

June 2007



ASAP Newsletter

The Philadelphia Chapter of the American Statistical Association

<http://www.amstatphilly.org/>

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As we welcome in the summer season, we hope that you will join us for our annual **summer short course**, to be held on Friday, July 20 at the ACE Conference Center in Lafayette Hill. We are pleased to be sponsoring a one-day course on statistical genetics by four members of the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania, led by Assistant Professor of Biostatistics, Dr. Mingyao Li. The cost is \$110, which includes breakfast and lunch, as well as course notes and public Wi-Fi access. Please register by Tuesday, July 10 by going to www.AmstatPhilly.org.

By now you should have received the **ballot** for electing ASAP officers for the upcoming season (July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008). If you have not, please email asa_philly@yahoo.com or visit www.AmstatPhilly.org. Please take a few moments to submit your preferences for President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary – these are the people who will continue to bring you high-quality meetings and other activities. Ballots are due to our Secretary, Susan Li, by Monday, June 25.

I would like to thank this year's officers for their time and dedication to keeping chapter activities running smoothly. It is a testament to their commitment that many would like to return for another year of service, for which we should all be grateful. Particular thanks go to former ASAP President Lisa Hickey, who has managed to be especially supportive between business trips to India.

On April 4 eight local statisticians helped judge **Delaware Valley Science Fair** posters at the Valley Forge Convention Center. Congratulations to winners Brian Dickinson (The Pilgrim Academy), Kevin Reynolds (Pennbrook Middle School) and Michael Wang (Upper Dublin High School), all of whom received a check for \$250 and a copy of JMP software. For additional details of this fun and educational event, please see page 9. Judging for DVSF always takes place the first Wednesday of April – mark you calendars for next year now!

It has been an honor and a pleasure serving the chapter for the past six years as Newsletter Editor, Vice President and President. We are fortunate to live in a rich statistical environment, replete with both academic and pharmaceutical leaders in the field. It is my hope that collaborations within and across institutions will continue to blossom, and that the chapter can continue to bring colleagues together in a spirit of mutual enthusiasm, excitement and support.

~Paul Johansen

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sun-Thu, June 17-21	43 rd Annual DIA Meeting, Atlanta, GA
Fri, July 20	ASAP Summer Short Course (www.AmstatPhilly.org)
Sun-Thu, July 29- August 2	Joint Statistical Meetings, Salt Lake City, UT (www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2007)

ASAP SUMMER SHORT COURSE

July 20, 2007

9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

ACE Conference Center - Lafayette Hill, Philadelphia

<http://www.aceconferencecenter.com/main.html>

Registration Cost \$110: includes notes, public Wi-Fi access, breakfast, lunch, access, continuous beverage, afternoon snack

Directions: <http://www.aceconferencecenter.com/location.html>

To register, please fill out the form on next page and send with a check payable to ASA Philadelphia in the amount of \$110 by Tuesday July 10*, to

Susan Li, ASAP Secretary
Centocor R & D, Inc.
200 Great Valley Parkway
MailStop C-4-2
Malvern, PA 19355

***We need an accurate headcount of attendees by July 10 for budgeting purposes.**

Statistical Genetics

A 1-day short course

Professors Mingyao Li, Nandita Mitra, Jinbo Chen & Hongzhe Li

University of Pennsylvania Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology

This short course focuses on statistical approaches to studying complex diseases in humans. The course covers a variety of topics in statistical genetics, including study designs, basics of linkage analysis, population-based and family-based association analysis, haplotype-based tests of association, inference of haplotypes and population structure, and admixture mapping.

The course goals are: (1) to increase the understanding of genetic principles among statisticians who are interested in studying the genetics of complex diseases; (2) to increase the ability of statisticians to evaluate evidence from genetic and biological studies and effectively use the necessary statistical tools; (3) to improve the ability of investigators to develop appropriate study designs using contemporary statistical genetic approaches.

Registration

Name _____

Affiliation _____

Email Address _____

Phone _____

Please send registration information with a check payable to ASA Philadelphia in the amount of \$110 by Tuesday July 10, to:

Susan Li, ASAP Secretary
Centocor R & D, Inc.
200 Great Valley Parkway
MailStop C-4-2
Malvern, PA 19355

A receipt of payment will be available the day of the event.

