

# Statistics News

VOLUME 4

JANUARY 2006

## Hello and Welcome to the Statistics News

Welcome to the fourth annual Department of Statistics newsletter! Our newsletter is a yearly effort to help alumni and friends learn about happenings in the department, and keep in touch with each other. It has been another eventful year and we have several news items to report, and updates from alumni to share. If you have not yet contacted us about your latest professional and personal information, please do so and we'll pass it along in the next newsletter.

## Dale and Darlene Everson Named Idaho Treasures

The University of Idaho Retirees Association and the University of Idaho Alumni Association sponsored the Ninth Annual Idaho Treasure Award Presentation Recognition Luncheon on November 10, 2005. The Idaho Treasure Award was established in 1995 to recognize retired University of Idaho faculty, staff and family members who, in their retirement years, have made significant achievements in service and leadership to our university.

Dale and Darlene Everson were named 2005 Idaho Treasures and their award was presented to them by UI President Tim White.

Dale Everson was a professor and directed the division of statistics at UI. He joined the UI faculty in 1962 and retired in 1996. Dale continues statistics research, along with consulting and mentoring students. Dale received his bachelor's degree from UI in 1952 and a master's degree in 1955. In 1996, the Eversons established the Dale Everson Statistics Fellowship to support UI students.



Darlene Everson actively supports the Idaho Repertory Theater, Latah Country Historical Society and the First Presbyterian Church. Darlene received a bachelor's degree in home economics in 1955 from UI.

The Department of Statistics is deeply indebted to both Dale and Darlene. We truly appreciate all they have done for the department and for the university.

## Statistics Certificate

In Summer 2005, the Department of Statistics began to offer a Graduate Certificate in Statistics. Students must complete Stat 401 and four approved graduate level statistics courses. The certificate is most attractive to students completing master's or Ph.D. degrees in other fields. So far, the department has awarded five certificates. Interest in this program continues to grow.

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### CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RECENT GRADUATES

**Juan Fan - Fall 2005**  
**Jianping Yuan - Fall 2005**  
**Kedar Koirala - Spring 2005**  
**Yen Hai (Lena) Le - Spring 2005**  
**Young Taik Lim - Spring 2005**  
**Xian Liu - Spring 2005**  
**Roman Makordey - Spring 2005**

### CONGRATULATIONS TO CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION IN STATISTICS RECIPIENTS

**Brock Eubanks**  
**Alessandra Falcucci**  
**Mark Kimsey**  
**Luigi Maiorano**  
**Josh Szasz**



## Students Awards

Each year, an outstanding graduate student in statistics is chosen for the department's American Statistical Association (ASA) Award. This year, we were able to recognize two students. The 2005 recipients were **Juan Fan** and **Jianping Yuan**. Along with a one-year subscription to the ASA publications, Juan and Jianping each received a framed certificate. For the second year, the department recognized students for outstanding service in the Statistics Assistance Center. Recipient of a Making a Positive Difference Award was **Rena Shrum**. Along with a framed certificate, Rena also received a gift certificate to Amazon.com.

## Brink 400 Lab Makeover

Former students who return to the Brink 400 computer lab will not recognize it. All the old computers have been replaced by three very powerful new machines. The furniture has been rearranged and new workstation chairs were purchased. Tim Johnson also has donated a computer which is running Linux.

## Spring Celebration

Statistics Department faculty, staff, students and alumni met on Wednesday, May 11 in the Brink Faculty Lounge for an end of semester gathering. We took a break from finals and enjoyed some good food and conversation. Framed certificates were presented to recipients of the department's 2005 ASA Award and of the department's Making a Positive Difference Award.



## Department Picnic

The annual Joint UI/WSU Statistics Department Picnic was held on August 30, 2005 at Reaney Park in Pullman. Many graduate students attended and enjoyed a fine time with faculty, staff and guests.

## Deb Montgomery Interns at Columbia Basin Research

This past summer, Deb Montgomery, a statistics graduate student, left the brown, arid Palouse to explore a lush, rainy Seattle. During that time, she participated in a 2.5 month internship with Columbia Basin Research (CBR). CBR is a small research group associated with the School of Aquatic and Fishery Science at the University of Washington. The biometrics research team mainly works with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Bonneville Power Administration on fish related issues, but occasionally picks up wildlife related projects. The portion of the team with which Deb worked is headed up by John Skalski, a fish and wildlife biometrician and professor. This was a great opportunity to work with Dr. Skalski, his research team and Josh Millsbaugh from the University of Missouri. In particular, Deb assisted CBR with the development of a new wildlife population estimator using harvest information. The project was partially funded by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and used data collected by MDC wildlife biologists during Mourning dove harvests. Through the project, Deb learned more about maximum likelihood methods and programming with the S language. Although the estimator did not prove to be fruitful, she appreciated the opportunity to work with a seasoned statistics research team and to explore downtown Seattle.



