistics at Erasmus University Medical Center Leek in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

Leek is an Associate Professor at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU)

Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, Maryland, where he also serves as co-director of the JHU Data Science Lab. He also is co-editor of the statistics blog “Simply Statistics.”

In a blog posting for *Biostatistics*, Rizopoulos and Leek share their vision for the journal’s future and touch on several new initiatives in the coming months, one of which is to create a more streamlined submission process inclusive of fast and fair review systems and wide, rapid dissemination.

In addition to that publication, Oxford University Press’s new open access journal, [*Dynamics and Statistics of the Climate System*](#), is accepting submissions. The journal encourages interaction between physicists, statisticians, mathematicians, computer scientists, and earth scientists in the development of new models and methods applied to the analysis of the climate system.

Crowdfunding Site Launched to Help Raise Legal Funds for Statistician

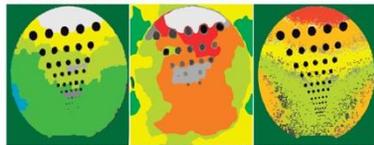


Colleagues of Andreas Georgiou have established a crowdfunding site to raise funds for his legal and court fees. To date, more than 109 donors have contributed 7,450 euro. Less than 50 days are left for donations. For more information, or to make a donation, visit the Andreas Georgiou [crowdfunding page](#) set up by Hallgrimur Snorrason, former head of Iceland Statistics; Gerry O’Hanlon, former head of the Irish statistics

service CSO; and Ada van Krimpen, director of the International Statistical Institute. Georgiou is Greece’s former statistics chief who continues to face criminal inquiries due to charges that he inflated budget deficit figures, even though judicial authorities dropped those charges last year.

Series of Imaging Science Conferences on the Horizon in U.S.

SIAM Conference on
IMAGING SCIENCE



Tom Goldstein and Stanley Osher, SIAM J. Imaging Sciences, Vol.2, No.2

May 23 - 26, 2016
Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town
Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA

The Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) is hosting a Conference on Imaging Science (IS 16) May 23-26, 2016, in New Mexico. The event includes two mini-symposiums on statistics in imaging: *MS6 – New Statistical Developments in Neuroimaging* and *MS25 – Statistical Modeling of High-Dimensional Brain Signals and Images*. Speakers and presenters

include Timothy Johnson, University of Michigan; Nicole Lazar, University of Georgia; Todd Ogden, Columbia University; Russell Shinohara, University of Pennsylvania; Hernando Ombao, University of California, Irvine; Hongtu Zhu, University of North Carolina; and Stefano Castruccio, Newcastle University, UK.

In addition, the American Statistical Association’s section on Statistics in Imaging, in collaboration with the Department of Biostatistics and Informatics of the Colorado School of Public Health; the Biostatistics, Epidemiology, and Research Design Program of the Colorado Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute; and the Center for NeuroScience



at the University of Colorado, will host an [Annual Conference on Statistical Methods in Imaging](#) June 1-3, 2016, at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora, Colorado. The conference consists of lectures, invited sessions, poster presentations and a student paper competition.

UMBC Celebrates Bimal Sinha at Probability and Statistics Day 2016

UMBC

AN HONORS
UNIVERSITY
IN MARYLAND

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Maryland Baltimore County will host the [10th Annual Probability and Statistics Day](#) on May 20–21, 2016. The event consists of invited lectures and commentaries by leading statisticians from academia, government and industry to celebrate Professor Bimal Sinha's 70th birthday. The conference will expose attendees to the latest statistical methodologies and innovative applications and is open to statisticians from all local universities, government agencies, and private industries.

Statistics Professor Rob Kass Talks Brains, Behavior and the Bible Code



In a recent [radio interview](#) with radio station WRSI, Professor Rob Kass of Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, talked about the importance of statistics in brain function and human behavior while explaining the role statistics played in debunking a once-popular phenomenon known as the Bible Code. In addition to instructing students within the Department of Statistics, Kass also works in CMU's Machine Learning Department and is the interim co-chair of the Center for the Neural Basis of Cognition.

University of Washington to Host Summer of Statistics



The University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, is preparing to host the [Summer Institutes](#) beginning on July 11, 2016. Programming focuses on four tracks: genetics, big data, modeling and clinical research and is led by experts in these fields who will introduce participants to modern issues and challenges in biostatistics, genetics, infectious diseases, epidemiology and clinical trials. Prerequisites are minimal, and the modular nature of the Summer Institutes enables participants to design programs best suited to individual backgrounds and interests. Participants attending the Summer Institutes will receive certificates of module completion in recognition of their participation.

Rice University Celebrates Legacy of Long-time Professor, NSF Award Winner



After 46 years in the statistical field, [James R. Thompson](#), the Noah Harding Professor of Statistics in the Department of Statistics at Rice University, Houston, Texas, is retiring. A statistician at Rice before the university even had a statistics department, Thompson's research focused on statistical model building, biomathematics, quality control and computational finance. His work in HIV/AIDS and cancer modeling was pioneering. He received the Wilks Medal for his work with the U.S. Army and the Owen Award for work in quality control. Through the years, he directed 17 doctoral students and authored or co-authored 14 books.