Statistical Genetics Course Outline

Session 1: Introduction to statistical genetics (Mingyao Li)

- Basic concepts in genetics
- Study designs
- Basics of linkage analysis
- Population-based association analysis
- Genome-wide association studies

Session 2: Population stratification and family-based association studies (Nandita Mitra)

- Population structure inference using STRUCTURE
- Family-based association analysis

Session 3: Haplotype-based tests of genetic association (Jinbo Chen)

- Generalized linear model based association tests
- Study designs: matched case-control, cohort, and nested case-control designs

Session 4: Admixture Mapping (Hongzhe Li)

Mingyao Li, PhD
Assistant Professor of Biostatistics
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
mingyao@mail.med.upenn.edu

Biosketch

Mingyao Li, Assistant Professor, joined the biostatistics faculty in January 2006, after receiving her Ph.D. in Biostatistics from the University of Michigan in 2005. Her main research area is statistical genetics. In particular, she is interested in developing statistical methods and computational tools for identifying and characterizing genetic variants that influence susceptibility to complex diseases. Much of her research has focused on the use of linkage disequilibrium in the mapping of complex disease susceptibility genes, which search for short segments of ancestral chromosomes shared among existent individuals.

Her methodological work includes identifying SNPs responsible for a linkage signal by joint modeling of linkage and association, developing unified statistical framework for association analysis of sibship data and unrelated cases and controls, and developing variance-components linkage and association analysis methods for non-normally distributed quantitative traits. Her paper on joint modeling of linkage and association won the Cotterman Award by the American Society of Human Genetics for the best paper published by a trainee member in 2005. Her current research work involves evaluating and improving power and efficiency for genome-wide association studies.

Nandita Mitra, PhD
Assistant Professor of Biostatistics
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
nanditam@mail.med.upenn.edu

Biosketch

Nandita Mitra, PhD is Assistant Professor of Biostatistics at the University of Pennsylvania. She received her BA in Mathematics from Brown University (1992), MA in Biostatistics from the University of California, Berkeley (1996) and her Ph.D. in Biostatistics from Columbia University (2001). She joined the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania in September 2005, after completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Harvard School of Public Health in statistical genetics and after serving on the faculty of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Her primary area of research is statistical genetics where she has worked extensively on SNP and haplotype problems in the context of family based and population based association studies. In addition, she has research interests in the theory of causal inference, propensity score methods, and health economics. She has collaborated with investigators in a number of medical areas including clinical genetics and oncology. She currently teaches a graduate level course in statistical genetics and advises several Masters students and one PhD student at Penn.

ELECTIONS

The Executive Committee of the American Statistical Association, Philadelphia Chapter (ASAP) consists of four elected positions: President; Vice-President; Secretary; and Treasurer. The term for these positions runs from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. The primary responsibilities of the elected officers include organizing the fall and spring chapter meetings, as well as the summer short course. Elected officers may also appoint other executive positions, such as Chapter Representative, Webmaster, Outreach Officer, and/or Newsletter Editor. Additional activities may be initiated as creativity, interest and time permit.

Biosketches of all candidates follow on the next few pages. Accompanying this newsletter you will find a ballot with detailed instructions. Ballots can also be found online at <http://www.amstatphilly.org/>. Ballots must be filled out and returned as instructed on the ballot by **Monday, June 25**. Thank you in advance for your participation in this important chapter activity!

Biographical Sketches

President

Bill Pikounis works for Centocor, a biotech company that is part of the Johnson & Johnson family and is located in the Valley Forge, Pennsylvania area. He joined Centocor in January 2005 when a dedicated Nonclinical Statistics group was created to serve needs across pharmaceutical discovery, research, development, and formulations. Previously Bill was at Merck in preclinical statistics after receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Florida (1991). Bill is currently serving as Vice President of the Philadelphia Chapter of ASA, and is a former president of the Princeton-Trenton chapter of ASA. His professional interests lie in data graphs, resampling methods, resistance & robustness, longitudinal data analysis, statistical computing, and software solutions.