## Chris Williams Returns from Sabbatical

During his sabbatical year, Chris Williams spent approximately three months in Indianapolis at the Indiana University School of Medicine working with Professors Joe Christian and Keith Dunker. The rest of the time was spent either in Moscow or on trips to present seminars.

The primary goal of his sabbatical leave was to conduct research on statistical problems in genetics and molecular biology, with a secondary goal of working on statistical problems in natural resources. Chris also worked with Professor Larry Forney at the University of Idaho on the experimental design and analysis of terminal restriction length polymorphism (tRFLP) data.

Chris gave several invited talks during his sabbatical year. In October 2004, he gave an invited seminar at the Departamento de Estadística, Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM) in Mexico City, Mexico, entitled "Estimation of disease prevalence from diagnostic tests with imperfect sensitivity and specificity." In April 2005, Chris gave an invited talk in Athens, Georgia at the Silver Anniversary Symposium celebration of the Department of Genetics at the University of Georgia, entitled "Parameter estimation in univariate twin models via frequentist model averaging." Also in April 2005, he spoke at the Division of Biostatistics in the Department of Medicine at the Indiana University School of Medicine, on the same topic as the Athens, GA talk.

Chris' sabbatical leave allowed him to renew research expertise in some areas, as well as to start research in several new directions. He's involved in several grants and publications, and will continue to strengthen the research efforts of many scientists at the University of Idaho.

## Faculty and Staff News

**Dean Johnson**, former visiting assistant professor, has taken a permanent position in the Statistics Department at WSU.

**Bahman Shafii**, a 1982 graduate of our program, continues as director of Statis-

tical Programs in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. He has taken on additional duties teaching statistics courses nearly every semester for the last several years. Bahman describes himself as overworked and underpaid.

## Faculty and Staff News cont. from page 2

**Chris Williams** returned from a year-long sabbatical. He is back teaching and providing statistical consulting.

**Kirk Steinhorst** published a paper on

people's lifetime smiling patterns. This paper with biologist Mark DeSantis and psychologist Phil Mohan is a departure from the usual papers he writes. The interesting results show that there is little

difference in smiling patterns among young children. Differences increase as one gets older and are significantly different among adult females and adult males.

## Meet our Current Students

**John Dugan** joined the department as a teaching assistant in Fall 2005. John will teach Stat 150 in Spring 2006. He is originally from Maryland.

**Misti Fowler** will join the department as a teaching assistant in Spring 2006. She just completed a Master's degree in Mathematics at UI. Misti is originally from Sugar City, Idaho.

**Jenny Guarino** will join the department in Spring 2006. She completed a B.S. in Psychology in May 2005. Jenny is originally from Cascade, Idaho.

**Qu Haiyan** also is pursuing a Master's degree in Forest Resources. He is originally from China.

**Sergiy Krasnozhan** just completed a Master's degree in Mathematics at UI. He is originally from Ukraine. Sergiy

has returned to Ukraine to take a job and hopes to complete his statistics degree within the next three years.

**Man Li** joined the department in Fall 2005 as a teaching assistant. She is originally from China.

**Deb Montgomery** completed a Master's degree in Wildlife Resources at UI in 2005. She coordinates the Statistics Assistance Center. Deb is originally from New Jersey.

**K. Joey Pavia-Jones** also is pursuing a Ph.D. in Forest Products. She is from Alaska.

**Nataliya Plesha** also is pursuing a Ph.D. in Forest Products. She is originally from Ukraine.

**Ju Qiu** joined the department as a teaching assistant in Fall 2004. She is originally from China.

**Christian Salas** expects to complete his Master's degree in Statistics from UI in Spring 2006. He is originally from Chile.

**Renae Shrum** will join the department in Spring 2006. She just completed a B.S. in Accounting at UI. Renae has worked in the Statistics Assistance Center since May 2004 and has served as the SAC coordinator for the past two summers. She is originally from Moscow, Idaho.

**Yabo Su** joined the department in Fall 2005. She is originally from China.

**Huei-Jin Wang** joined the department as a teaching assistant in Fall 2005. She expects to complete a Master's degree in Forest Resources from UI in Spring 2006. Huei-Jin is originally from Taiwan.

