



Message from Farzaneh Tabnak, SSA President:

I am pleased to report that we have had a productive year fulfilling our association's mission of *promoting and encouraging the use of statistics and research* through the Annual Institute on Research & Statistics, short courses, seminars, newsletters and graduate student fellowships. This was only possible because of your continued involvement and support. Through wide participation of our members, we have also been able to fulfill one of our main goals of fostering and promoting opportunities for the community to exchange ideas in the area of statistics.

The 24th Annual Institute on Research and Statistics, convened on April 15, 2003, was well organized by our Vice President, Julie Yee. It offered a variety of interesting topics presented by high-caliber speakers from academic, government and private institutions. The Institute started with an informative and interesting talk by Howard Roth, Chief Economist California Department of Finance. As the keynote speaker, he presented "The California Economy: Bubble Hangover." It was followed by a talk by Professor Rudy Beran, Chair of the Department of Statistics, University of California, Davis as the featured speaker who presented his insightful and exceptional talk on the theory and practice of statistics "Experimental Statistics and Statistical Theory." We were fortunate to have speakers from a wide variety of organizations: universities (UC Davis and CSUS), governmental departments (Finance, Health Services, Employment Development, Developmental Services, Motor Vehicles), Industry (Research Bureau and Drug Treatment Evaluation Consultant firm) and colleges (California Community Colleges).

Throughout the day the talks covered topics such as multiple frame sampling strategies, transition matrices for analysis of system change over time, classification and clustering via functional principal components, Bayesian approach to prevalence estimation and sample size calculation, response surface methodology, survey research methodology, meta analysis, patterns in data and Kernel methods, experimental statistics and statistical theory and imputation of missing data. The applications ranged over time-course gene expression, Medi-Cal recovery, driving behavior, the impact of changeover to North-American industry classification system on employment, analysis of 2000 census and mortality rates due to cancer.

Presenting short courses in methods and applications of statistics that are valuable to the wide spectrum of members of the Association is also one of our priorities. You have already received an announcement from our short course committee Chair, Kirsten Knutson that Professor Christina Drake from the Department of Statistics at UC Davis will be offering a short course on missing data and causal inference in observational studies on October 16. Please see more details about the event in the Event Section of this newsletter. We would also like to promote participation of our members in well-organized statistical seminars in our neighborhood. We distribute the announcements of the weekly seminars of the Department of Statistics of UC Davis to our members hoping that participation in these seminars will enhance their appreciation of wide-range statistical theory and methods. We also co-sponsored several workshops with the Department of Finance, California State Data Center including "Using Economic Census Data" presented by Paul Zeisset from the U.S. Census Bureau and "Census Data Comparability and Caveats" presented by Cam McIntosh from the U.S. Census Bureau.

The annual student scholarship award of the SSA Association has been established to recognize outstanding students in the field of statistics with the aim to further the support for training and research of the next generation of statisticians. This year, Adam Branscum, a Ph.D. candidate from the Department of Statistics at UC Davis was one of the recipients of the scholarship. Adam presented his work titled "Bayesian approach to prevalence estimation and sample size computation in surveys to substantiate freedom of a county from infectious agents" at the Institute. The other recipient of this year's SSA scholarship was Erik Bloomquist, a CSUS Mathematics Department graduating senior who was accepted for admission to several graduate programs in statistics including North Carolina State, UCLA, UC Santa Barbara, and UC Davis.

I would like to take this opportunity and thank the 2002-2003 SSA board members:

Julie Yee, Vice President and the Chair of this year's Institute
Shannon Conroy, Secretary
Charles Chan, Treasurer
Linda Gage, American Statistical Association (ASA) Representative
Scott Bartell, Councilor and Webmaster
Kirsten Knutson, Councilor and Chair of Short Courses
Matt Facer, Councilor and Publicity/Newsletter Chair
Lisette Walker, Councilor and committee member
Lois Lowe, Councilor and committee member
Doraiswamy Ramachandran, Councilor and committee member
Kathleen Gallagher, Councilor and committee member

for their devotion and significant contributions in planning and organizing the activities of the Association this year. Without their continuous support and assistance the achievements we have made this year would not have been possible. I am also happy to let you know that Linda Gage, our ASA Representative this year, received recognition for her many years of outstanding contribution to the success of SSA.

Finally, I would like to invite you to our annual membership dinner that will be held on November 1, 2003. The purpose of the event will be to elect the new officers for the next term. A slate has been proposed that the current Vice President, Julie Yee, be the President elect, Matthew Facer be the Vice President elect, Kathleen Gallagher be the Secretary and Charles Chan to continue as the treasurer. Please see more details about the annual membership dinner in the Event Section of this newsletter.