Vice President

Dennis Cosmatos, Dr.P.H. is Sr. Director and Head of the Biostatistics Group supporting Early Development and Clinical Pharmacology at Wyeth. He has had broad experience in applying statistics to a variety of research settings in clinical and nonclinical research having worked at the NIH - National Institute on Aging, the American College of Radiology - Radiation Therapy Oncology Group, Janssen Research Foundation, Rhone-Poulenc Rorer - Gencell Division, Aventis Pharmaceuticals and presently at Wyeth. He received his B.A. degree in biology from Queens College of the C.U.N.Y., M.S. Hyg. in Biostatistics from the University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public Health and his Dr.P.H. degree in Biostatistics from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Dennis has been an active member of ASA and DIA throughout his career in statistics and is currently active in promoting statistics in Translational Medicine and plans to promote the teaching of "quantitative thinking" in Junior High School and High School education.

Treasurer

Alex Hanlon, Ph.D. received a B.S. from Rochester Institute of Technology (1985) in mathematics and statistics, an M.S. from the University of California-Irvine (1991) in mathematical statistics, and a Ph.D. from Temple University (1998) in statistics. Early in her career, she gained experience in engineering in the aerospace industry as well as in teaching undergraduate calculus and statistics at UC Irvine and Arcadia University. After earning her M.S., she worked full-time as a biostatistician at the American College of Radiology (1991-1994), where her primary focus was on patterns of care in radiation oncology. During this period she also began her doctorate work at Temple University, with her primary research goal in the analysis of post-radiation therapy PSA level profiles. She completed her Ph.D. while working as a biostatistician at the Fox Chase Cancer Center (1994-present); her thesis topic was hierarchical mixed effects modeling of PSA levels in men treated with radiation therapy for prostate cancer. At present, Dr. Hanlon actively serves on scientific editorial boards and frequently makes presentations at conferences of professional associations to share on-going research and recent findings. She trains medical researchers in relevant statistical methodologies to enhance their research efforts; she is an active grant-writer and plays a prominent role in institutional grants; she facilitates promulgation of research findings by co-authoring scores of publications that disseminate research findings, assuming responsibility for the statistical evidence and analyses in these publications. During recent years, Dr. Hanlon has been involved in pharmaceutical drug development within the Johnson and Johnson family of companies; she is currently an Assistant Professor within Temple University's College of Health Professions.

Secretary

R. Mac Turner, Ph.D., serves on the faculty of the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. He teaches year-long undergraduate courses in Research Methods and Statistics and graduate courses in Multiple Regression, Survey of Multivariate Statistics, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). His current research focuses on SEM and developing quantitative models of long-term recovery and adjustment to cancer treatment. Prior to joining the USP faculty in 2000, Mac spent 20 years at Temple University School of Medicine where he was the PI or Co-PI on numerous NIMH and NIDA grants, and the PI for the Statistics Core for the NIDA Center on the Treatment of Adolescent Substance Abuse. He has been an active participant in ASA Joint Statistical Meetings and has served as a judge for the Science Fair and spoken to high school statistics teachers on behalf of ASAP. Mac received his BS in Business Statistics at Penn State in 1974 and his Ph.D. in Quantitative Psychology from Temple University in 1979.

Xiaolei Li is currently a Sr. statistician at GlaxoSmithKline, Oncology, based in Upper Providence, PA. Her major role is to provide strategic and innovative statistical input into clinical development programs within Oncology setting and represent GSK, Statistics and Programming Team at various external or internal meetings. She has been working on three Ph II, Ph III oncological as well as supportive care trials since she joined the company in September of 2006. Before joining GSK, Xiaolei got her Ph.D. in statistics from University of Wisconsin in Madison in August, 2006. Her thesis topic was concentrated on the Bayesian methodology development in multiple dimensional parameter spaces. In particular, her thesis work also included applications in Spatial statistics, environmental statistics as well as epidemiology. Xiaolei is enthusiastically to serve the ASA Philadelphia chapter. She believes any bit would contribute to a better future for our chapter. All together, we can make ASAP a better place for everyone of us on team!

DELAWARE VALLEY SCIENCE FAIR (DVSF)

Seven ASAP chapter members served as special judges for this year's edition of the Delaware Valley Science Fair (DVSF), held April 4-5 at the Valley Forge Conference Center. The DVSF (<http://www.dvsf.org>) presents an opportunity for middle and high school students to discover and present the wonders of science in the wide spectrum of scientific subject areas. ASAP has contributed special judges to assess statistical content of the posters for several years now.