## Alumni News

**Peter Bonate** graduated in 1990 with an M.S. He and his wife, Diana, moved to Indianapolis where Peter started work with Eli Lilly. In 1991, Peter started work on a Ph.D. in Medical Neurobiology, which he completed in 1996. Peter completed a post-doc in pharmacokinetics at the University of Pittsburgh that same year. They moved to Kansas City where Peter started work at Hoechst Marion Roussel. He was involved in the development and commercialization of Allegra and Ketek. In 1998, Diana gave birth to their twins, Robyn and Ryan. In 2001, they moved to San Antonio, where Peter joined a small biotech company called ILEX Oncology. While there, Peter was the lead pharmacokineticist for clofarabine (Clolar), the first drug approved for pediatric leukemia in more than a decade. In 2004, ILEX was acquired by Genzyme, and Peter is now the director of pharmacokinetics for them and is involved in the development of many different drugs, including Cerezyme and the soon-to-be approved Myozyme. In 2005, Peter published a book entitled "Pharmacokinetic-

Pharmacodynamic Modeling and Simulation" (Springer, New York) which may be of interest to students because it focuses on linear and nonlinear regression as well as linear and nonlinear mixed effects models.

**Carl Brenner** is still a Business Intelligence manager at Coldwater Creek in charge of statistics, geography and retail analytics. Carl reports that construction of an addition to his house is keeping him busy.

**Ann Shih Jacobsen** just became a permanent employee at Celera Diagnostics, after contracting there for almost two years. Her title is senior biostatistician. Ann enjoys working on genetic data and is learning a lot. Recently, she took a data-mining course from Tibshirani and Hastie in Boston. On a personal note, Ann and her husband, Lew, still enjoy living with two dogs and two cats in Richmond, California.

**Chris Lighty** is working as an analyst for Coldwater Creek Business Intelligence Department. She works with the Merchandising Department to provide

information they need to make decisions. Chris lives in Sandpoint, Idaho.

**Kedar Koirala** is living in Toledo, Ohio, with his family. Kedar is a part-time faculty member of the Math Science Department at Owens State Community College.

**José Miguel Castellanos Ponciano** is nearing completion of a Ph.D. in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology under the direction of Dr. Paul Joyce. José was honored with a 2005 University of Idaho Alumni Award for Excellence.

**Richard Remington** continues to work as a statistician for Kern Statistical Services in Boise, Idaho. For the past two years, he has taught applied statistical methods in the masters of health science program at Boise State University. A manuscript with Dr. Karl Madaras-Kelly from the Boise VA Medical Center entitled "Evaluation of an Intervention Designed to Decrease Nosocomial MRSA Infection by Encouraging Decreased Fluoroquinolone Use" was recently accepted for publication by In-

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## Alumni News cont. from page 3

fection Control and Hospital Epidemiology. The study found evidence that eliminating use of levofloxacin (a fluoroquinolone antibiotic) cut the hospital acquired MRSA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus, a staph infection) infection rate in half.

**Salman Sabir** expects to move to Australia in early January to pursue higher education and better prospects.

**Jeff Hovermill Shamatha** and his spouse, Abby, still live in Flagstaff, Arizona where Jeff is in his third year as an assistant professor of Mathematics Education. Last year, he was awarded the Chair's Award for Excellence in Research and Scholarship for the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

**Elhadji Anassour Laouan Sidi** is pursuing a master's degree in Agricultural Eco-

nomics at UI. In addition, Sidi continues to work with researchers in University Residences to assist them with survey research funded by a U.S. Department of Education grant.

**Fei Tian** spent some time in Canada after graduation from UI. Now, he teaches in the Department of Sociology at Anhui University in China. Lately, he has taught courses in Calculus, Sampling, and Social Statistics.

**Michelle Tschida** went to work for The Boeing Company as a statistical consultant in 1997 after completing her M.S. in Statistics from the University of Idaho. Last February, Michelle left Boeing and accepted a position with Washington Mutual as a data analyst. Although it has taken a while to adjust from the airline industry to the banking industry, the change has been a positive one and has cer-

tainly helped Michelle see things from a different perspective. She has lived in the Puget Sound for almost nine years and has settled into the lifestyle. In her spare time, Michelle enjoys the arts, friends, walking and volunteering. The highlight of her year was a trip that Michelle and her mother took to Africa last Christmas to visit Michelle's brother, Kelly, who was serving there in the Peace Corps. Michelle loved Africa and hopes to go back again someday.

**Ray Wallace** left his position in the Institutional Research Office at UI in January 2005 for a similar position at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. He lives in Blacksburg with his wife and three children.

**Aiyuan Xie** continues to work at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.