Message from Julie Yee, SSA Vice-President and 2003 Institute Chair:

As vice president, it has been a privilege to chair the 24th Annual Institute on Research and Statistics. The SSA membership is made up of people with very diverse interests and backgrounds in the area of statistical research, so it is always a challenge to put together a program that has something for everyone. This year's Institute covered a wide range of topics, and we have a wonderfully eclectic mix of speakers to thank for that. Some of you have expressed interest in obtaining handouts related to some of the speakers' talks. We are happy to announce that all visual aids provided by this year's speakers, including handouts, are now posted on our website.

We value the participation and feedback of all of the SSA members. Thank you to all 112 of you who attended this year's Institute. Your participation contributed to a very successful turnout. Twenty-seven participants returned their evaluation forms and provided very positive and constructive feedback, which will be used during the planning of next year's Institute meeting. Some of the changes you noticed in this year's Institute were a result of feedback from the previous year, so if you liked something, then please make sure we know about it.

Another change you might have noticed, although not a result of feedback, was the way we handled parking permits. Since the California State University stopped providing parking permits free of charge, we decided to pre-purchase your parking permits at the time of your pre-registration and mail these to you. Unfortunately, for those of you who registered at the door, we could not logistically have parking permits available to you on site. We are aware that some of you would have liked more time to pre-register, so we will keep this in mind for the planning of next year's Institute.

Finally, I would like to express appreciation to the many people who volunteered their time and effort in order to make the Institute possible. The Math Department of the California State University of Sacramento greatly facilitated our access to services in the Union. Professor Doraiswamy Ramachandran of the Math Department was instrumental in making it possible for the SSA and the CSUS Math Department to co-sponsor the Institute. Our tireless SSA secretary Shannon Conroy did an excellent job keeping track of members, preparing and sending mailers, and processing registrations. Rather importantly, our SSA treasurer Charles Chan paid our bills and worked with the caterers to coordinate the delivery of our breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Shannon, Lisette Walker, Kirsten Knutson, and Lois Lowe manned the registration desk throughout the morning introductions and plenary sessions. Scott Bartell posted all of our Institute information on our web site. During the plenary sessions, Scott also assisted with lights, and Willard Hom assisted with the microphone. Linda Gage made the appropriate contacts allowing us to have our always-popular keynote speaker, the Chief Economist, talk about the economy. Scott, Matt Facer, Kathleen Gallagher, Kirsten, and Lisette moderated talks during the break out sessions. And last but not least, our president Farzaneh Tabnak, who was

last year's Institute Chair, did some early legwork on this year's Institute before I became Chair, so that I wouldn't have quite so much to do. Without her guidance, support, and unshakable charm, the Institute would not have been quite the pleasure that it was.

Joint Statistical Meetings, 2003:

We were fortunate this year to have the Joint Statistical Meeting (JSM) convene in San Francisco in August 2003. JSM is the largest gatherings of statisticians held in North America and is held jointly with the American Statistical Association (ASA), The International Biometric Society (ENAR and WNAR), the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS), and the Statistical Society of Canada (SSC). Attended by over 4000 people, activities of the meeting include oral presentations, panel sessions, poster presentations, continuing education courses, exhibit hall (with state-of-the-art statistical products and opportunities), placement service, society and section business meetings, committee meetings, social activities, and networking opportunities. Toronto is the host city for JSM 2004. For further information or the JSM 2003 Proceedings CD-ROM, please visit the American Statistical Association web site: <http://www.amstat.org/meetings>.

Upcoming SSA Events:

SSA Short Course

The Sacramento Statistical Association is offering the short course “**Missing Data and Causal Inference in Observational Studies**” presented by Professor Christiana Drake of the Department of Statistics at University of California, Davis from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM on October 16, 2003, at the California Department of Health Services (DHS). The course will provide an overview of the interpretation of statistical quantities, missing data mechanisms and commonly used imputation methods. Methods used in reducing bias and the concepts of causal inference and propensity scores will be presented, and the application of these concepts to missing data will be discussed.

There is still time to sign up for the course! Anyone interested in attending the short course is asked to **pre-register by Friday, October 10, 2003**. If you did not receive the email announcing the short course, email Kirsten at kknutson@dhs.ca.gov <<mailto:kknutson@dhs.ca.gov>> for a registration form.

Annual Membership Dinner

The annual membership dinner will be held on November 1, a Saturday at 6 p.m., at Symposium. The restaurant, featuring Greek dolmas, souvlakis, mousakas, soutzoukakias, and karlamarakias is located at 1620 E. Eighth Street in Davis. The purpose of this evening is to elect officers for the upcoming year, and all current members and their guests are invited to the event. Please contact Charles Chan at cchan@dhs.ca.gov to confirm your attendance.

Conference Announcements:

The American Public Health Association (APHA) will hold its 131st Annual Meeting in San Francisco during November 15-19, 2003. The APHA has a statistics section that offers oral and poster presentations on statistical issues relating to public health and epidemiology. The conference website is <http://www.apha.org/meetings>.

Final Words:

Please help us update our database! If your contact information (address, email, phone) has changed, kindly inform our Secretary, Shannon Conroy (916) 449-5280, or sconroy@dhs.ca.gov.