The three winners this year exhibited fine displays of using data analysis and/or statistical methodology to demonstrate their project. Brian Dickinson presented on "Greater Plant Yield", Kevin Reynolds on "Can you hear me now?", and Michael Wang on "Statistical Analysis of the AIDS Pandemic." There were several other good presentations amongst the hundreds of posters. While good data analysis and the clear presentation of it is far from universal, it was encouraging to see how statistical thinking distinguished some of the posters.

Thanks to Paul Johansen, Dennis Cosmatos, Bob Gagnon, Bill Pikounis, Jenny Sun, Mac Turner, and Al Getson for volunteering their time as special judges this year. If you have never participated as a special statistics judge in a DVSF, it is an inspiring experience, and a great way to serve your profession in the area community. Please be on the lookout for the opportunity to judge in the next edition come Spring 2008, as the ASAP chapter would dearly welcome more volunteers to help the cause of faithfully judging the hundreds of posters.

TREASURER'S REPORT

BALANCE FORWARDED (01/07/07)

\$2854.36

INCOME:

ASA Chapter Dues		
October, 06	\$151.00	
November/December, 06	\$423.00	
January, 07	\$223.00	
March, 07	\$239.00	
April, 07	\$193.00	
May, 07	\$246.00	
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$1475.00
Other Revenue Sources		
Mid-Winter Gathering Registration Fees	\$885.00	
Spring Meeting Registration Fees	\$1,230.00	
Spring Newsletter Ads	\$75.00	
Corporate Support: Wyeth, Merck, ICON	\$2,500.00	
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$4690.00

TOTAL INCOME:

\$6165.00

EXPENSES:

Mid-Winter Gathering		
Shackomaxon Catering	\$2,803.00	
Drinks and Supplies	\$280.00	
Speaker Expenses	\$388.05	
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$3471.05
Spring Meeting		
Ft. Washington Hotel and Conference Center	\$1,480.50	
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$1480.50
Summer Course		
ACE Conference Center	\$1,382.00	
<i>Subtotal</i>		\$1382.00

Other Expenses

DVSF Prize of \$250	\$250.00
DVSF Supplies	\$34.70
Annual Web Site Renewal	\$231.45
Excessive Item Fee	\$48.00

Subtotal \$564.14

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$6897.00

BALANCE FORWARDED (06/08/07) \$2121.66

EMPLOYMENT

Instructor or Assistant Professor of Biostatistics
Drexel University
Philadelphia, PA

The College of Nursing and Health Professions at Drexel University invites applicants for this non-tenure track faculty position at the rank of Instructor or Assistant Professor. The 12-month appointment entails teaching introductory biostatistics in an online format to graduate nursing and health science students. The position also involves consulting with faculty researchers. Applicants must have a minimum of a Masters degree in Biostatistics, Statistics or other related field, with a Ph.D. preferred. Preference will be given to applicants with teaching experience, especially in an online format.

Applicants must send a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, statement of teaching philosophy, and names of three people who can provide references to:

Dr. Rita Naremore
Associate Dean for Research
College of Nursing and Health Professions
Mail Stop 501
245 N. 15th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Senior Biostatistician
ICON Clinical Research

Responsible for statistical aspects of clinical/preclinical research projects including study design, sample size estimation, patient randomization, case report form development, writing statistical analysis plans, statistical analysis/interpretation of data, reporting of results. Will work with SAS programmers.

Ph.D. degree in statistics/biostatistics/or related field and 6 years of pharmaceutical or related experience required; Knowledge in applied parametric/nonparametric statistics, strong SAS programming skills; ability to translate client needs into statistical practice and to educate clients in the use of statistics essential.

TO APPLY please visit us at www.iconclinical.com . ICON Clinical Research is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed strength in diversity.

ASAP CHAPTER OFFICERS

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<p><u>Chapter Representative:</u> Devan V. Mehrotra Merck Research Labs., UG1CD-44 351 N. Sumneytown Pike North Wales, PA 19454 (267) 305-6599 <i>voice</i> (267) 305-6538 <i>fax</i> devan_mehrotra@merck.com</p>	<p><u>Vice Chair, District 3, Council of Chapters:</u> B. Christine Clark ICON Clinical Research. 212 Church Road North Wales, PA 19454 (215) 616-3412 <i>voice</i> (215) 616-3012 <i>fax</i> clarkc@iconus.com</p>