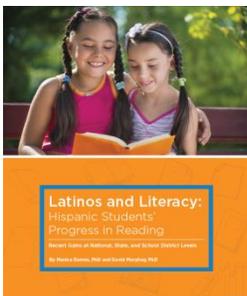
Additionally, Rice Statistician and neuroscientist [Genevera Allen](#) has received a CAREER Development Award from the National Science Foundation (NSF). Allen is hoping to provide data scientists with new tools that can uncover hidden patterns and correlations from complex data sets. Allen is a junior chair of Statistics and an assistant professor of statistics and of electrical and computer engineering. She is a statistician, mathematician and neuroscientist with a joint appointment in pediatric neurology at Baylor College of Medicine's Neurological Research Institute at Texas Children's Hospital.

DOE User Meeting and Workshop to Take Place in Belgium



Stat-Ease, Inc. and CQ Consultancy are hosting the [Sixth European DOE User Meeting and Workshops](#) on May 18-20, 2016, in Leuven, Belgium. Attendees will explore the latest design of experiments (DOE) techniques, demonstrate new features in the just-released Design-Expert® software (version 10) and have the opportunity to get help from DOE consultants on user-specific applications while hearing from keynote speakers and DOE experts. Pre-meeting workshops focus on the following: "Figuring Out Factorials" and "Optimal Formulation and Processing of Mixtures via Combined Designs." Outside of the classroom, attendees will have many opportunities to partake in renowned recreational and entertainment festivities.

New Report Reveals Latino Students' Progress in Reading in U.S. Schools



A new report from [ChildTrends](#) highlights growth in U.S. Latino students' reading scores over the last decade. Researchers used scores from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment to compare progress across states and major cities, and for some major urban school districts. Key findings at the national level for public schools from 2005-2015, indicate that reading scores for Hispanic fourth- and eighth-graders increased by the equivalent of roughly half a grade level. At the state level, more than one third of states saw improvements in

Hispanic students' reading scores at fourth or eighth grades throughout the last decade. Also of note, school districts in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, San Diego, and Washington, DC (all of which serve a large percentage of low-income Hispanic students) were among the top performers over the decade.

Ethiopia Grows Interest in Agriculture with Applied Statistics Conference



The Department of Statistics at Haramaya University in Ethiopia hosted the first international conference on “Applied Statistics in Agriculture” on March from 25-26, 2016. The conference addressed advancement and applications of statistics in agricultural fields, drawing experiences from different countries. Guests included professors, practitioners, researchers and academicians from different Ethiopian Universities and from abroad. More than 150 participants

attended the conference where 23 manuscripts were presented, in addition to numerous public lectures and discussion sessions taking place.

Zena Habtewold of the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resource provided opening remarks on statistics's role in the production and productivity in the agriculture sector. Haramaya University President Chemedha Fininsa also emphasized the value of statistics by saying... the interpretation of “different Statistical methods and models and how they would be better applied and used in agricultural research and surveys so that it helps the national endeavor of improving the productivity of crops vegetable and fruits and livestock should be given emphasis.”

Iran Celebrates National Day of Statistics



Shahrood University of Technology in Iran recently marked the country's National Day of Statistics with workshops on statistical software and spatial statistics and a presentation from Professor M. Mohammadzadeh Darrodi of Tarbiat Modares University.

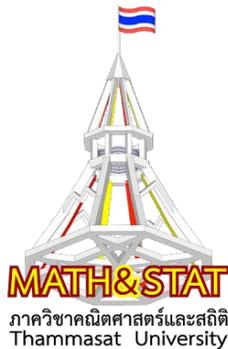
March Issue of IAOS Statistical Journal Hones in on Disclosure and Protection



The March 2016 issue of the [Statistical Journal](#) of the International Association for Official Statistics (IAOS) is now available. The theme for this issue is “Disclosure and Protection in a Big Data World,” and it features papers on various aspects of the Big Data Revolution. Issues related to synthetic data are presented in several papers, including the open paper authored by Vilhuber, Abowd and Reiter, titled: "Synthetic

Establishment Microdata Around the World.” A paper by Richard Madden and co-authors titled "Statistics on Indigenous Peoples: International Effort Needed," also might be of interest to the international community involved with Statistics without Borders.

Thailand Welcomes Statisticians for ICAS 2016



The [International Conference on Applied Statistics](#) (ICAS 2016) is the interdisciplinary forum for the presentation of new advances and research results in the fields of statistics and applied statistics. Sponsored by the Department of Mathematics and Statistic at Thammasat University, the conference takes place July 13-15, 2016, in Phuket, Thailand, and invites high quality multidisciplinary research that employs statistical concepts and theories to tackle a broad range of practical everyday challenges. In addition to keynote lectures by notable researchers, participants will also have the opportunity to explore one of the world's most beautiful beaches.

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Let us know of an upcoming statistics-related event, and we'll post it on the [Activities Calendar](#).

Want to share pictures and details of a statistics-related event? [Submit your photos and details](#) and we'll share those in the next issue of *News from the World of Statistics*.

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